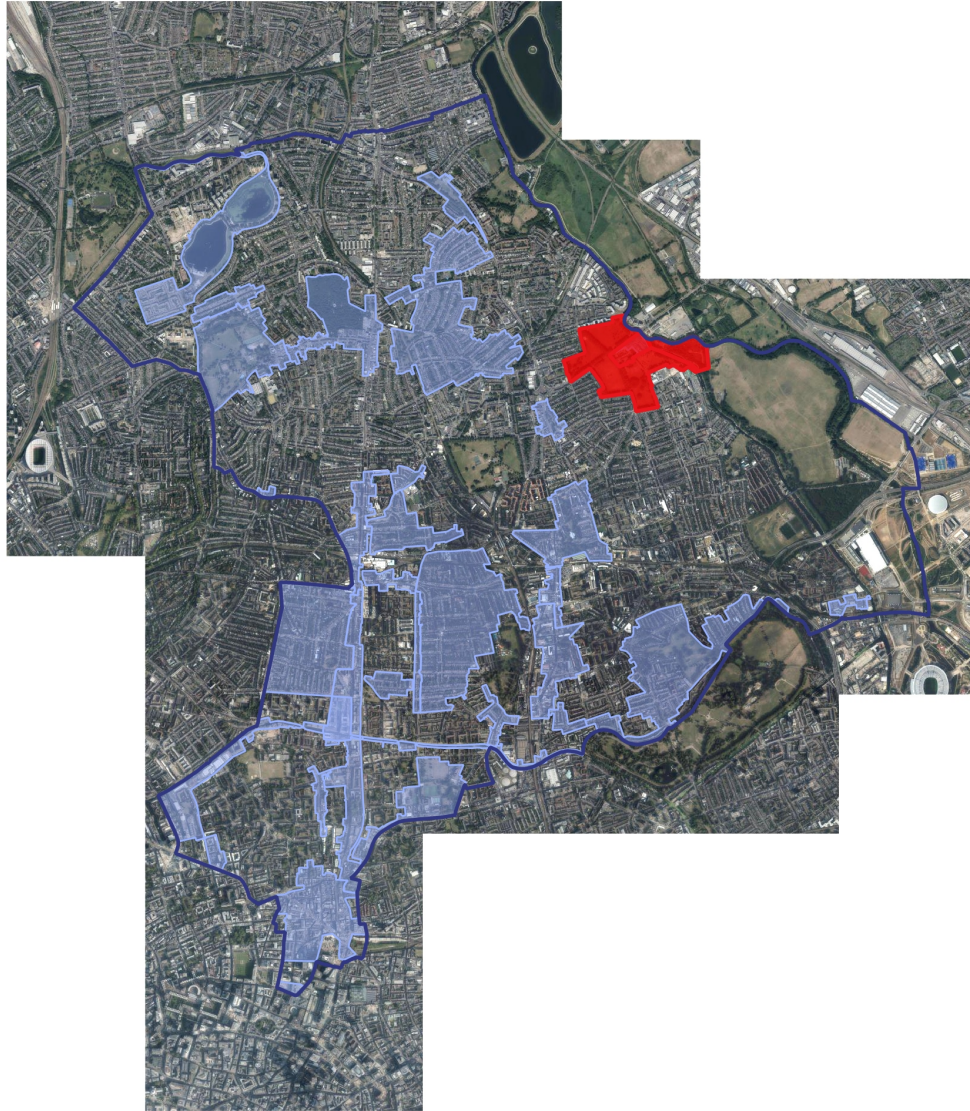




Lea Bridge Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Consultation Draft November 2019



