

Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2043





Foreword

Our neighbourhood reflects the essential, eclectic essence of Notting Hill. We have a buzzing street scene around our shops and restaurants and an ever-expanding group of food purveyors, yet our residential streets are quiet and leafy. The housing stock is handsome and varied but sadly the public realm lags dramatically.

Our Neighbourhood Plan is a product of years of consultations with the community and gives all of us an opportunity to tailor the future of our area and realise its unique potential. The Plan attempts to capture the essential qualities of our area and enhance them by providing clear, detailed guidance to ensure planning decisions are understandable, consistent, and fair. It contains policies to guide development towards better outcomes and projects to improve our public realm for the benefit of all.

This Plan will provide a 20-year framework that will shape our buildings, preserve our amenity, and address the looming climate crisis, and has been a collaborative exercise, undertaken by those who live and work here in consultation with the local community.

Penny Bagnall-Smith
Chair

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What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

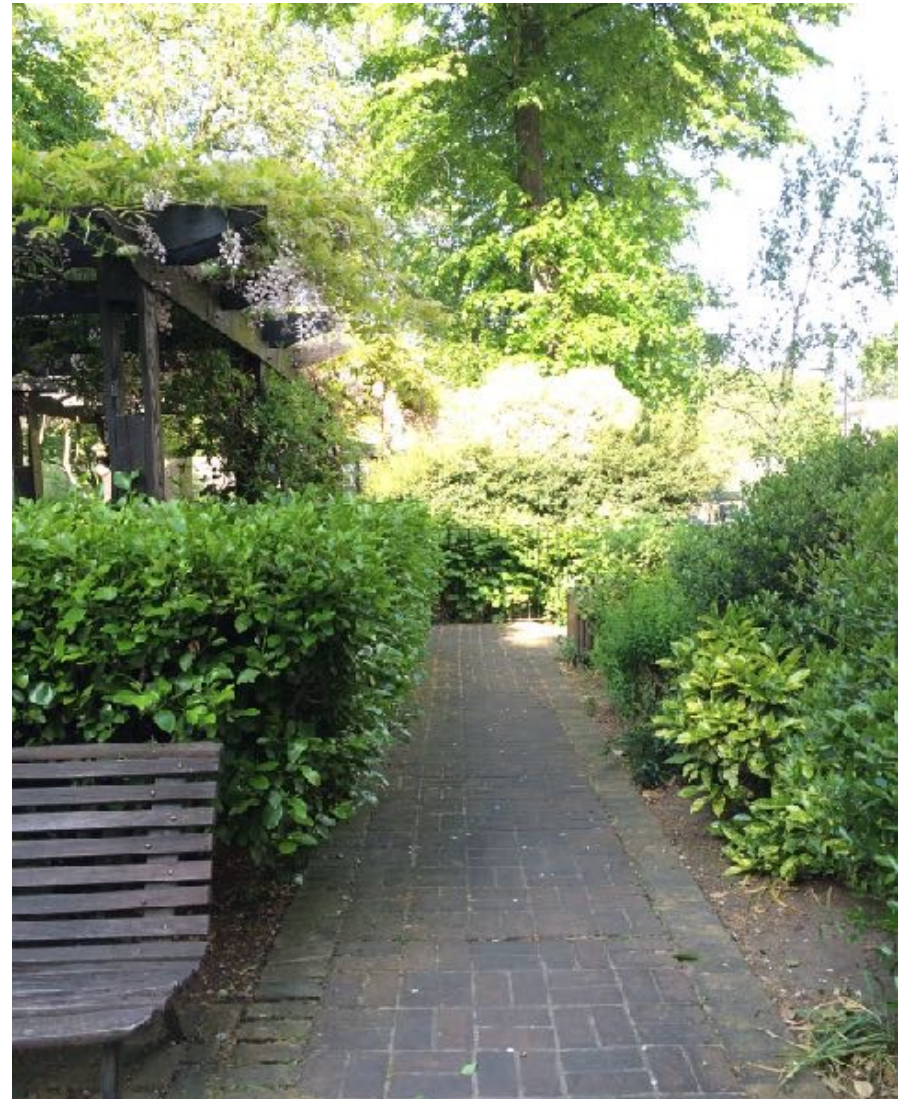
All neighbourhoods are subject to local and national planning policies and regulations. Most of us only become aware of these when seeking permission to do something (e.g. renovate a property, organise an event, or start a business). A Neighbourhood Plan gives local residents and businesses the opportunity to introduce new policies and set priorities for their local area.

How are they created?

A Neighbourhood Plan starts and ends by asking the local community what they want. By law, a Plan must come from consultation with this community and must be supported by them in a final vote. Over the past 5 years, our residents and businesses have contributed their ideas and responded to consultations and surveys. Our first draft Plan was published in 2018, and this second draft with further refinements is now ready for review. It's still not too late to have your say. The plan will only work if it has the support of community, so please share your views with us.

How will this make our area better and what can I do?

Our plan introduces policies to provide multiple benefits, both personal and public. It will allow additional high quality space for residents, inside and out, and address climate change by supporting more energy efficient buildings. It will conserve and restore the historic architectural features on the fronts of our buildings, and promote greater freedom at the back to encourage more interesting architectural solutions better able to meet the needs of users. It will provide guidance for better street lighting and more attractive storefronts. And it will maintain the leafy and garden-rich quality of our area by adding trees, protecting garden spaces and improving public parks.



How will it work?

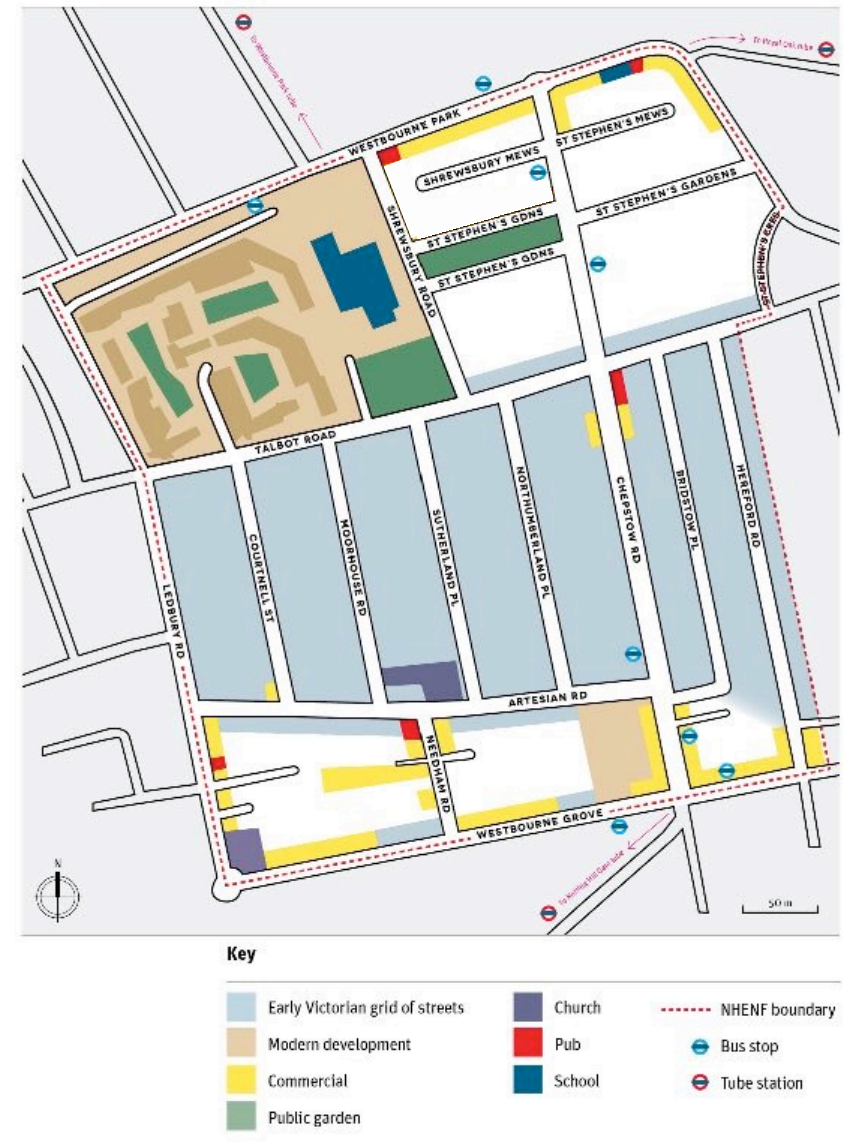
The Neighbourhood Forum has taken the ideas and comments from our consultations and surveys, refined them, and created a set of policies and their justifications which if adopted, will become our planning guidance and controls for the next 20 years. While policies must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the London Plan and the 2019-2040 Westminster City Plan, we can include new policies, or add detail to existing policies to make them more relevant for our area. Anyone submitting planning applications here must comply with these policies.

In addition, the Plan identifies Public Realm improvement projects to be prioritised when funds such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money becomes available. The Forum has also included some helpful information and additional detail in non-policy guidance, which if followed, would improve development and enrich the area.

Area covered by the Plan

The boundaries of the Forum area are Hereford Road to the east, Westbourne Grove to the south, Westbourne Park Road to the north and Ledbury Road to the west. Largely within the route of the Notting Hill Carnival, it is a mixed residential area of approximately 450 m. x 400 m. square on the western edge of the City of Westminster and bordering the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. There are approximately 4500 residents (2011 Census) in about 2000 households - at last count there were approximately 330 houses and 1670 flats, all within some 615 buildings. There are shops and food outlets, mainly on perimeter streets, but there are also clusters of independent businesses on Chepstow Rd. with others sprinkled along Artesian and Needham Roads. Apart from Wessex Gardens estate, Shrewsbury Gardens park, St. Mary of the Angels primary school and a Children's Centre which are in the Westbourne Ward, the remainder of the neighbourhood is within the Bayswater Ward and is the western half of the Westbourne Conservation Area.

Diagram 1: Land use in Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum area



Our Objectives

Our overall aim is to protect our architectural integrity, prevent overdevelopment and maintain the green, leafy nature of our area, while also removing any barriers that might stifle innovation or interfere with us addressing climate challenges. To achieve these aims, our **policies** and **projects** would:

Protect residential amenity and our natural environment:

1. Conserve and improve our public garden spaces so that they remain attractive and safe places for social interaction and community events.
2. Maintain and add to our garden rich surroundings for both aesthetic and environmental reasons.
3. Ensure the local tree policy for publicly and privately owned trees will promote species diversification and residential amenity.

Restore our heritage and ensure good design on our buildings:

4. Protect and restore the historic features on our street facing elevations and encourage the reinstatement of lost features.
5. Ensure that changes to our buildings are environmentally sustainable and respect the amenity of neighbours.
6. Help planning applications to be more successful and planning decisions to be more consistent and comprehensible by providing clear guidance with adequate information.
7. Address climate challenges when making changes to buildings.

Improve our public realm and strengthen our community:

8. De-clutter our streets by providing better design solutions for information and ensuring that street furniture is of the highest quality.
9. Eliminate street litter, including dog litter by encouraging adequate bins and appropriate locations and management of those bins.
10. Make streets more user-friendly and efficient for all road users by adjusting their configuration and reducing vehicle speed.
11. Reduce harmful air, light and noise pollution.
12. Foster and enhance the sense of community by building on the momentum and participation that our plan preparation has generated amongst our residents.
13. Promote and support our small businesses by encouraging more attractive storefronts, resisting harmful changes of use, and exploring a brand identity for the neighbourhood.
14. Continue to add to our tree inventory and enhance our green spaces to provide a healthy and beautiful public realm for our community to enjoy together.

Summary of the Policy Proposals

The following proposals emerged from the consultation process

NHE1 - Public Gardens and Open Spaces

proposal to designate Shrewsbury Gardens and parts of Wessex Gardens as Green Spaces to preserve them as gardens and hopefully attract investment from community funds

NHE2 - Trees and Arboricultural Policy

tree planting policies that encourage the right tree for the right location across public and private land.

NHE3 - Rooftop terraces, greening, structures and supporting privacy

support for planted roofs, roof terraces, and screened balconies that balance a need for green space with neighbour privacy.

NHE4 - Glass, roof lights and light pollution

practical proposals to limit light pollution where possible

NHE5 - Our Gardens

proposals to protect front gardens being completely paved over or rear gardens from being raised or lowered. The ambition is to preserve our neighbourhood's garden heritage for generations to come.