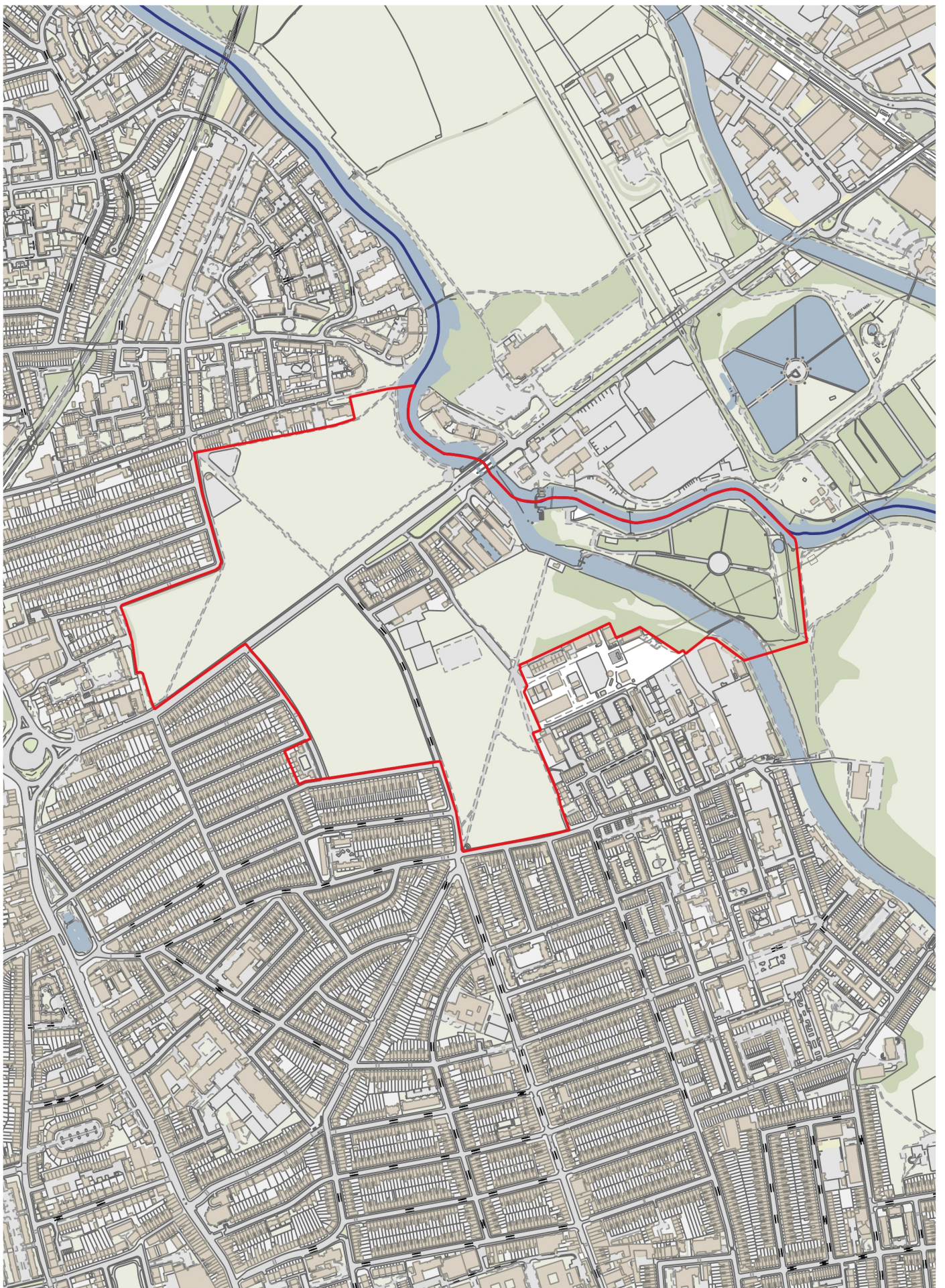
- Lea Bridge Conservation Area
- Conservation Areas
- London Borough of Hackney
- London Borough of Hackney

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Map 1: The location of Lea Bridge Conservation Area and other Conservation Areas in Hackney

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Map 2. The boundary of Lea Bridge Conservation Area

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Designation Background

Lea Bridge Conservation Area was first designated in 2005 to include a group of 19th century buildings associated with the historic industrial character of the River Lea. The boundary was tightly drawn around the historic core of riverside development and the Council's 2017 borough wide Conservation Areas Review recommended a boundary review to refocus the conservation area on the wider character of the River Lea and the adjacent open green spaces at Millfields Common and the Middlesex Filter Beds. Following research undertaken for this appraisal, the boundary has been extended to include these historic open spaces.

1.2 What is a Conservation Area?

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

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

1.3 Implications of Conservation Area Designation

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

Certain types of more minor development, particularly in relation to single family dwellings, are subject to Permitted Development rights (under the General Permitted Development Order, 2015, as amended). These Permitted Development rights are more limited in Conservation Areas, and may be removed partially or completely through the use of Article 4 Directions.

Trees above a specific size are protected in Conservation Areas. Applicants must give the Council six weeks' notice in writing before any work is carried out to lop, top or fell a tree in a Conservation Area. There is also greater control over advertisements in Conservation Areas.

1.4 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 provides national guidance. Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is a key component of the NPPF's drive to achieve sustainable development. Section 16 of the NPPF, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the heritage framework in detail in relation to various 'heritage assets'. Conservation Areas are referred to as designated heritage assets in the NPPF.

Although not statutory guidance, Historic England's document, The Historic Environment in Local Plans (Historic England, 2015), and Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic England, 2016) provides further guidance from the national heritage authority.

1.5 Regional Policy

The relevant Regional Spatial Strategy is the Greater London Authority's London Plan (GLA, 2016). The following policies are relevant:

- Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology
- Policy 7.9 Heritage-led Regeneration

1.6 Local Policy

Local borough-wide planning policy is contained within Hackney Council's Local Plan. At the time of writing (August 2019) the relevant parts of the Local Plan are the Local Development Framework Core Strategy (LBH, 2010), the Development Management Local Plan (LBH, 2015), the Site Allocations Local Plan (LBH, 2016) and Area Action

Plans (LBH, various dates). These are supported by various Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance (the Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD, (LBH, 2009) being an important example).

The following policies are particularly relevant.

- LDF Core Strategy Policy 24 Design
- LDF Core Strategy Policy 25 Historic Environment
- DMLP Policy DM1 Design
- DMLP Policy 28 Managing the Historic Environment
- The State of Hackney's Historic Environment Report (LBH, 2006)

1.7 Emerging Policy

At the time of writing the Local Plan 2033 (LP33) has undergone public examination and is considered to have some weight as a material consideration in decision making on planning applications.

The following policies are particularly relevant:

- LP3 Designated Heritage Assets
- Historic Environment Strategy SPD

1.8 Statement of Significance

This is a riverine Conservation Area with intimate physical and historical connections with the River Lea (sometimes spelled Lee). Since King Alfred the Great signed a treaty with Guthrum (circa 878) to limit the extent of Viking lands, the River Lea has formed an important boundary. It was the historic boundary between Middlesex and Essex until 1965 and continues to distinguish the London Boroughs of Hackney and Waltham Forest to this day. The River Lea formed the topography of the area, with its flood plains still evident as the former common land at North and South Millfields. The need to cross the river in flood led to the construction of a series of bridges and the local road structure. The canalisation of part of the river nearby as the Hackney Navigation or Hackney Cut gave it a role as part of late 18th century transport infrastructure. But the river had other roles: as a source of power, as a means of waste disposal for effluent and as a source of drinking water.

The Conservation Area includes a core of buildings, mainly from the 19th century, which grew up around the river crossing and reflect some of its historic uses. This core of buildings forms a distinctive Lea Bridge Character Area, secluded and detached from the streets of late Victorian housing to the north and west. The character is that of a small, riverside

hamlet and many of the buildings that survive add positively to the area's special character and interest, as does the historic street pattern, street surfaces and mature trees. This area reflects the river as an industrial area, with "vile trades" such as carbonic acid gas works concentrated in the more remote location and using the river both as a source of water and to dispose of effluent. The listed former schoolhouse (Testi and Sons Millwrights) reflects the need to educate the young of this industrial and canal-based community.

To the north and south of the historic core of buildings, the Millfields Character Area comprises expansive areas of common land, which were historically used as farmland and millfields. These former flood plains of the river are open and green in character with numerous, well established mature trees, which provide areas for recreation and playspace as well as acting as a green buffer.

To the east of the historic core, on the eastern bank of the River Lea, the Filter Beds Character Area shows the river as source of both power and drinking water. The filter beds formerly featured numerous watermills and the complex flow of the river at this point may continue to reflect this. The Middlesex Filter Beds are a surviving remnant of the expansive East London Waterworks which once occupied large areas to the east and west of the River Lea, including parts of what is today the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The Filter Beds are now a nature reserve and have a peaceful and secluded character. The discernable raised pattern of Filter Beds survives along with some of the Victorian ironwork associated with the former use.

The activities and uses within the conservation area reflect the traditional riverside uses evident along the River Lea, including former industrial buildings and a popular public house. The area immediately surrounding the historic core of the conservation area retains its open, green landscape character, which is an important part of its special interest.



This Appraisal defines the characteristics that make the conservation area special, including its wider context, historic development, townscape, streetscape and architectural character. It also describes the Conservation Area's current condition.



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Map 3. Aerial photograph of Lea Bridge Conservation Area and surrounding area

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 Location and Setting

The Lea Bridge Conservation Area is located in the north east of the borough on the border with the London Borough of Waltham Forest. It is bisected by Lea Bridge Road, which is one of the key historic routes between London and Essex. The eastern boundary of the Borough is formed by the River Lea, which meanders in a south-easterly direction from Tottenham down to the Thames at Canning Town.

To the north and west of the conservation area are the predominantly late Victorian terraced streets of the Clapton neighbourhood. To the south is the Kings Park Estate, which comprises predominantly post war residential housing and to the east are areas of open space and industrial land located within LB Waltham Forest.

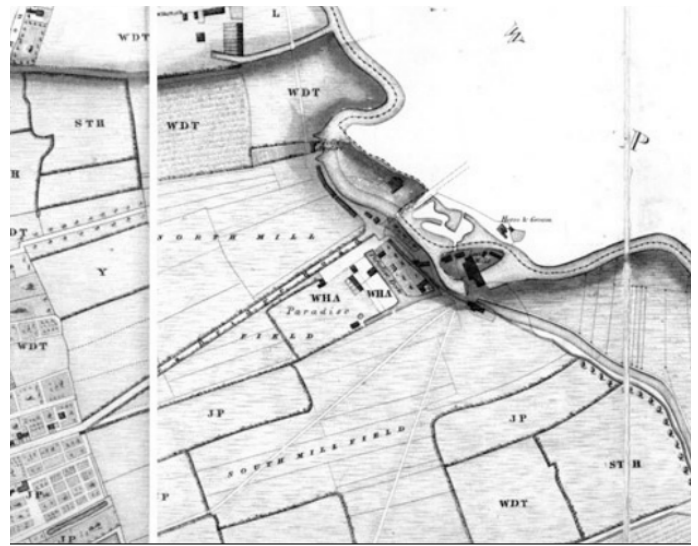
The whole of the conservation area forms part of the Lee Valley Regional Park, whilst the Millfields Commons to the north and south of Lea Bridge Road are designated Metropolitan Open Land. The Middlesex Filter Beds are also a designated Nature Reserve.

2.2 Historic Development

The River Lea is one of London's oldest waterways. The Danes sailed up the river in the late 9th century to attack Hertford, and since the early 13th century it was used regularly for the transportation of goods into and out of the capital.

From the Medieval period onwards, the River Lea was used as a source of power by a number of mills along its banks. In certain areas this led to a reduction in the navigable width of the river, causing friction between the millers and the bargemen. During this period, the marshes either side of the river were known as Llammas land. These were large areas of common land that the landowners could cultivate from 6th April to 12th August each year, whilst for the rest of the year, commoners were allowed to graze their cattle on them.

Navigation along the River Lea was continually improved; many of the improvements being sanctioned by Acts of Parliament and funded through tolls. Improvements to the River took the form of dredging, removing obstacles from the waterway, and cutting new channels and locks. Flood relief channels were also constructed. Industries and communities along the river also



Map.4 Map of 1831

used it as a source of water, again leading to friction with bargemen as water levels were often reduced. Warehouses and wharves were built on the banks of the river, although in many areas it retained its open rural character.