NHE6 - Restoration of Architectural Detail

proposal that encourages reinstatement of missing architectural details on building fronts during building projects.

NHE7 - Energy Conservation and Generation

support for double glazing, solar panels, alternative energy, and innovation that helps achieve climate goals

NHE8 - Underground Development

guidelines for underground development to enable consistent planning decisions while ensuring deep garden planting spaces remain

NHE9 - Roof Extensions and Mansards

support for mansard roof extensions, but promotion of lighter construction materials and more energy efficient designs.

NHE 10 - Backs of buildings & our green valleys

support for innovation in rear extension design, but with limits on depth, width, and height to preserve gardens and prevent overshadowing of neighbours.

NHE11 - Signage, Shopfronts and Commercial Areas

proposals aimed at unifying the design of shop and storefronts to create a neighbourhood style and preventing change of use to residential

Summary of the Project Proposals

The following proposals emerged from the consultation process

PR1 - Fiveways

Enhance Fiveways through pavement, traffic and crossing changes

PR2 - St. Stephen's Gardens

improve St. Stephen's Gardens by reconfiguring pergola and adding seating and game tables

PR3 - Needham Road

rearrange pavements and plantings at Needham and Artesian Roads.

PR4 - The Interior Streets

slow traffic on the interior streets through pavement changes and allow play streets

PR5 - Wessex Gardens

create more visible and pedestrian friendly entrances at Wessex Gardens

PR6 - Pedestrian Crossings

add pedestrian crossings across Talbot Road, Ledbury Road and Westbourne Park Road

PR7 - Air Quality Monitoring

install air quality monitoring devices

PR8- Street Lamp Replacement

replace street lamps with lower heritage designs for less light pollution

PR9 - Business Support and Branding

create a brand identity for our area and our businesses to help support them

PR10 - Drinking Fountain

host a competition to design a NHENF drinking fountain and raise funds for its instalment

PR11 - Public Art

add some public art in visible locations in our area

PR12 - Additional Street Trees

plant additional street trees in locations identified where possible

PR13 - Notting Hill East Design Guide

create a local design guide for our streets

	OBJECTIVES	POLICIES	PROJECTS	ACTION / SUPPORT
1	Conserve and improve our public garden spaces so that they remain attractive and safe places for social interaction and community events.	NHE1 Public Gardens and Open Spaces	PR10 Drinking Fountains, PR11 Public Art	NHENF WCC Parks
2	Maintain and add to our garden rich surroundings for both aesthetic and environmental reasons.	NHE1 Public Gardens, NHE2 Trees, NHE3 Green roofs, NHE5 Our Gardens, NHE8 Underground Development, NHE10 Back extensions		NHENF WCC Parks WCC Trees
3	Ensure the local tree policy applied to publicly and privately owned trees will ensure species diversification and residential amenity.	NHE2 Trees and Arboricultural Policy		WCC Trees
4	Protect and restore the historic features on the street facing elevations of our buildings and encourage the reinstatement of lost features.	NHE6 Restoration of Architectural Detail, NHE9 Roof Extensions and Mansards	PR13 Design Guide	NHENF WCC & Community
5	Ensure that changes to our buildings are environmentally sustainable and respect the amenity of neighbours.	NHE3 Rooftop terraces, NHE4 Glass & roof lights NHE7 Energy Conservation, NHE9 Roof extensions, NHE10 Back extensions		NHENF WCC
6	Help planning applications to be more successful and planning decisions to be more consistent and comprehensible by providing clear guidance with adequate information.	All policies.		NHENF WCC
7	Address climate challenges when making changes to buildings.	All policies.		NHENF WCC
8	De-clutter our streets by providing better design solutions for information and ensuring that street furniture is of the highest quality.	NHE11 Signage, Shopfronts & Commercial Locations	PR9 Brand Identity	NHENF, Branding expert
9	Eliminate street litter, including dog litter by encouraging adequate bins and appropriate locations and management of those bins.		PR13 Design Guide	WCC & Community
10	Make streets more user-friendly and efficient for all road users by adjusting their configuration and reducing vehicle speed.		PR3 Needham / Artesian, PR5 Wessex Gardens, PR6 Pedestrian Crosswalks	WCC, TFL, NHENF, RBKC
11	Reduce harmful air, light and noise pollution.	NHE4 Glass, roof lights and light pollution, NHE10 Back extensions	PR8 Street Lamps PR7 Air Quality Monitoring	NHENF WCC & Climate Groups
12	Foster and enhance the sense of community by building on the momentum and participation that our plan preparation has generated amongst our residents.	NHE1 Public Gardens and Open Spaces	PR2 St. Stephen's Gardens, PR4 Play Streets,	NHENF WCC
13	Promote and support our small businesses by encouraging more attractive storefronts, resisting harmful changes of use, and exploring a brand identity for the neighbourhood.	NHE11 Signage, Shopfronts & Commercial Locations	PR1 Fiveways PR9 Brand Identity	NHENF WCC
14	Continue to add to our tree inventory and enhance our green spaces to provide a healthy and beautiful public realm for our community to enjoy together.	NHE2 Trees and Arboricultural Policy	PR3 Needham/ Artesian PR12 Additional Street Trees	NHENF WCC

Consultation Statement

Our consultations:

- 2010 and 2012 -The WNA amenity society does basement surveys and mansard surveys to get residents' views on development in the area. See Appendix A10
- 2014 - Small meetings with residents in the area to develop ideas for the improvement of our Public Realm spaces.
- AGM Spring 2015 - Presentation to the forum which included the feedback we received from prior surveys about development and also a visual presentation of ideas for our public realm. Forum members were enthusiastic about the possibilities.
- May & June 2015 - These public realm ideas were then summarised and presented along with our development control proposals to our local authority.
- April of 2016 - We conducted a survey to determine residents' support for our proposals so that we could develop them appropriately.
- AGM Spring 2016 - We presented the survey results and had a discussion afterwards. Our proposals were overwhelmingly supported by those surveyed.
- Winter of 2016 - We had our residents play a "Planning Game" during which they formed groups, and each group put their ideas for public realm improvements onto large maps of our area, and presented them at the end of the evening to the other groups. See Appendix A6
- AGM Spring 2017 - Presented our Neighbourhood Plan Draft on presentation boards, and gave a slide presentation of its main points.
- April 2018 - Neighbourhood Walk. - We led a neighbourhood walk to show our residents and councillors how and where our proposals would affect the area.
- June 2018 - Regulation 14 Consultation
- Spring 2022 - Survey on specific policy refinements
- Spring 2023 - Two day plan display at the Cock and Bottle



SECTION 1 - RESIDENTIAL AMENITY AND OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Public Gardens and Open Spaces (NHE1)

Introduction

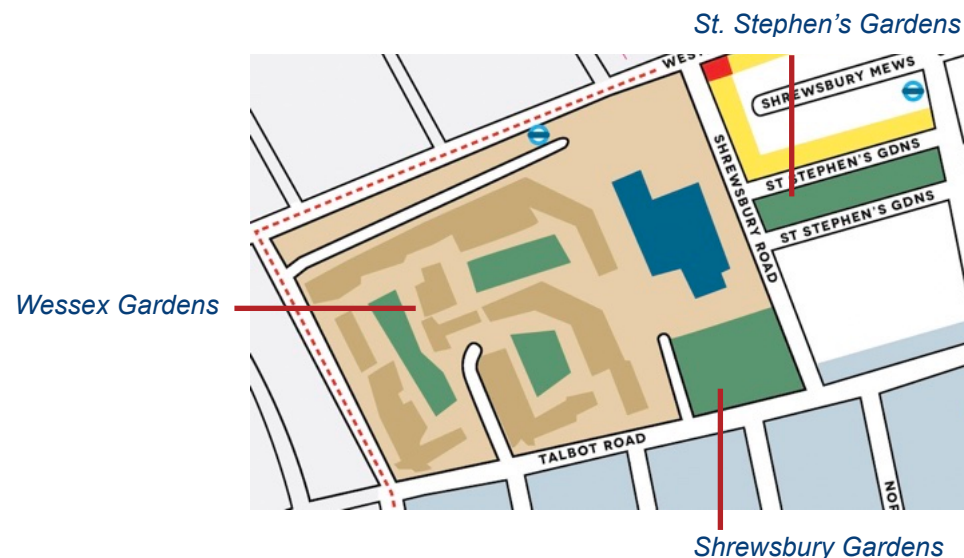
We have two public gardens within our area, St. Stephen's Gardens and Shrewsbury Gardens, along with some open green spaces in and around Wessex Gardens. St. Stephen's and Shrewsbury provide a good balance of amenities, including a children's play area, quiet corners for reading or sunning, table tennis, and a dog friendly space for owners to meet one another. St. Stephen's Gardens is already protected by the London Squares Act. We wish to protect Shrewsbury and Wessex Gardens.

NHE1

- A. Shrewsbury Gardens and the green spaces within Wessex Gardens are to remain green spaces. We wish to designate these as protected Green Spaces. No development in Shrewsbury beyond enhancement as open community spaces will be considered.
- B. Should any redevelopment be planned for Wessex Gardens Estate that might change the configuration of the buildings, the proposal should show that an equivalent or greater amount of green space/ planted area will be included.

Justification

1. To preserve common area green spaces for recreation and social interaction and prevent their removal for future development
2. To protect and/or improve levels of biodiversity.



Trees and arboricultural policy (NHE2)

Introduction

Trees and green infrastructure in general represent crucial parts of the natural environment in urban areas and confer a range of substantial benefits. They convert carbon dioxide to oxygen, filter pollutants, support bird and insect life, slow run-off, thereby reducing flood risk, provide shade in the summer, reducing our need for mechanical cooling, and can even complement the architecture of the area. On the other hand, the wrong tree in the wrong place, or poorly maintained trees can result in costs: subsidence, black sticky honeydew covering our railings, vehicles and pavements, and excessive shading that darkens lower level rooms nearby. Large forest trees can even interrupt the visual harmony of the architecture on our streets.

We have developed the policies below to cumulatively reduce these costs and augment the benefits. These would apply to both private and council owned trees.

NHE2

A. Applications that include new tree planting should show that:

- A.1 The tree(s) proposed will add to the diversity of species within our area.
- A.2 Their size at maturity, and leaf habit are appropriate for the locations proposed.
- A.3 Root damage to adjacent buildings has been considered.
- A.4 The type is not known for troublesome tree litter, e.g., honeydew from certain lime trees, trichomes from plane trees, or unusually dense leaf cover that would significantly cut light to neighbouring properties.
- A.5 Neighbours have been consulted.

B. Applications for the replacement of a private garden tree that has a TPO (tree preservation order) should be considered if it can be shown that it is

damaging the nearby building or surroundings, or declining due to age or disease, provided an acceptable tree species will be planted in its place, and proof of replacement is a condition for sign-off.

C. Applications for a significant reduction in the size of lime and plane trees close to houses in private gardens that have become too large should be supported.

D. A programme of renewal of our ageing street and garden trees should be implemented to ensure the health of our trees and increase the diversification of species in our area to protect from future blights.

E. On streets with architectural significance, trees should complement the scale of the buildings.

Justification

1. Although the backs of houses are composed of individual private spaces in separate ownership, collectively they have the potential to form eco-habitats with ecological implications for wildlife. Sustainable and appropriate planting contributes to the well-being of neighbours, as well as encouraging ecological equilibrium. However, the physical stability of buildings and the amenity of neighbouring gardens can be compromised by inappropriate planting. Unsuitable species can produce unwanted shade for neighbours and the roots of such trees can damage buildings directly, and through soil desiccation, cause subsidence.
2. Estates across London are embarking on tree regeneration programs to ensure adequate diversity to protect from future blights, and are replanting over a period of time to replace ageing trees that have declined. Several of our streets have a cluster of a single species of trees which have grown beyond optimal size for their locations and if lost from a blight, would denude a significant area. These streets should be targeted for renewal and diversification programs to optimise tree cover for the future. We will prepare a comprehensive tree map of our area so that streets without adequate variety can be specifically targeted.
3. Eco diversity reduces the spread of disease, and more flowering trees were a neighbourhood request.



Above, balanced trees that have a complementary scale for the surrounding architecture. At right, ageing and overgrown trees on our streets crowding out newer ones that could contribute to species diversification. At left, unpruned large scale trees with dense leaf cover can darken the rooms of neighbours.



Rooftop terraces, greening, structures and supporting privacy (NHE3)

Introduction

If the 2020 pandemic showed us anything, it is that all residents should have access to good outdoor space. Historically, roof terraces and upper level conservatories existed across London, creating gardens in the sky and green roofs, rather than grey ones to look down on. Today's green roofs help to offset carbon emissions.

We live in a dense area, many of us with only 10 metres between our rear extensions. While it is easy to view neighbours' gardens from our rear windows, proposals for roof terraces can generate valid concerns about privacy and noise.

Generally, users of roof terraces are seated, and low-level trellising and plantings can provide adequate privacy for the surrounding areas. Those with concerns about their own privacy at garden level also have the option to consider planting their rear gardens with trees and climbers on arbours and pergolas, adding not only to individual privacy but to our stock of plantings.

Concerns about noise are generally related to antisocial behaviour, which can happen just as easily in rear gardens as on rear terraces. In fact, acoustically, noise reverberating up from rear gardens can be more intrusive. Roof terraces are typically small, with capacity limited, and most are used infrequently for quiet enjoyment. However, we have developed the following policies to address potential concerns.



NHE3

A. Planted flat roofs (green roofs) should be supported.

B. Vertically greened and screened roof terraces on rear extensions and upper level balconies and belvederes, especially for flats without gardens should generally be supported.

B.1 To protect privacy, proposals for roof terraces on extensions should meet the following conditions:

- Boundary/ screening is set inside the parapet wall.
- Terraces are a half level below or above adjacent main windows to avoid eye-level intrusion into private spaces.
- They include adequate screening up to seated eye level height to protect the privacy of immediate neighbours.
- Where existing rear extensions exceed the projection limits in NHE10, roof terraces should be no deeper than these new limits.

B.2 To address the climate emergency:

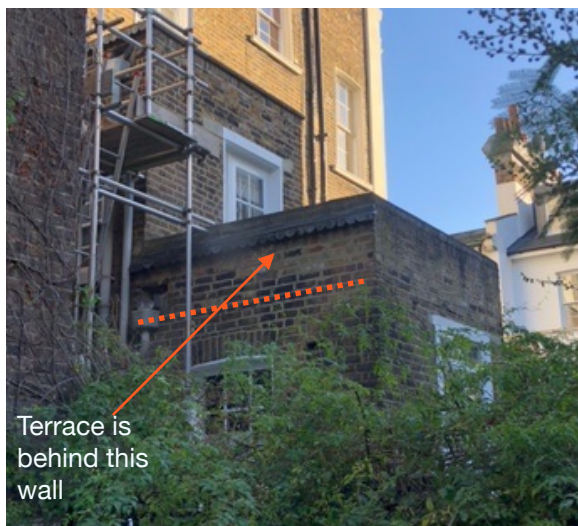
- Trellising materials should have a proven durability and longevity, e.g. aluminium, wrought iron, hardwood.
- Proposals should include provisions for live plantings.

C. Solid canopies above roof extension terraces will not be allowed but light structures for climbing plants could be supported.

D. Embedded terraces created by lowering ceiling of rear extension to create a taller parapet wall can be supported, provided they meet other conditions listed in B above.

E. Proposals for rooftop greening or other garden uses on the rooftops of Wessex Gardens Estate should be supported.

F. If Wessex Gardens residents without terraces wanted balconies, these could be supported with a group application to ensure a cohesive design for each building. See balconies on the Westbourne, page 60.



EMBEDDED TERRACE

At above right, roof terrace contradicts B1 because users are at eye level with primary rooms next door. Our policies prevent this visibility by requiring screening at the sides and a location that is a half a level up or down from primary rear windows. Unsecured pots on coping at high levels are also a hazard for users of gardens several storeys below.



Above, a variety of existing roof terraces - at left, outside our area, at right in our area.



Image provided by the Garden Trellis Company

SCREENED ROOF TERRACE

Greened and screened edges of roof terraces and deeper plantings at leading edges ensure privacy for gardens below and windows nearby.

Justification:

1. Planting trees and climbers at ground level can provide additional privacy for those with concerns. We encourage tree planting in our rear gardens, provided it is an appropriate size and type.
2. Allowing greening of upper level flat roofs along the backs of our buildings and across Wessex Gardens can help with insulating and offsetting carbon emissions.
3. For those in Wessex Gardens without terraces, balconies can add valuable personal outdoor space.



Opportunities for greening on Wessex roofs.



Sedum roof on a rear extension in our area helping to address climate change.



This rear garden at ground level in our area has been planted for privacy. This approach doesn't deprive others of roof terraces/ upper level outdoor space and adds trees and greenery to our rear landscape.

Glass, roof lights and light pollution (NHE4)

Introduction

With ever increasing development and the consequent reduction of space between buildings, matters such as light pollution become more acute. This is particularly important with harsher and brighter LEDs being used inside and outside of buildings. Surface mounted bright lights can also interfere with night vision which can jeopardise safety. Obscured glass can also create, through refraction, an uncomfortable level of brightness in the evenings. It is therefore neighbourly to shield bright exterior lights and brightly lit internal spaces to mitigate any ill effects on surrounding properties. This can be achieved by using appropriate light fixtures, and blinds or other internal or external devices on glass openings.



Excessive glare from brightly lit interior spaces and unshielded exterior lighting in our area.

Non policy guidance

1. Security light sensors should be limited to the boundary of the property.
2. Interior lighting in a downward direction helps to minimise light disturbance to neighbours.
3. In general, when increasing glass in exterior walls, lighting should be designed sensitively.
4. Landscape lighting should be turned off overnight to protect biodiversity and wildlife.

NHE4

- A. Proposals including new roof lights, roof lanterns, glass roofs or larger glass walls should not result in disturbance from increases in light pollution which would harm residential amenity for neighbours and wildlife.
- B. Proposals that include obscured glass should demonstrate how interior lighting has been designed to lessen ill effects to neighbours.
- C. Unshielded uplighting in front gardens will be prohibited except when positioned at the base of plantings which will minimise light spill.
- D. Upgrading of exterior lighting at Wessex Gardens with shielded light fixtures having a warmer colour temperature should be supported.
- E. All bulbs in exterior wall and ceiling lighting fixtures should be shielded to maintain the townscape character of a conservation area and protect adjacent owners from light pollution.
- F. Proposals for exterior lighting including any changes to street lighting should show that the minimum quantity of lighting to meet the purposes intended has been proposed and that all lighting has been shielded or placed to avoid the harmful effects that such exposed lighting has on people's eyes. <https://www.darksky.org/our-work/lighting/>

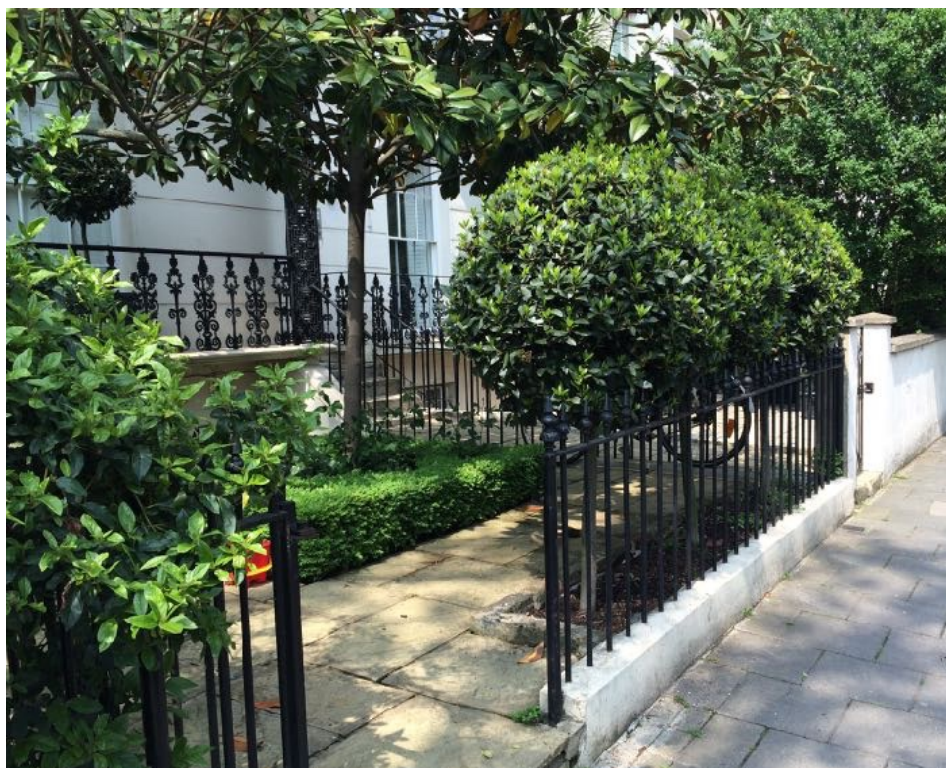
Justification

1. Poor quality and harsh lighting lowers the quality of the public realm.
2. Light pollution has been shown to damage the quality of sleep for humans as well as harming wildlife and ecosystems.
3. Bright unshielded lights diminish the historic character of a conservation area and create adjacent pools of darkness. Better distributed lighting is more important than brightness to minimise these dark pockets.

Our Gardens (NHE5)

Introduction

Our area is unique for its small, private but contiguous front and rear gardens. As a group, these form 'green valleys' and 'garden sanctuaries' between and around our houses. We want to maintain and enhance these green spaces, not only to benefit our residents, but to aid carbon capture and support a nature positive and climate cooling environment.



A planted front garden in our area. Plantings in the ground and immediately behind railings benefit all aesthetically, can absorb some road pollution and allow drainage.

NHE5

Front and Rear Gardens

A. Fully paved over front or rear gardens shall not be permitted.

A.1 All garden development must be premised on Sustainable Urban Drainage principles, (SUDS) <https://www.susdrain.org>.

A.2 Where a change is proposed to existing soft landscaping areas, e.g. new patio spaces, pavers should be permeable, and new planted areas should be identified, (green walls, green roofs) in order to maintain or preferably increase the overall area of soft landscaping.

A.3 Any replacement of existing paving in front and rear, where over soil, should be of permeable paving materials or a mixed surface, e.g. stone and grass/ planted material.

Front (Street Facing) Gardens

B. Boundaries of street facing gardens should be defined with iron railings above plinths on all streets where these are the prevailing character. The exceptions are Bridstow Place, the Mews, the north side of Artesian Road and Hereford Road, which have their own historic precedents.

B.1 Railing heights should be no higher than that of the near neighbour (s) and style should follow that in the Conservation Audit if identified, or the most common example on the street. Some are shown on Page 64.

B.2 Applications for the reinstatement or replacement of railings should be accompanied by a planting scheme immediately behind the railings to include pollution mitigating hedges, shrubs, trees and other live plants. These should be planted in the ground and not surrounded by a curb that would divert rainwater into highways beyond.

B.3 Discrete bin storage should be considered part of the overall garden design and therefore be constructed of natural and planted material to minimise visual impact.

NHE5 continued

Rear Gardens

C. Rear gardens should be maintained at original garden levels to the extent described below, to preserve the original garden walls and to retain and allow planting at that level to contribute positively to the views across the wider garden area.

C.1 Where excavation of gardens is proposed to provide a level transition from lower ground floor to garden levels, this should be limited in scope. As large an area of original garden level as possible should be retained.

C.2 Excavation within 60 centimetres around the perimeter walls should be resisted because of disruption to neighbours, and would remove earth for planted screening where it might be needed.

C.3 There should be no raising of rear garden levels that would require building up walls and screening in order to maintain neighbours' privacy.

C.4 Gardens should include planted areas at ground level as opposed to raised planter beds or boxes. Plants in soil at ground level can dampen localised noise as well as assist with natural drainage.



Shown above, rear gardens at the backs of our houses maintained at original garden levels allow views across the wider garden area.

Non policy guidance

Live plantings are encouraged as they support biodiversity and wildlife, and help to clean our air and drain our soil.

Artificial plantings do not contribute to the above. They deteriorate in colour and appearance over time and are actively discouraged.



Justifications

1. Our front and rear gardens are a defining characteristic of our area. The use of front gardens as parking spaces is not supported, as it fails to recognise the communal benefits gardens bring to an entire neighbourhood. Barren, hard surfaced front gardens have a negative effect on adjacent properties and the area in general, while planted gardens make an area attractive and contribute to air quality and the well-being of its residents.