The first bridge at Lea Bridge was constructed of timber in 1757, replacing a ferry crossing known as Jeremy's Ferry. A second bridge was constructed in 1820, but was itself replaced in 1892. By the 1830s Paradise Dock (later known as Lea Bridge Dock) had been cut out and a more coherent cluster of development had been constructed along its sides. Throughout the 19th century this was supplemented by further residential, commercial and industrial development.

From the 1850s onwards, the East London Waterworks were constructed to the east of the River Lea to bring fresh water to London's growing population. The waterworks included large filter



Fig.2.1 Lea Bridge Mill c. 1850

beds to purify the water following several cholera outbreaks in the preceding years. In the later part of the 19th century, residential streets were developed around the Millfields to the west of the River Lea. The Millfields were common land, which could not be developed, allowing the historic core of development at Lea Bridge to remain as a distinct group.

Along with wharves and waterworks, a number of service industries, such as boatyards, sprang up along the banks of the River Lea. The River was also used for recreational purposes, with rowing and boating clubs being based along its entire length. Regattas were organised during the summer months, and the riverside became a popular location for public houses and inns: serving both those who worked on the River and those using it for leisure pursuits. Housing was also built, for those working on and alongside the river.

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An auction catalogue and plan from 1902 lists a variety of lots for sale at Lea Bridge: a glass factory, boat builders (with dressing rooms and club rooms), a carbonic acid gas factory, an India rubber works, and cottages, as well as the Ship Aground Beer



Fig 2.4 Barges on the River Lea just south of the Princess of Wales PH, c. 1900.

House. The area around Lea Bridge reflects the many uses of the River Lea. In 1935 a furniture works was constructed to the rear of the carbonic acid works to Otley Terrace. Drawings from this period indicate that the Lea Bridge Dock was still in use.

Improvements to the River Lea continued until as recently as the 1930s, and even as recently as 1962 the River was used regularly for the transportation of goods, such as timber and coal. There are few remaining timber yards on the banks of the river, and any that remain are now supplied by road transport.