2. The Town and Country Planning Act of 2015 requires that in any garden of a single family house exceeding 5 square metres, e.g., 1 metre x 5 metres, or 2.5 metres x 2 metres, paving must be permeable or must drain into a permeable area within the curtilage of the property, e.g., planted garden bed.

Link: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/596/schedule/2/part/1/crossheading/class-f-hard-surfaces-incidental-to-the-enjoyment-of-a-dwellinghouse/made>. Our policies go further for all the reasons elaborated upon in these justifications.

3. Deeply excavated gardens reduce natural light into lowered gardens. This prevents normal plant growth at the new garden level and leads to paved over spaces with high surrounding walls akin to squash courts. Noise emanating from inside these spaces is magnified, causing noise nuisance to almost all adjacent residents. This is a particular problem during the summer months when garden doors are open.

4. The run off from hard surfacing places an increased burden on London's underground drainage system contributing not only to catastrophic local flooding but widespread flooding over the Thames valley.

5. Urban run-off contains such substances as engine oil, herbicides, brake dust, medicines, and raw sewage, which then contaminates the rivers.

6. Replacement of vegetation with hard surfaces can have an impact on local temperature, contributing to the 'heat island' effect; these surfaces cannot absorb heat, but intensify it, resulting in higher temperatures.

7. The loss of water from London clays causes the soil to shrink and can contribute to subsidence and the cracking that sometimes occurs in our buildings.

8. The loss of planted front gardens removes an important pollution mitigating element and leads to a loss of fauna.

9. The lack of front gardens and the removal of boundary railings can encourage speeding as it creates the impression of a wider road.

10. It has been shown that green gardens are stress relieving.

<https://www.nationalparkcity.london//being-positive/191-green-front-gardens-really-are-stress-relieving>

Much of the information above comes from the report prepared by the London Assembly Environment Committee "Crazy Paving, The Environmental importance of London's front gardens", published September 2005.

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/archives/assembly-reports-environment-frontgardens.pdf

11. A Flood Risk Assessment would be part of be detailed Structural Methodology Statement required for basement applications.

12. The Environment Act of 2021 requires that planning permissions must yield a 10% increase in biodiversity and our policies would help to meet this requirement. Although householder applications are exempt, the government has made clear that it still wants to see improvements in biodiversity, which can be imposed through planning conditions.

13. From UDP - *Trees and Other Planting on Development Sites*

"The Council takes the view that trees, shrubs and other greenery are often essential features of Westminster's historic environment. For this reason, the Council regards existing trees and general landscaping as indispensable parts of the special architectural and historic character of the City and is committed to their preservation, protection, enhancement and renewal." and "but, especially in Conservation Areas and where the development affects a Listed Building or Historic Park or Garden, the council will attach special conditions seeking to protect or replace existing trees or shrubs or to secure the planting of new ones."

Non policy guidance

Secondary fencing in other materials such as bamboo or wood should not be used on the fronts of buildings in place of or behind iron railings at ground level, or balconies higher up.

SECTION 2: BUILDINGS, DESIGN, HERITAGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Restoration of Architectural Detail (NHE6)

Introduction

During the decades during and after the war and through the Rachman era and beyond, many of the original architectural features were lost from our facades and gardens. Gradually, owners are reinstating missing architectural features during their renovation programmes, and we'd like this practice to continue. Our policy is aimed at restoring our facades to ensure a cohesive street facing appearance and balanced by other policies that promote innovative solutions to rear extensions and climate change mitigation.

NHE6

Reinstatement of any missing architectural details (e.g., ironwork, corbels, cornices, etc.) is strongly encouraged as part of any planning application for substantial development, e.g. mansard, basement, rear extension.

The extent, design and materials of missing details will be advised by WCC conservation officers.

Any removal of original detail from street facing elevations is strongly discouraged.

Non policy guidance

Proposals for reinstated architectural features such as corbels, cornices, ironwork, etc., will normally require annotated and detailed drawings. To assist applicants, the Forum will work, with oversight from WCC conservation experts, towards posting street-specific architectural details on its website for reference.

While replacement of doors and windows on listed buildings is strictly controlled, those on conservation facades should also always follow the original or historic pattern of the street, terrace or group, e.g. style, number and placement of glazing bars on french doors.

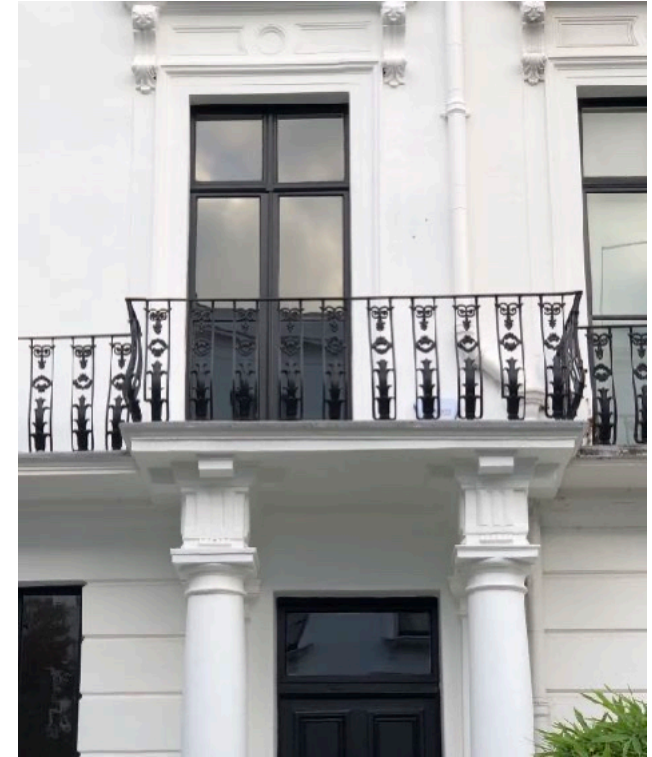


Our buildings in the 1970s

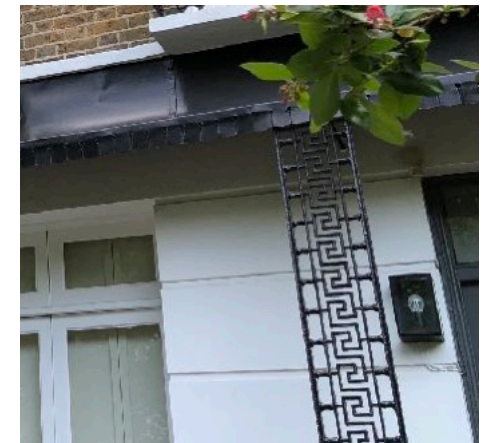
photograph Jonathan Barker

Justification

1. Renovation/ redecoration projects provide the perfect opportunity to reinstate missing features, especially when scaffolding is erected, and are often a minimal investment compared to the greater building project.
2. These building exteriors make up the 'walls' of the streetscape, and the common good, architecturally, socially, and historically is served by maintaining and improving these features.
3. By reinstating these lost details, we can finally undo the damage done during the war and post war decades.
4. Being part of a conservation area implies conservation and restoration of the special elements on our buildings and this should always be considered when doing a programme of works.



Historic detail sometimes missing from the fronts of our houses.



Energy conservation and generation (NHE7)

Introduction

Throughout our plan there are policies to counter the ill effects of climate change: planted front and rear gardens, integration of solar panels onto mansard roofs, etc., but there are some additional changes we can make to our buildings and neighbourhood to add to our sustainability. Building regulations already require materials to limit heat loss, but with new technologies becoming available over the next several decades, gas boilers being phased out, and other climate regulations being drafted, it is important to remain open to all innovative methods of energy conservation.

The seriousness of this emergency dictates that priorities must be shifted, and slight inconsequential differences of appearance, even on listed buildings, must be accepted, as the public good is better served through climate change mitigation.

NHE7

- A. Appropriate double or triple glazed replacement heritage windows and doors should be supported on our Grade II listed buildings, provided they replicate as closely as possible the original historic material, sections and arrangement of any glazing bars, and aren't considered to cause harm to the special historic or architectural significance of the building. Methods of construction to be determined in conjunction with Conservation Officers.
- B. Solar panels and solar slates, and other solar capturing devices on roofs should be supported, as long as they are integrated within the overall design in profile and colour where visible.
- C. Alternative energy sources such as heat pumps should be supported, provided proposals show care in the siting and visual impact of equipment, with screening shown on drawings if required for sufficient concealment. The mitigation of any noise or other nuisance to neighbours should be addressed in the proposal.

Justification

1. We are in a climate emergency and all means of reducing heat loss from our buildings should be employed. While draught proofing can help somewhat, double and triple glazed units mitigate heat loss and reduce carbon footprint more effectively than other door and window changes, and can be done without significant alteration of the appearance of the fenestration. Suppliers can closely match existing timber sections and use glass that has the appearance of original historic glass. Examples are installed in listed buildings throughout Edinburgh and other UK cities.
2. Energy conservation needs to be an important priority of our plan, and if solar tiles are installed per our policy, we see no detrimental effect to our streetscape or views towards or from the rear of our buildings.
3. Heat pumps and other alternative energy solutions can contribute to a zero carbon future.

Non-policy guidance:

New methods and products to reduce heat loss and improve energy efficiency are being introduced all the time. Windows and doors are just one part of the thermal envelope and ventilation is an important consideration. Up to date guidance and/ or professional advice can be sourced online.

*Solar roof tiles
virtually
indistinguishable
from slate.*



Image provided by GB-Sol

Underground Development (NHE8)

Introduction

The NHENF area has been the epicentre of basement developments in Westminster. While underground development has provided valuable extra space for some, it has caused significant concern to others adjacent, who worry about the effect on their properties and the displacement of groundwater. Excessive underground development across our area has led to the paving over of our front and rear gardens and a loss of flora and fauna. The policies below have been developed to minimise nuisance and prevent overdevelopment, while still permitting some underground, or lower ground level space for additional accommodation, access and storage.

NHE8

- A. In back gardens, underground development will not occupy more than 30% of overall rear garden space.
- B. In front gardens, underground development will not occupy more than 50% of garden space as measured from boundary wall to façade.
 - B.1 Underground development in front gardens should be accompanied by a planting plan showing retention of or an increase in planted material.
 - B.2 The area immediately behind railings should always be planted material with adequate depth of soil. In the Westminster City Plan, this is 1 metre of planting soil with 200 mm drainage layer.
- C. Material excavated from basement digging must be electrically extracted via an overhead conveyor belt into a street sited skip, and a licence displaying the WCC licence number must be displayed on all hoardings.
- D. Building work and associated activities should not take place on pavements.

Justification

1. A 30% limit for underground development in rear gardens will allow some storage or utility space while still maintaining the remainder for deep planting. If this underground utility space is used to house a boiler, the flue pipe should run up to and above high rooftop of house level so this is not venting into neighbours' gardens.
2. In front gardens, a requirement of at least 50% of deep garden space, as measured from the boundary wall will protect amenity planting for our area while still allowing some below-ground expansion for utility spaces and access to lower levels.
3. Controlling basement excavation and prohibiting pavement building work will ensure that no pedestrian will be forced out into the street.
4. Limiting hardscape and preserving planted areas in exterior gardens will help to contribute to the 10% increase in biodiversity requirements.

Non-policy guidance:

Owners should monitor storm water drains to ensure they are not blocked as a result of construction activity - we suggest a survey of these, and neighbours' drains before and after construction.

Roof Extensions and Mansards (NHE9)

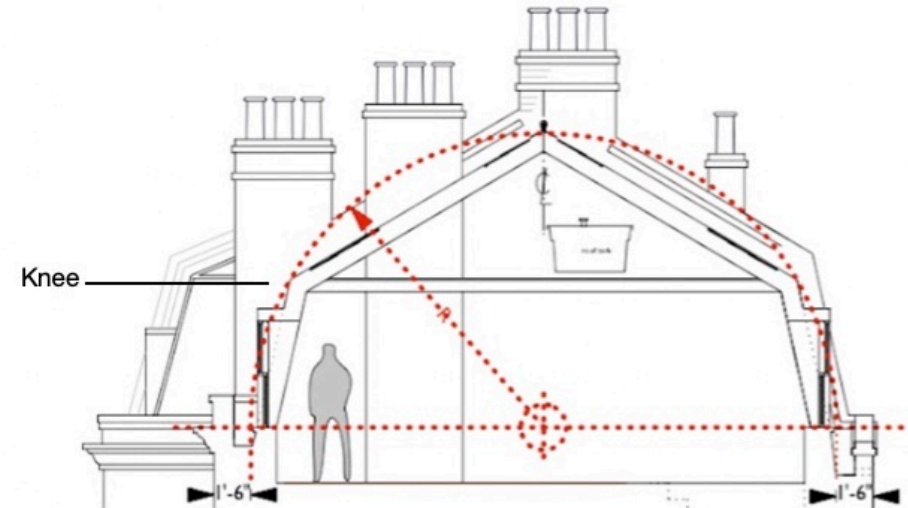
Introduction

Houses have always been extended upwards. Early extensions lacked a consistent approach in their design and detailing, resulting in a random assortment of heights, fenestration and materials. Later, many mansard applications were rejected, so gaps that might otherwise have been filled were not. Recently, planning has favoured roof extensions that match the pattern of those nearby, without considering whether those nearby extensions represented the best possible example of the type of extension, exhibited exemplary design and detailing, or addressed environmental concerns. The policies below have been created to rectify these omissions, and will ensure that roof extensions are well detailed, and environmentally friendly.

NHE9

A. Where noted on our map on page 30, and on top of our typical early and mid-Victorian houses, development upwards is to be allowed within clear constraints. Such development sits above and behind the parapet. This upwards expansion shall be allowed within an area defined by a semicircular arc and the preferred option for these roof structures is the historic or true mansard, double pitched and ridged, as shown at right. This true mansard is the only option permitted on Grade II listed properties and these should follow traditional Historic England guidelines and requirements.

B. Only the parapet, windows, and chimneys will be outside the semicircular arc. Chimney stacks with pots should be extended in matching brick to preserve the rhythm of the surrounding roofscapes and any missing parts or details should be restored to the elevations. Butterfly parapets should be retained and restored.



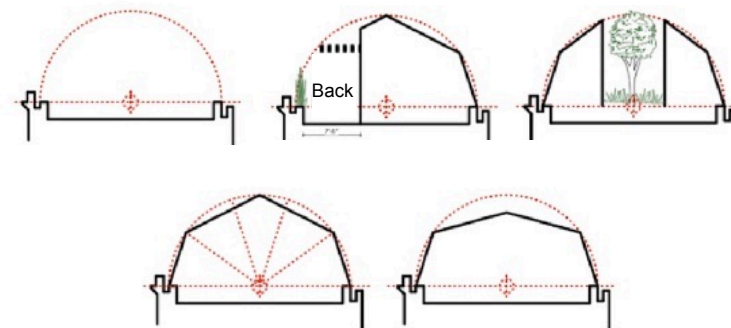
Setting out diagram for a “true” double pitched mansard:

- Semicircular arc centre aligns with top of cornice and is centred between front and rear walls of house.
- Diameter of arc is depth of house less 3', or arc starts 1'-6" back from outer face of elevations, i.e. $2R = \text{depth of house} - 3'$
- Chimney tops elevated and restored.
- Butterfly parapet retained and restored.
- Both roof pitches clad in slate.
- Knee (where both pitches meet) is located at approximately half the height of the semicircle.
- Can be built entirely in timber.
- Solar tiles encouraged where suitable.
- Dormer windows should be set within the lower pitch of the roof, front and back.
- Front windows should attempt to align with windows below.
- Lanterns may protrude beyond the semicircular arc.
- Roof lights are permitted on both rear slopes.

C. Flat topped roof extensions are discouraged for environmental reasons. (see Justification 2 below) If a proposal is submitted for a roof extension with a flat top it should include a sedum/planted roof or solar panels.

D. Consistent views from street level are preferred; however, roof extensions that include an internal roof garden or one at the back which would not be seen from the street should be supported. See diagram at right.

E. At the ends of terraces, hipped roof mansards should have the same roof angles and form on the side as the front elevation. Any existing chimneys may be raised and integrated into the new sloping roof pitches.



Key to illustrations above, clockwise from top left.

- *Roof without roof extension, which could accommodate greening or solar panels.*
- *Partial mansard with roof terrace at the back, with or without trellis.*
- *Double pitched mansard with central roof terrace.*
- *Shallow double pitched roof mansard.*
- *Traditional double pitched mansard generated from 5 equal segments.*



This roof outside of our area shows the chimney raised and incorporated into the sloping roof pitch. End of terrace hipped roof mansards on Needham Road showing their greater useful internal volume for passive cooling and energy saving equipment. Using slate or tiles consistently on all pitches contributes to visual uniformity and ease of construction and detailing.



F. Integral solar panels or solar roof tiles should be supported where these would not harm the appearance of listed buildings or those within a conservation area. No heat pumps or air conditioning equipment will be allowed outside of the roof structure.

G. Proposals for mansard development should be accompanied by the reinstatement of missing architectural details to the principal elevation, especially where the building is in single ownership.

Side elevation on an end of terrace house on Artesian Road showing blind windows replicating the front elevation, with mansard windows aligned above. These windows should be permitted unless the neighbour's privacy would be significantly impacted.



Photo at left from Northumberland Place shows earlier double pitched mansards on each end with two later flat topped mansards in the centre and gaps to the left where mansards have been refused - a consequence of inconsistent planning policy implementation over time. Darker paint finishes on the mansard windows at far left help them to read as part of the roof structure.



Double pitched mansard roof extension in our area.

Justifications

1. The area behind the parapet wall above the street cornice affords desirable extra living space and when set back as described, has minimal visual impact from the most important vantage point, which is the street. See photos on the previous page. At a time when more accommodation is needed, as clearly identified in the London and Westminster City Plans, roof extensions are a low impact way to create a three-bedroom home from an upper-level maisonette or provide additional living space for a growing family occupying an entire house.
2. In addition to historical accuracy, double pitched mansards are capable of being more environmentally sustainable. Mansard-type roofs with a flat top are discouraged for the following reasons: they generally require steel construction which imposes extra loading on buildings, lack internal volume for ventilation or passive cooling leading to the need for A/C in summer months, are built using materials inconsistent to those elsewhere in the house, and can be prone to leaking. Conversely, traditional double pitched mansards using timber/carpentry construction are quicker to build, as materials can be sized on site without waiting for delivery of bespoke steel elements, and have vaulted spaces and more volume at roof level to accommodate water tanks, insulation and space for interior passive cooling, important in the summer months. In addition, with two slopes, roof materials can be consistent, of either slate tiles or integral PV solar tiles. Conversion from existing flat topped mansards to double pitched mansards should therefore be supported.
3. By requiring changes above parapet level to be built of sustainable and lighter carpentry construction, the loading on the building structure and disruption to the neighbourhood are minimised, especially as options can include off-site construction of prefabricated mansards.
4. The principal masonry elevations of our terraced houses help to define our streets, while the structures above and behind the parapets, according to traditional mansard roof design, are set back and generally have a visually receding slope. These rooftop structures within the boundary of the semicircular arc are therefore subsidiary. While uniformity of form is a good idea, permitting some variety of detail and glazing designs where not visible from the street offers more flexible solutions to the homeowner. The suggestion of darker painted surfaces helps to unify disparate roof forms and different types of, and division of fenestration.
5. In Chepstow Road, proposals to reinstate a missing central architectural feature above parapet level in combination with mansard roof extensions will restore the architectural balance and significance of the street, and when completed on both sides, will re-establish the original mirrored composition. This would be an important improvement in townscape character for this area, and would positively address the need for more housing space by providing additional accommodation. A joint application would ensure uniformity of design. Separate implementation by householders would allow for this development to happen over time to a common design, as and when more space is required by individual householders. This approach would be preferable to implementation in groups which would lead to 'clumps' of development and an imbalance in the overall architectural composition of the street.
6. Mansard construction requires scaffolding across the principal elevation of a building so this is a perfect opportunity for reinstatement of any missing historic architectural features.



East side of Chepstow Rd. (formerly Richmond Rd.) at end of 19th c. showing central pavilion with pediment and flanking balustrades.

H. Additional Housing Opportunities through Roof Extensions

H.1 The NHENF area doesn't have many sites where additional housing can be provided; however, if the residents of Wessex Gardens would be amenable to up to two additional storeys and/or rooftop greening, these proposals should be supported.

H.2. Eight of the houses on the north side of St. Stephen's garden square have mansard roof extensions, whereas their neighbours to the west have a sheer attic storey created by extending the principle elevation upwards. Proposals to replace mansard extensions with the type to the west should be supported, provided the parapet level is consistent across the entire group.

H.3. In addition to the architecturally significant Chepstow Road, groups of houses on Needham Road, Artesian Road, Ledbury Road and the crescent on Westbourne Park Road have often lost their original roof shapes but remain without roof extensions. These could all accommodate an additional storey, providing valuable added or expanded housing, therefore proposals for roof extensions on these properties should be supported. In these groups, proposals for roof extensions should be submitted as a group application to ensure consistency of design, with individual implementation permitted. An applicant should provide a drawing of the group context.

Justification

1. Additional space and / or roof greening added to Wessex Gardens can help meet housing targets in London, increase our neighbourhood greening and carbon capture, or provide additional amenities such as storage, workshops, roof gardens and other facilities for existing residents. The seven unique buildings at Wessex Gardens can be extended upwards according to their different sizes, shapes and position within the estate.
2. Of the groups of houses in our area without roof extensions, there are 24 properties in Chepstow Road, 3 on Artesian Road, 8 on Needham Road, 10 on Ledbury Road, and 10 in the crescent on Westbourne Park Road, totalling 55 potential opportunities for better and expanded family accommodation. Unless incremental implementation of these is allowed, unrealistic burdens of cooperation and finance will be placed on adjacent homeowners, not to mention the many potential pitfalls which can occur during the construction process that could disrupt the completion of the group. A requirement for group applications will ensure the desired consistency of design.



Shown above, eight houses on the north side of St. Stephen's Square with mansard roof extensions. On the left, the top storey has been created by extending the principal elevation upwards.

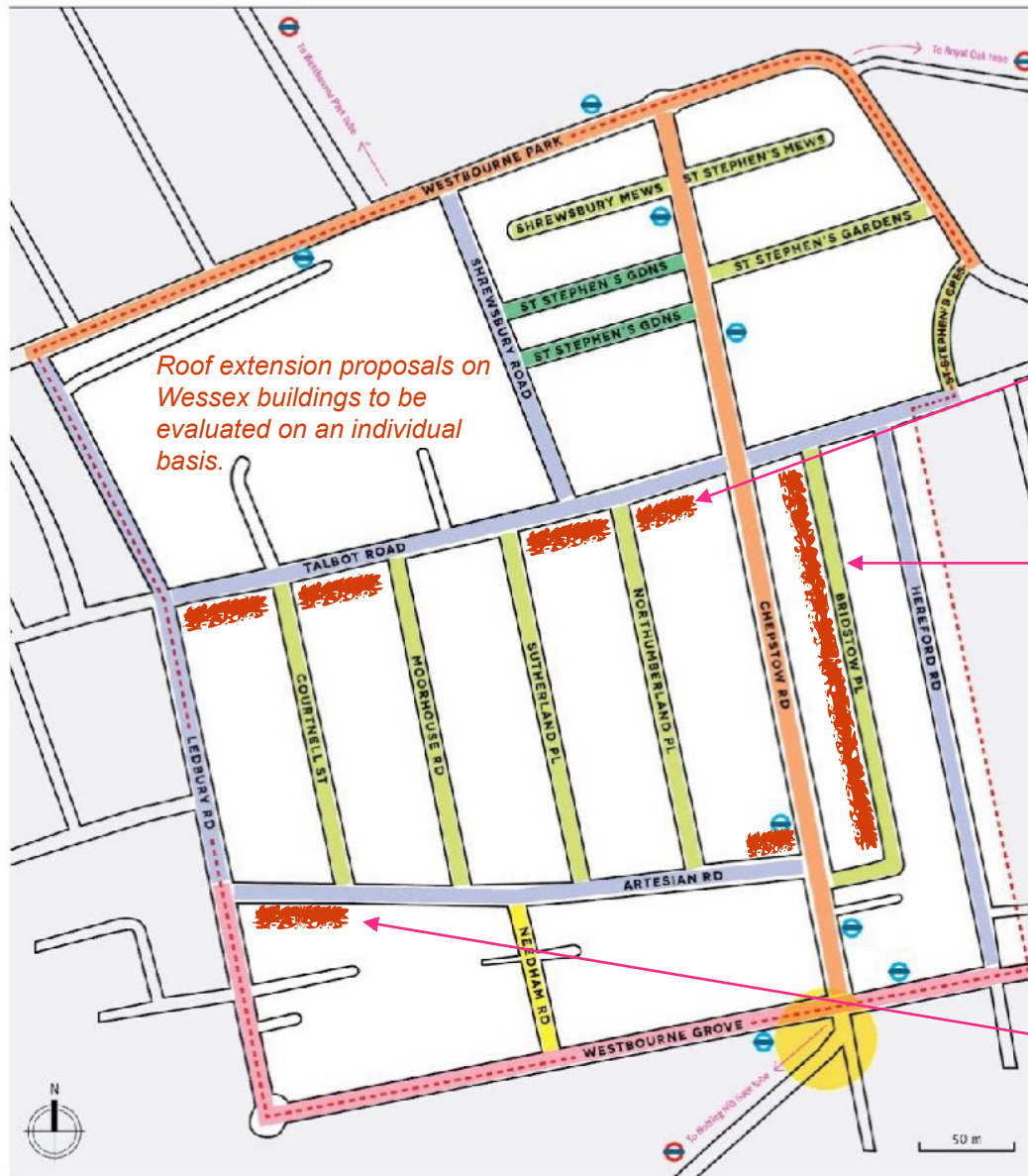
Non policy guidance

1. Fire escapes and emergency egress from roof levels are important and should be as light in scale as possible.
2. Changes above parapet level, with the exception of leadwork and roof cladding, should be primarily of carpentry construction using FSC (forest stewardship council) timber. Roof tiles should be slate or solar slate on listed buildings, with artificial riven slate permitted on others. All painted surfaces above and behind the parapet should ideally be dark to further recede when viewed from a distance and indicate that they relate to the context of roofs rather than principal elevations. However, where new mansards are being added to a row of existing mansards, painted surfaces may match that of neighbours for the sake of uniformity.