Fig 2.2 The East London Waterworks

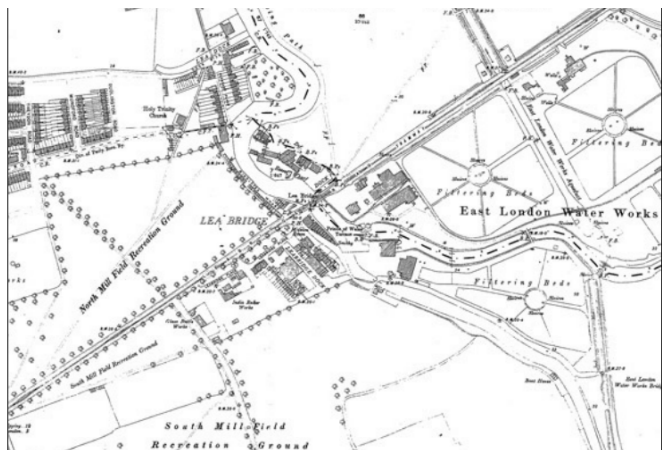


Fig 2.3 Map of 1894

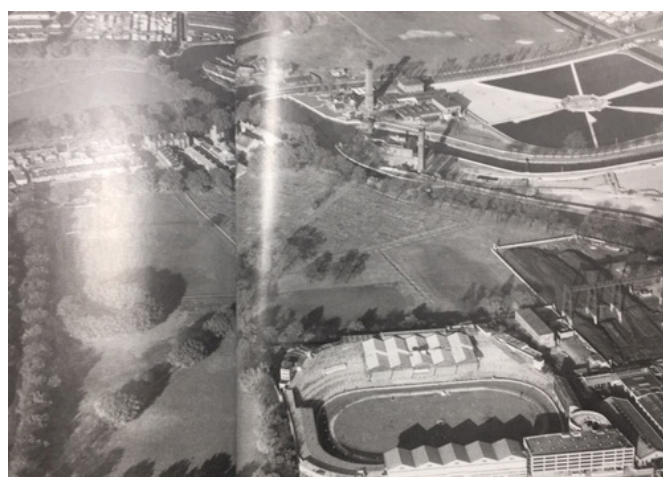
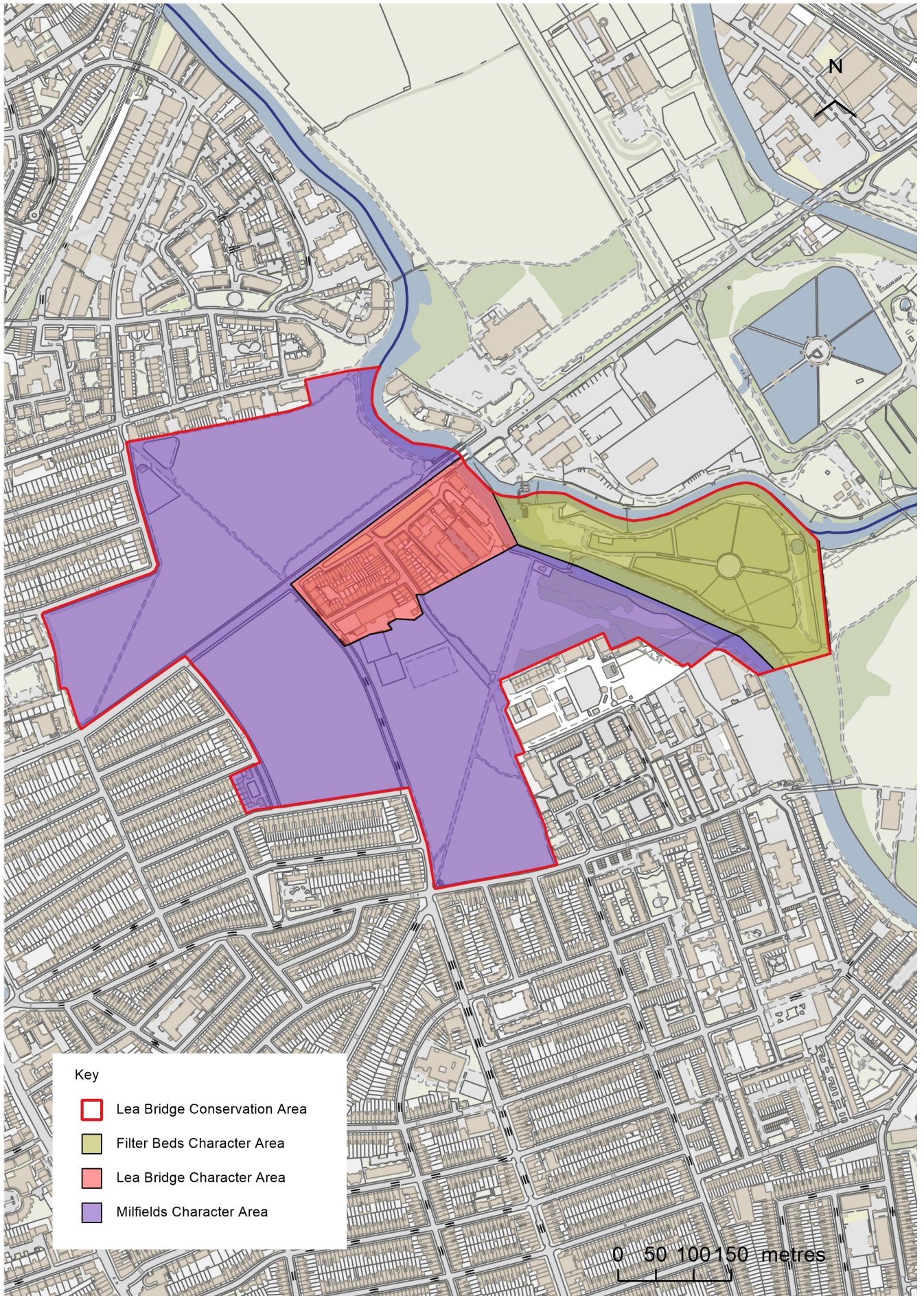


Fig 2.5 Aerial view of Lea Bridge circa 1949



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Map 4. Lea Bridge Conservation Area and Character Areas

3.0 LEA BRIDGE CHARACTER AREA

3.1 General Description

This character area is focused on the historic core of development that grew up next to a key crossing on the River Lea. It contains an interesting group of buildings mainly dating from the 19th century, which reflect the historic uses of the banks of the river. These include a listed former school house, two pubs (one no longer in use), the buildings of a former carbonic factory, and Russell Terrace, a late 19th century apartment block. The character area forms an ‘island’ of development alongside the Lea, surrounded by the former common of Millfields.

Also of significance is the line of the former Lea Bridge/Paradise Dock. This is still evident in the open space between the industrial buildings, although it is not known whether the canal lining remains below the surface. This open space and the associated building lines which reflect the line of the former Dock are an important feature of the Lea Bridge Character Area.



Fig 3.1 View of Lea Bridge Character Area



Fig 3.2 1895 map of Lea Bridge and Paradise Dock

3.2 Plan Form and Streetscape

The buildings within this character area form a distinctive and coherent piece of townscape. It is a compact form of settlement and the industrial nature of many of the buildings is softened by the surrounding landscape, with its open green spaces and mature trees. This is especially evident in views into and out of the character area.

The buildings to Lea Bridge Road form a coherent frontage and are largely set back from this busy arterial route. The buildings fronting Lea Bridge Road are seen behind groups of mature trees. This is also true of the buildings within the character area when viewed from the River Lea. Many of the streets within the character area are of smaller scale, including domestic terraces and low industrial buildings. A number of streets and open spaces retain their original cobbled surfaces as well as historic boundary markers, along with other street furniture, such as the postbox to the end of Hillstowe Street. It is important that these are retained in the future.

3.3 Positive Buildings

This character area contains a number of buildings that positively contribute to the conservation area’s overall character and appearance.

The following buildings are considered to be positive contributors:

The Princess of Wales Public House, Lea Bridge Road

The Princess of Wales Public House is a prominent building in views along Lea Bridge Road and along the River Lea. The current building dates from 1920 when the Princess of Wales Public House was rebuilt. It is a well detailed building in the Queen Anne revival and Arts and Crafts manners, which retains many of its original features, and remains in use as a pub.



Fig 3.3 The Princess of Wales PH

The former Ship Aground Public House, Lea Bridge Road

Like the adjacent Princess of Wales Public House, The Ship Aground is a well detailed late 19th century public house, although no longer in use as a pub. It is stucco fronted with its roof hidden behind a parapet. It too retains many of its original features, although it no longer remains in use as a pub. Being set back from the main road, it is less prominent than the Princess of Wales.