Above, groups of buildings without roof extensions on either side of the Walmer Castle on Ledbury Road. Below, the crescent of buildings without roof extensions on Westbourne Park Road.





Roof extension proposals on Wessex buildings to be evaluated on an individual basis.




Talbot Road villas



Bridstow Place cottages



Artesian House

 Indicates building types where mansards would not be appropriate.

Backs of buildings & our green valleys (NHE10)

Introduction

The predominantly formal, historic front elevations of the houses in the NHENF area form the walls of our streets - the 'street or townscape', and correctly invoke a policy of conformity and complementary design. The backs of the houses always had far fewer pretensions to grandeur than fronts. Modest 'closet wing' extensions from the 19th century would have afforded good natural light for the main rooms at the back of the house and a strong visual connection with the garden behind. Some had glass 'lanterns' at the top and other later additions used an informal design language and appeared in a variety of materials, often of light construction. There was caprice in these designs, which included oriel structures, oriel windows, balconies and terraces, which often had great charm and reflected the owner's needs and aesthetic tastes of their period. Ecologically, valleys of plantings emerged and provided benefits to both neighbours and wildlife. These varied informal extensions and the gardens around them created a 'gardenscape' at the back, in contrast to the street or townscape at the front.

The NHENF area includes variations of building styles on each street and in each terrace that reflect different construction periods, landowners and builders, yet conservation policy in recent decades has prioritised uniformity in form, materials and fenestration at the back, without equal or weighted policy towards the preservation of adequate garden space and increases in plantings to offset new construction. This has resulted in a proliferation of oversized, tall rectangular brick box-shaped structures with sash windows now occupying garden spaces, to the detriment of the houses behind and the spaces in between and beyond.

With climate change accelerating, this overdevelopment needs to stop, and these 'gardenscapes' must be preserved and enhanced. Returning to an informal design language, but one that uses more modern materials and methods of construction can help play a complementary role in sustainability.

Our policies, parts A to H below, have been developed to limit excessive expansion of buildings, minimise carbon impact and protect the communal green spaces that we all value and enjoy.

Homeowners will have the opportunity to think imaginatively, possibly choosing to remove their existing rear extensions completely, which would maximise the relationship between house and garden. Or they might adjust their extension to better favour the environment, improve the aesthetic value of the property and

reintroduce the caprice and charm that once enhanced the varied character of the conservation area.



One of our 'green valleys'.

This historic illustration shows the back of a row of houses without lower level extensions, preserving generous garden spaces. Low walls rise up adjacent to door and window openings for privacy.

Note the projecting top floor 'oriel', third house from the left. This was the normal solution to provide a little extra space at the top of a house without the risk of detracting from the elevation as a whole.





TOWERING BRICK EXTENSIONS OVERSHADOW OUR HOUSES AND GARDENS

Tall brick extensions in our area.

Too tall brick rear extensions in the “closet wing” location tower over the houses behind, leave dark spaces between, create uninteresting views for neighbours and compromise the main rooms of the house. These effects are made worse by the paving over of rear gardens, amplifying sound and creating a landscape devoid of natural features.

When these extensions are deep as well as tall, they reduce garden areas and create “tunnels” between the extensions, separating the main rooms of houses from their rear gardens and compromising their light and views. See alternatives on the following pages.

Back Extensions and Infills NHE10

A. Maintain a Square of Garden

Where rear extensions in the typical “closet wing” location are proposed, extensions at ground level must leave at least a square of garden remaining. (length is equal to or *more than* width of property). Where there are longer gardens behind some Hereford Road, St. Stephen’s Gardens, Talbot Road, Courtnell Street and Westbourne Grove properties, this must be a square and a half of garden.

B. Limit Width:

Provided the minimum square or square and a half of garden remains, rear “closet wing” extensions should be supported provided their **width** is generally less than half the width of the building, normally by two bricks, which leaves space for the downpipe and fixings below the valley of the butterfly roof.

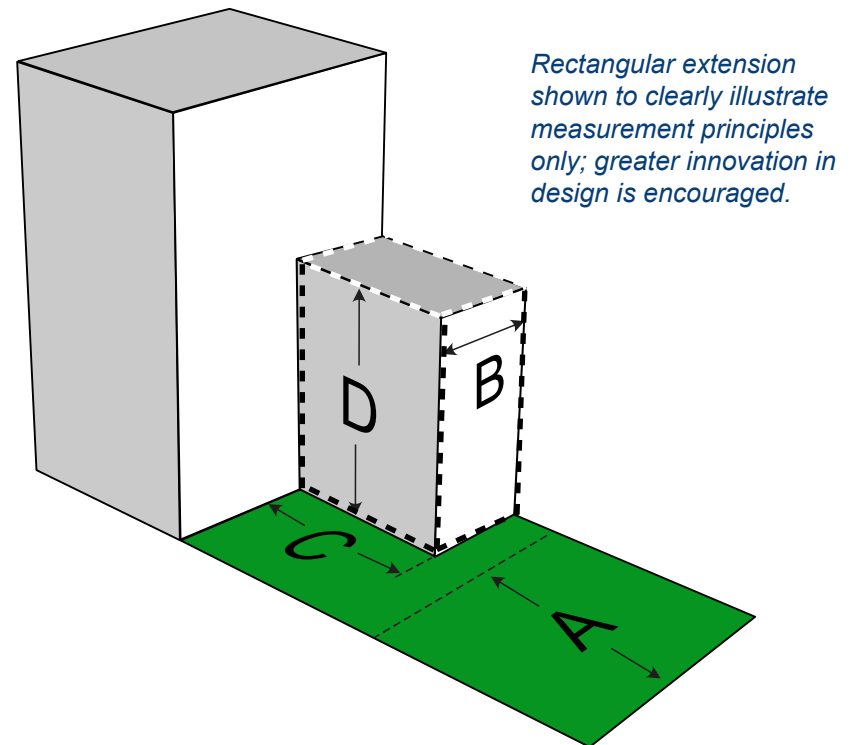
C. Limit Depth

Provided the square of garden remains, the maximum projection from the original back façade can be equal to, but preferably less than the width of the remaining main rear wall of the host building/house.

Exception: In the exceptionally long gardens behind a few of our terraces and where garden shapes are irregular, proposals for longer less standardised **single storey** extensions that enhance the conservation area may be considered, as long as the equivalent of square and a half of garden is maintained.

D. Limit Height:

The **heights** of any primary closet wing extension with the projection described above is limited to 3 storeys. On the larger 5, 6 and 7 storey houses with long back gardens of Talbot Road north, St. Stephen’s south, and Hereford Road, a proportionate approach should be taken. Above these top storeys, we would support a roof terrace that conformed to NHE 3.



Multi Storey Back Extension

Principle A relates to garden depth

Principle B relates to extension width

Principle C relates to extension depth

Principle D relates to extension height

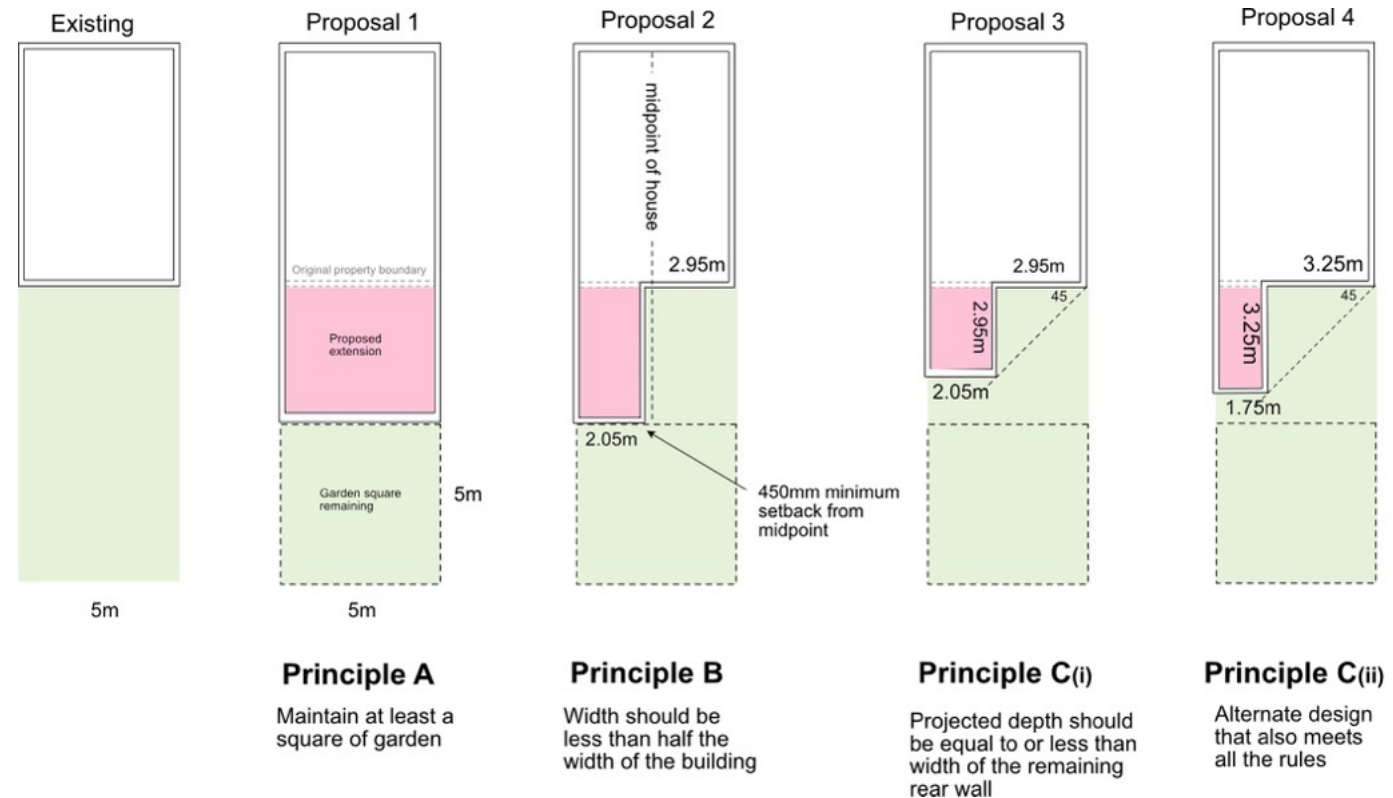
Example of **NHE10**, principle A, B and C applied to a rear extension proposal at right. All three must be satisfied.