Fig 3.4 An historic image of the Ship Aground PH

Former Carbonic Gas Works, 142 Lea Bridge Road

This complex of industrial buildings was formerly used as a carbonic acid gas works, and subsequently used as a furniture works. Given its location on the former Lea Bridge Dock and the presence of glass bottle works on adjacent sites, it is likely that the works was used to create carbonated drinks. Dr Joseph Priestly, the creator of the first drinkable, manmade glass of carbonated water in 1767, was resident in Hackney from 1792 - 94, although a link with this building has not been

proven. A plaque marks the site of Dr Priestly's residence, now occupied by 113 Lower Clapton Road (outside of the conservation area). The former carbonic acid gas works comprises a front office block and a rear range of works buildings, along with two, prominent well detailed chimneys. The front block appears to have been constructed as offices for the complex. It is a well-detailed brick building of three storeys plus mansard roof. It has a main entrance to Lea Bridge Road and an ornate brick side entrance leading into the open yard. The yard between the office block and the range of rear works buildings has a cobbled surface and contains significant traces of inset iron rails for trolleys, used to move goods around the works, and presumably to load and unload goods from the adjacent Lea Bridge Dock.

The rear block is an important survival of the industrial heritage of the River Lea. It has an ornate gable facing Lea Bridge Road, with terracotta detailing, and a handsome chimney. To the rear, running along Otley Terrace, the complex has a taller element, which presumably housed machinery or tanks for liquid. The whole rear complex has well detailed, original wrought and cast iron windows. To the rear of the 19th century complex is a group of lower industrial buildings, which were constructed 1935, for use as a furniture works.



Fig 3.5 The distinctive chimney and gable of the former Carbonic works.



Fig 3.6 Contemporary view of Russell Terrace

Russell Terrace, 132-140 Lea Bridge Road

This row of late 19th century houses is similar in style to the block to the front of former carbonic acid works to the east, with which it forms a coherent group. It is a well detailed, unified, brick terrace of three storeys, which retains its original sashes and many of its original features.

146A Lea Bridge Road/ 1 Waterworks Lane

This former schoolhouse, thought to date from 1860, has been attributed to E C Hakewill (1816-1872) (the architect of the Church of Saint James the Great, Lower Clapton Road 1840-41). There appears to be much better evidence that the building's architect was Arthur Ashpitel (1807-1869) FSA, FRIBA (and Vice-President of the RIBA in 1862).

The building dates from after 1855 and before 1868, when it appears on the Ordnance Survey map as "Infants' School". A likely date of construction is 1860. It appears on the 1894 and 1913 Ordnance Survey Maps as "Mission Room". Victorian polite society regarded canal workers as a problem group. The adults frequented the pub rather than the church and the children were unlikely to be educated outside the barge. The likely narrative is that this school was church run and aimed at canal worker's children and that it fulfilled this function for a relatively short period from 1860 to after 1870. From that date, church schools suffered direct

competition with the new state schools built by the School Board for London under Forster's Education Act of 1870. At the same time, the canal industry was in decline due to competition from railways and were perceived as quaint and old-fashioned by the 1920s. The church appears to have retained the building and used it as a Mission Room (church hall and Sunday School) from about 1890 to 1920.

In 1920 the building was sold to the large adjacent Eclipse Glass Works and went into industrial use. By 1960 it was in use by the Maintenance and Co. Ltd metal window manufacturers and Testi and Sons Ltd Mechanical Engineers (Millwrights) and by 1975 was in use by Testi and Sons, Millwrights alone. This last known use appears to have ended by 2007 at the latest. The building has been empty for some years and is in poor condition (on the Heritage at Risk Register). At the time of writing (November 2019) it is being restored for use as a Vietnamese Buddhist Temple.

The building is now hard to read, because it is approached from the road, whereas it would originally have been oriented more towards the south and east. The building appears to have had two entrances: a combined children's and schoolmaster's entrance to the south (perhaps for girls) and another entrance to the west (perhaps for boys). The building is in the Tudor Gothic style and is built mainly of Kentish ragstone, laid to courses, with limestone dressings (corner, quoins, hoodmoulds etc). There are two main elements: the schoolroom and the schoolmaster's house. The schoolroom is the main volume and is expressed externally as a lower red clay tile pitched roof with a single hexagonal chimney to the south and three windows on the east and west sides with Tudor hoodmoulds, the walls retained by simple buttresses. There is a further trefoil high level window to the north and, although the current north doors post-date 1975, the Tudor arched opening on that formed the window head. Internally, the schoolroom is a single storey room, featuring three arched Queen post trusses and exposed purlins in dark stained timber, a baronial style fireplace (the chimney piece is lost) and two doorways. The Tudor doorway to the south east leads to a passage which formed the original children's entrance and coats area. The square headed doorway to the south west is later in date and leads into the schoolmaster's house. Another Tudor doorway to the west leads to the entrance on that side.

The schoolmaster's house is expressed externally by a higher pitched red clay tile roof with a stone bellcote to the east (without a bell) and a four pot conjoined octagonal chimney stack to the west. There is an entrance to the west under a Gothic hoodmould. Windows are generally in Tudor style, with hoodmoulds and stone transoms and mullions. The accommodation comprised a kitchen and living room at ground floor with (now removed) chimney breasts and fireplaces.

The area to the north was presumably a playground and continues to be at least partially bounded by a Kentish ragstone dwarf wall which was once topped with cast iron railings.