Principles A, B and C in relation to extension depth and width:

Principle A limits the proposed extension depth based on garden retention, principle B limits the extension width based on house proportions, and principle C further restricts the extension depth based on house proportions. All three principles are applied when evaluating the suitability of a multi-storey proposal. In this example proposal 1 would be rejected as it fails to satisfy principles B & C. Proposal 2 would be rejected as it fails to satisfy principle C. Proposals 3 & 4 are both acceptable.

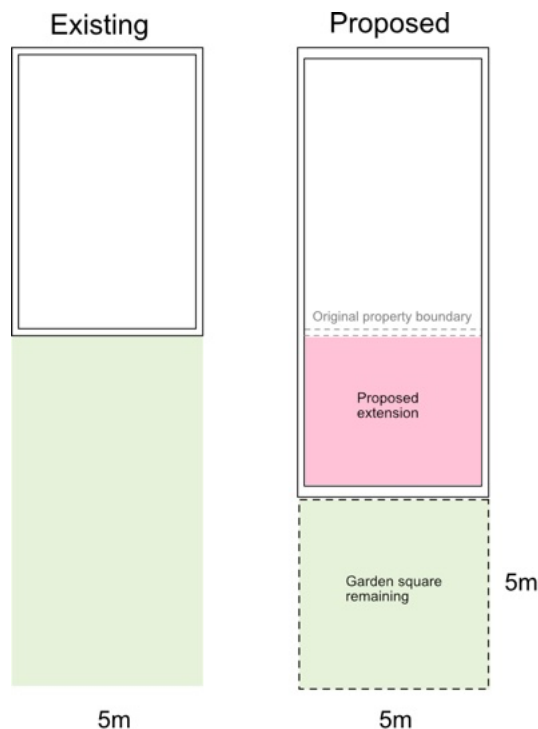
Extension height:

The maximum height of all rear extensions is limited to 3 storeys, but principles B & C only apply to extensions greater than 1 storey. This means a full-width single storey extension is permitted provided principle 1 is maintained, so diagram 1 at right would be permitted if the extension is single storey only.



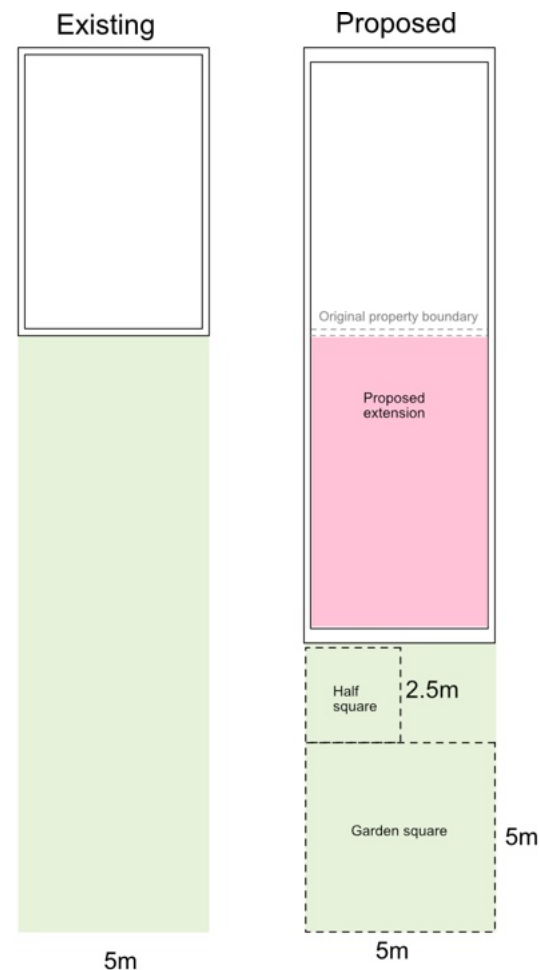
Principle A in relation to properties with exceptionally long gardens.

Principle A limits the proposed extension depth based on garden retention. Generally the requirement is to maintain "at least a square" of garden as illustrated on the left. For properties with exceptionally long gardens this requirement changes to "at least a square and a half" of garden as illustrated on the right, for **single storey** extensions only. Normally the entire footprint should not be covered over. (See Tonkin Liu project in Appendix 5) Proposals for these larger extensions should show that environmental impacts have been considered.



Principle A (normal)

Maintain at least a square of garden

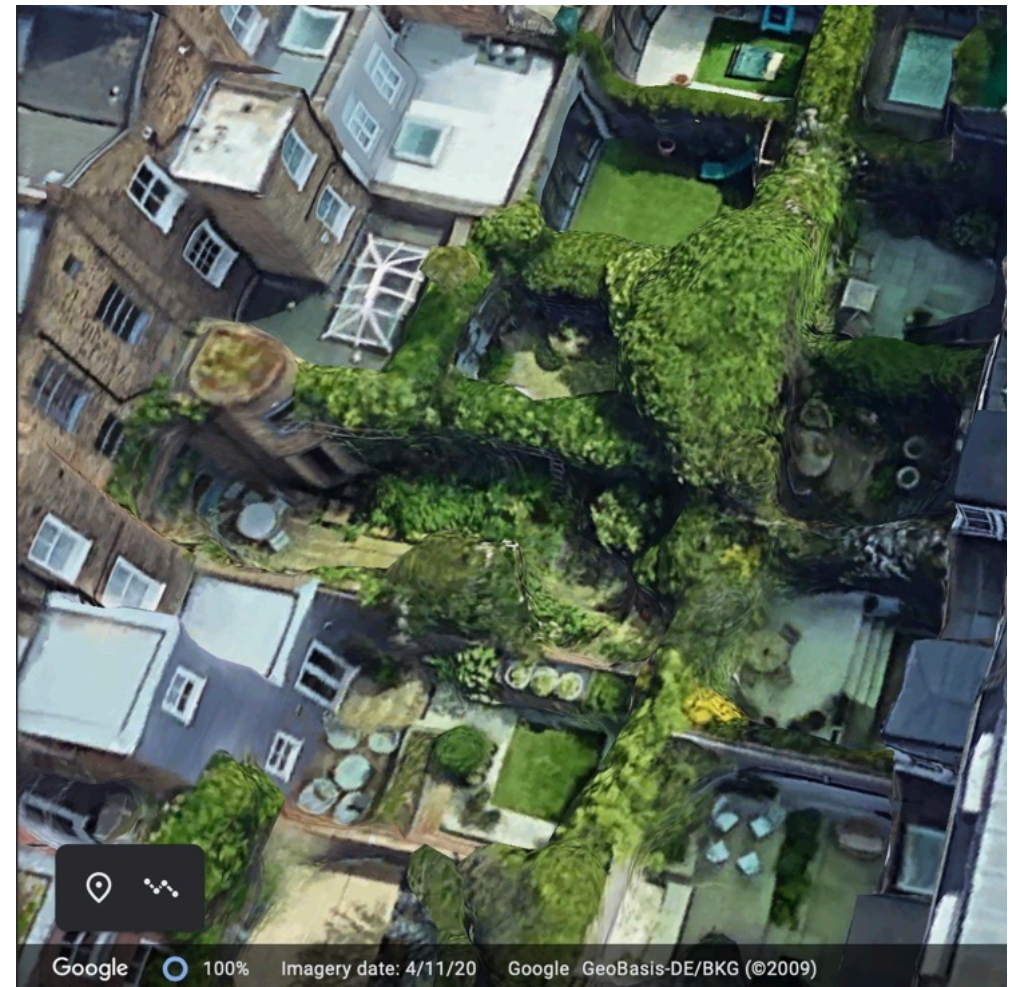


Principle A (long gardens)

Maintain at least a square and a half of garden

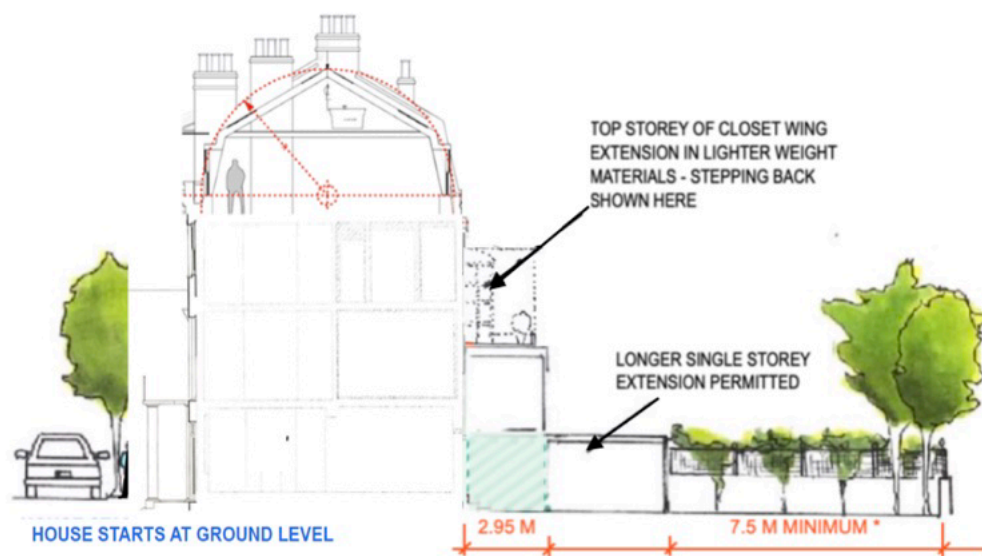
Justifications

1. In our smaller gardens, anything less than at least a square will bring buildings into uncomfortable proximity to one another and result in a loss of valuable green space. Limiting depth of rear closet wing extensions preserves the quality of the garden spaces between these extensions.
2. Rear gardens should be seen as a potential future energy resource such as a provider of ground source heating or space for an air source heat pump. Therefore the size of gardens may well start to determine the viability and value of houses in the future.
3. These length, height and width restrictions and the use of lightweight materials, especially at higher levels, aim to prevent the dark tunnelling effect between extensions and the columns of overly dominant brick towers that are covering our garden spaces and starting to accumulate along the backs of our buildings. The best views to the rear are normally from the principal rooms of the house and the infill spaces between rear extensions, so limiting the width of these extensions increases the space between them, ameliorating the tunnelling effect and allowing the principal rooms to maintain their connection with the garden, with their windows un-compromised. Setting the extensions back from the centreline of the building leaves space for the downpipe, hopper and fixings for attachment immediately below the low point of the butterfly and eliminates the need for pipework cutting horizontally across the rear elevation.
4. These limits also confer advantages to the occupant from an interior perspective; the shallower a building is, the more natural light there will be inside, and the better the connection with the garden.
5. Sky views from buildings and back gardens are often limited, especially where gardens are small. Depending on orientation, extensions could cast extensive shadows over a neighbour's property. Extensions on top of existing rear additions can cause particular problems by reducing light to already narrow spaces between back extensions and visually dominating neighbouring properties.





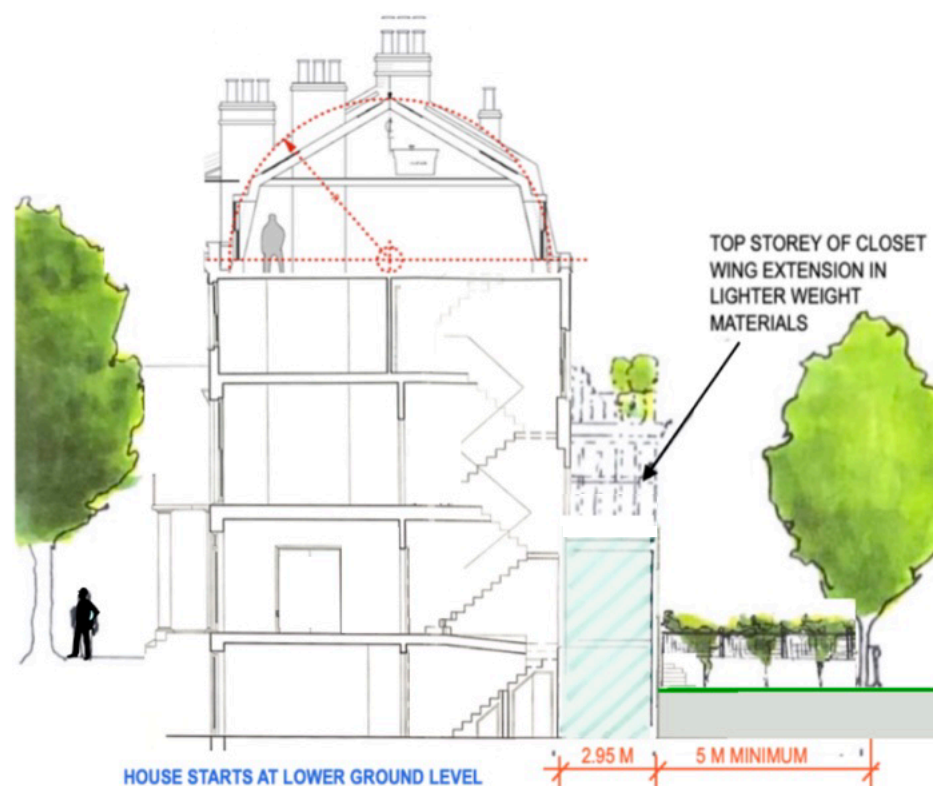
A well preserved green valley between two of our streets.