Terraces in Legrave Road

These buildings date from the early 20th century and would have provided housing for many of the workers in the nearby riverside industries.



Fig 3.6 Terraces in Legrave Roadw

3.4 Neutral Buildings

These buildings neither contribute nor actively detract from the conservation area's special character. In principle, the loss of these buildings would not be resisted, provided the proposed replacement buildings adhere to the objectives of relevant planning policy and are of a high quality of design commensurate with the conservations area's special character.

The Paradise Dock development is considered to contain buildings that have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.5 Negative Buildings

These buildings detract away from the area's special character. In principle, the redevelopment of these sites would be encouraged, provided proposals for their replacement are of a high quality architectural design and make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The following buildings are considered to have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area:

- Depot in Legrave Street
- Newsagent at 142 Lea Bridge Road

3.6 Landscape and Trees

The most significant groups of trees lie along the Lea Bridge Road frontage and the river banks. The open, green spaces which form the setting of the Lea Bridge Character Area are important in views into and out of it, as are the grassed verges fronting Lea Bridge Road. Within the Character Area, open spaces are characterised by more hard landscapes of a more industrial character.

3.7 Views and Focal Points

The Princess of Wales Public House is a prominent building within the Lea Bridge Character Area, both in views along Lea Bridge Road (from the east and west) and along the River Lea. Both the Lea Bridge Road frontage and the river banks contain important groups of trees, which are prominent in views into and out of the Character Area. The chimneys and distinctive gable to the former carbonic acid gas works are important features within views around the Character Area. The low scale of development within the Character Area is especially evident in views along the small streets and across the open landscape areas surrounding the Lea Bridge Character Area.

4.0 MILLFIELDS CHARACTER AREA

4.1 General Description

This character area comprises several historic green spaces that surround the core of buildings in the flood plain of the River Lea. This common land, now formally designated as Metropolitan Open Land includes the open green spaces immediately south of the conservation area, Millfields Cricket Pitch to the west and Millfields Park to the north. These spaces lend the conservation area an open character and contain numerous mature trees.



Fig 4.1 View of Millfields Character Area

4.2 The Millfields

Mills have been recorded on the banks of the River Lea since at least the early medieval period, powered by the numerous river channels. The presence of these earlier mills are reflected by place names such as Millfields Park located on an area of former Lammas land known as Mill Field and named after the famous corn mill built on the River Lea in the late 14th-century. A second mill was built in this area in the 15th century, at which time the names north Mill Field and South Mill Field came into use. During this early period, the millfields were used as Lammas land. The word 'Lammas' derives from 'loaf mass', which describes the first fruits at the start of harvest. Lammas land was common land between Lammas Day (12th August) and Lady Day (6th April). Common rights had first been granted locally by King Alfred in 895 and all of the marshes within the River Lea valley had this title. All residents could graze their cattle and horses between Lammas Day and Lady Day. In the intervening period, hay was grown on strips of land belonging to different freeholders, which could be used to feed animals in winter.

As the area became more urban, Lammas land was used more for recreation and sport and a 1904 Act of Parliament formally recognised this change. These areas of common land later became designated as Metropolitan Open Land and development, other than that which is ancillary to the use as open space is restricted.



Fig 4.2 View of Millfields Recreation Ground

4.3 Positive Contributors

Disabled Soldiers & Sailors Foundation, Watisfield Road

The foundation was formed after the First World War by G.F.J Macleod, formerly manager of the Hackney Empire and Sir Louis Stanley Johnson MP JP to provide homes for married men who had been enlisted in any of the fighting forces and then disabled. The remit was later extended to help other disabled public service personnel.

The dwellings are arranged symmetrically in a typical C plan, reminiscent of historic almshouse, around a central communal open space. The buildings are in a plain but attractive later expression of the Arts & Crafts style. Each cottage has its own name, noted in attractive bronze plaques, which appear to reflect contributors to the Foundation. The building was designed by Gunton and Gunton Architects, who also designed the nearby Millfields Disinfecting Station. The buildings are also of interest because they are in themselves a War Memorial. They also form an early example of specialised housing for the disabled.



Fig 4.3 Front view of former Disabled Sailors & Soldiers Home, Wattisfield Road



Fig 4.5 Railings on southern boundary of North Millfields

Other Positive Contributors

The Caretaker's Lodge adjacent to the River Lea dates from the early 20th century and is considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The following are also considered to be interesting features that make a positive contribution to the conservation area:

- Boundary Marker outside Caretaker's Lodge
- Railings to west side of North Millfields Common



Fig 4.4 Boundary Marker adjacent to Caretaker's Lodge

4.4 Landscape and Trees

This character area contains expansive area of green spaces, which are designated Metropolitan Open Land. It also contains numerous mature trees along the edges of the commons and also within the green spaces.

4.5 Important Views

The following views have been identified as making an important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area:

Views across the common to the historic core of Lea Bridge Character Area

5.0 FILTER BEDS CHARACTER AREA

5.1 General Description

This character area comprises the Victorian filter beds of the former East London Waterworks, which once occupied a vast area on the banks of the River Lea. The Filter Beds remain in their original plan form and are now a haven for nature and wildlife.



Fig 5.1 Contemporary Photo of the Filter Beds Character Area.

5.2 The East London Waterworks

The very first waterworks in this area were built by Francis Tyssen II in about 1707 just north of Lea Bridge at Jeremy's Ferry'. A waterwheel brought the water out of the river and pumped it along wooden pipes to a reservoir at Clapton. From there, water was distributed to the people. This method was very basic and eventually fell into disrepair. Local people had to go back to carrying water from the river or collecting it from pumps and rain butts. In 1760, the Hackney Water Works Company moved down the river to this site and set up new waterworks to supply local people.

In 1829 the site was bought by the East London



Fig 5.2 Views of the East London Waterworks today

Waterworks Company. All the water at this time was untreated and because of this disease quickly spread. In 1849, 14,900 people in east London died from Cholera. People demanded cleaner, safer water and so in 1852 the East London Waterworks Company began constructing the six Middlesex Filter Beds to purify the water. By 1882, there were 25 filter beds in the Essex and Middlesex Water Works. These were later replaced by the Coppermill Water Treatment Works.

The Filter Beds were designed to clean the water from the River Lea using a filter of sand and gravel. This prevented the spread of diseases such as Cholera and made the water safe to drink. The water was taken out further upriver at Walthamstow, where it was cleaner. It was then stored in reservoirs. An aqueduct carried the water from the reservoirs to the Filter Beds and the water passed through pipes under the River Lea to the Middlesex Filter Beds. Through a network of channels in the lower gravel water trickled uniformly over the whole of the filter bed. The purified water then flowed through the perforated concrete base of the beds and along channels to the central culvert. Finally, the Victoria Pump house drew the purified water from the central reservoir and pumped it throughout North East London.



Fig 5.3 Views of the East London Waterworks today



Fig 5.4 The Middlesex Filter Beds today

5.3 Positive Contributors

The buildings associated with the former waterworks were demolished a number of years ago. However, the historic form of the Filter Beds remains, as does a number of remnants of former machinery. These features are considered to contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.4 Landscape and Trees

This character area is now a designated nature reserve and contains well established vegetation, which provides a home for a variety of wildlife.

5.5 Important Views

Views along the main axial routes are particularly important as they provide a sense of the original filter beds.

6.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

6.1 Development Guidelines

This section includes area specific principles that respond to the particular challenges and opportunities for proposed development in the Lea Bridge Conservation Area.

All development proposals should preserve or enhance the conservation area's character and appearance and conform to local policies.

For advice on whether planning permission is required for works please contact the Council.

6.2 Demolition

Planning permission from the Council is required for the demolition of buildings larger than 115 cubic metres within the conservation area.

The Council will resist demolition of all buildings that make a positive contribution to the special character of the Lea Bridge Conservation Area. Demolition of buildings identified in this document as making a neutral contribution to, or detracting from, the conservation area's special character will only be supported where there are acceptable plans for the site following demolition.

6.3 New Development

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

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

6.4 Development Affecting the Setting of Lea Bridge Conservation Area

All proposed development in close proximity to the Lea Bridge Conservation Area should seek to preserve and enhance its setting.

All development proposals affecting the setting of the conservation area will be assessed against the Historic England guidance document 'The Setting of Heritage Assets.'

6.5 Extensions

Front extensions of street facing buildings will not be permitted due to the resultant disruption to the appearance of buildings and the character of the Conservation Area.

Roof extensions that are visible from the street will generally be resisted, due to the disruption in the overall proportions and character of buildings and the resultant dominant massing.

Side extensions to buildings will generally not be permitted because they would reduce the spacing between buildings which is a key feature of the character area's layout and enables views in-between buildings.

There may be some scope for rear extensions to properties, subject to their subservience to the main building. The Hackney Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD should be consulted for further detail information.

It is recognised that there have been some unsympathetic roof and side extensions to buildings in the Conservation Area that occurred prior to its designation. These extensions should not be used as a precedent for further inappropriate extensions.

All proposed extensions should be of a high quality design and materials to complement the area's historic character. Proposed extensions should not disrupt the balance and appearance of distinctive groupings of buildings.

6.6 Architectural Features

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

6.7 Cladding, Rendering or Painting of Walls

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

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

6.8 Extraneous Fixtures

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

6.9 Design Guidelines

The Council's 2009 Residential Extensions & Alterations Supplementary Planning Document gives general guidance on extensions and alterations, which is relevant for properties across the borough. However, to ensure the special character of the Conservation Area is not adversely affected by incremental alterations, the following types of development will generally be resisted by the Council.

- Painting/rendering of unpainted brickwork
- Installation of non-traditional window types/materials (upvc/metal)
- Installation of satellite dishes on street facing elevations
- Installation of window bars or door gates
- Installation of decking or railings to front boundaries

The Council's Shopfront Design Guide provides general guidance for traditional shopfront styles and is particularly relevant for Conservation Areas. The guidance advocates traditional, well-proportioned timber shop-

fronts with stall risers, integrated fascias and external lighting.

Both documents can be found on the Council's website, www.hackney.gov.uk

6.10 Enhancement Proposals

Property owners are encouraged to undertake minor works that will improve the condition and appearance of their properties, which will have a wider positive impact on the conservation area as a whole. Much enhancement of buildings and the wider area does not require planning permission; please contact the Council for further advice. The Council welcomes and supports enhancement schemes proposed by property owners or the local community.

The following are suggested proposals for enhancement of the conservation area:

- Building Repairs
- Highways Improvements
- Public Realm & Traffic Management Improvements
- Street Furniture
- Trees
- Open Space Improvements
- Listings and Local Listings
- Co-ordinate proposals with LBWF