Examples of height and projection limits in section.





ASSUMING HOUSE WIDTH = 5 M. * EQUALS A SQUARE AND A HALF OF GARDEN TO REMAIN IN LONGER GARDENS

-  SUGGESTED LIMITS FOR REAR EXTENSIONS IN PRIMARY "CLOSET WING" LOCATION
-  INFILL BETWEEN PRIMARY REAR EXTENSIONS LIMITED TO ONE STOREY



ASSUMING HOUSE WIDTH = 5 M.

-  SUGGESTED LIMITS FOR REAR EXTENSIONS IN PRIMARY "CLOSET WING" LOCATION
-  INFILL BETWEEN PRIMARY REAR EXTENSIONS LIMITED TO TWO STOREYS

These illustrations show height and projection limits for rear extensions. The house on the left starts at ground level like those on Artesian, Courtnell, etc. The house on the right starts at lower ground level, like those on Sutherland, Northumberland. Top storeys with less solid mass shown. In the example on the left above, the garden is longer than normal, so as long as a square and a half of garden remains, a longer single storey extension can be supported. The blue shaded area indicates infill limits.

E. Supporting innovation and good design

E.1 All extensions must be of high design quality, detailing, and construction. New ideas and inventive design solutions that would enhance the character of the conservation area should be encouraged. See examples below.

Justification:

1. While some homogeneity of building style and materials can be an important unifying factor across much of the NHENF area, there should always be the opportunity for new inventive design which should be subservient to and may contrast with the host building and introduce new materials.
2. Allowing design flexibility will provide users the best way to realise their needs and requiring a high level of detailing and construction will ensure a positive and sustainable contribution to the neighbourhood.
3. Apart from a reference to trees being seen through gaps between buildings at the back, there is no mention in the Conservation Audit of a particular style in back extensions that should be maintained.



Rear closet wing extensions with unique designs and architectural interest. A flat roof is not always needed. Example at left is in our area, others are nearby.



F. Consider lighter, climate and neighbour friendly extensions:

F.1 The top storey of these rear extensions should have less mass, achieved by using lighter and more skeletal structures constructed of lightweight or more transparent materials, e.g. timber and glass, and/or set back, possibly with a sloping roof to further lessen its dominance.

F.2 Flat surfaces on rear extensions, other than the floors of balconies, should be resisted unless they are green or brown.

F.3 Proposals that do not improve the carbon efficiency of the house or flat, or are at least carbon neutral, should not be supported.

Justification

1. Using lighter weight materials shortens construction times, which limits the impacts on our environment, gardens and neighbours by requiring fewer skips and parking suspensions, creating less site noise, etc.

2. From an energy standpoint, while the terraced house typically exposes just two walls - the back and front, and the roof, outward rear extensions that extend into the private gardens behind have long exposed flank elevations and typically large flat roofs which present a major challenge in energy efficiency. This is another reason why we encourage smaller, shallower extensions that reduce the surface area of the walls. NHENF supports good design, and methods and materials that will allow quicker construction and aim towards carbon neutrality.

3. Tall brick extensions are an unimaginative solution with a limited historical precedent. These structures have a detrimental effect on the light to neighbours, create a sombre atmosphere, and do not promote greening. NHENF wishes to support a variety of imaginative solutions and to champion greening and the use of lighter materials to reduce impacts to neighbours and the environment as a whole.

4. While there is uniformity on the fronts of some sections of our streets, there is also variety within these. On the backs, while extensions appear on early maps, they are shown in plan form, without existing evidence that they were uniformly brick in elevation. In fact, many early examples have lightweight lantern structures at the top, as shown below. With the climate crisis accelerating, and modern materials playing an important role in energy conservation, alternative climate friendly designs should always be supported.



Lighter extensions - example at left is in our area, others nearby.

G. - Additional Space and Light for upper-level flats

G.1 In upper-level flats with limited space, shallow projecting oriel-like extensions on the rear facade could be considered. These should be limited to an outer projection of 2'-7 1/2" / .8 m. and less than half the width of the house.

G.2 If residents on multiple upper level floors immediately above or below one another would like to have these, they should form a coherent composition.

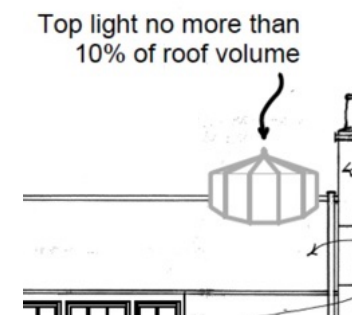
A variety of oriel windows on buildings nearby and farther afield. Our proposals would only allow these on the rear elevations.



G.3 To allow more light into the centre of the house, top of stairs and upper level flats, proposals for roof lanterns/ top lights should be supported.

Justification:

1. Provided these extensions are shallow, they provide useful additional space for those in upper-level flats without overly impacting neighbours below or to either side. The size suggested could accommodate a seating area, writing desk, laundry machines, a dog bed, i.e., useful functional space for a smaller flat, and can bring it into contact with the gardens beyond. Such structures do not need to be entirely glazed.
2. Roof lanterns have historic precedents and can let valuable additional light into the centre of a house or over a staircase. Provided they are modestly sized, they can span the ridge of the roof.



Shown above, a roof lantern positioned across roof ridge to let more light into the centre of the house or over stairs.

Shown at left on Hereford Road, an oriel window in black and a barrel vaulted roof extension.

Illustrations of lighter rear extensions.



Houses that start at ground level

Houses that start at lower ground level

Larger 5, 6 and 7 storey houses with deep back gardens

Shown above are top storeys of rear extensions with reduced mass, e.g. stepping back, constructed of lighter more skeletal materials like timber and glass, and/or having a sloping or pitched roof. Any masonry extended upwards on this level should only be a small proportion of the overall enclosure, e.g. as required to meet fire regulations. If flat, the roof should be a green roof, or a roof terrace could be supported provided it meets the conditions of Policy NHE3.

H. Infill extensions should be subservient to the host building

H.1 Infill extensions between the more solid rear “closet wing” extensions should be supported up to one storey in height where properties start at ground level and up to two storeys in height where properties start at lower ground level. Such extensions do not need to be of uniform design and may, but, do not need to occupy the entire side return space.

H.2 Generally, these infills should be primarily lighter or transparent (glazed) facing the garden and set back from the more dominant solid extension. This setback should also preserve the square of garden at a minimum, even if an existing rear extension already intrudes into this square.

H.3 Infills that are part of a continuous projection at the lower ground or ground floor (not set back) could be supported provided the minimum garden sizes specified above remain, and different solutions to fenestration should be allowed, e.g., a steel and glass door system or matching pairs of French doors.

H.4 Similarly, should someone wish to have only a single storey extension across the entire width of their house, these should be supported, again provided the minimum garden sizes remain. Any additions above these single storey extensions later should only be supported if they are within the width, projection and height limits outlined above – again, to prevent the tall dark vertical spaces between extensions. End of terraces should be considered separately because of their impact on rear gardens and windows that are perpendicular.

H.5 Wherever additional hard surfaces have been added to the rear of our buildings, applications should show an increase in planted material to offset any increase in noise resulting from these additional hard surfaces.

H.6 Steps from upper infills or upper ground floors to garden level should be offset from garden walls and/or screened with plantings to restrict views down into neighbours' gardens.



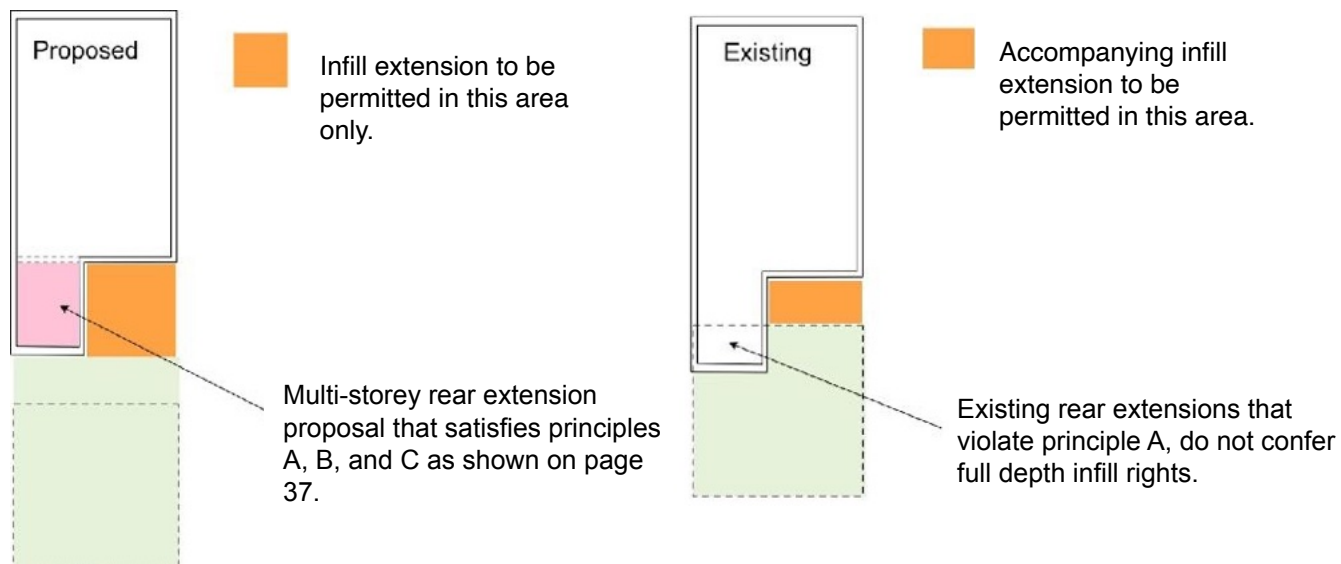
H.3 Illustrated



H.4 Illustrated

Justification:

1. Adding between rear extensions is a sustainable way to add more living space as it does not intrude upon viable garden areas. Height for glazed extensions is limited to connect them more with the privacy of garden areas rather than the full exposure of upper levels and will limit light pollution being introduced into neighbours' upper windows.



Single storey infill extensions for houses that start at ground level, or one or two storey infill extensions where a house starts at lower ground level are permitted provided principle A relating to garden size is fulfilled. This minimum garden size also applies to infill extension requests next to existing closet wing extensions, regardless of the existing closet wing depth.



Trellis for privacy - above 2 m high requires planning permission.

Two storey rear infills on buildings that start at lower ground levels. - modern example above from outside our area, traditional one below from our area.



The illustration at right shows that within certain limits, extensions can be designed to satisfy the needs of owners and give us a play of heights and shapes. Provided they are built of high quality materials, these can provide a reflection of life in the 21st century and architecture worth conserving for the next generation. The illustration is not meant to suggest specific designs, but to show how a lighter and more varied approach can create a more joyful rear aspect.



Above, backs of houses in another Westminster neighbourhood with a variety of conservatories, roof terraces, oriel windows and infill extensions.

Key to illustrations above. These houses start at lower ground level. (see numbers above mansard roofs)

- 1. Shows three storey rear extension with sloping roof, no infill.*
- 2. Shows rear roof terrace, an upper level shallow extension, and no extensions at ground level, maximising garden space.*
- 3. Shows two storey rear extension with roof terrace/garden, and single storey infill with roof light.*
- 4. Shows three storey rear extension with vaulted ceiling and single storey infill with green roof.*
- 5. Shows three storey rear extension with sloping roof and single storey infill with roof terrace.*
- 6. Shows three storey rear extension with green roof and two storey infill with planted roof.*
- 7. Shows two storey masonry rear extension and no infill.*

SECTION 3 - PUBLIC REALM AND OUR COMMUNITY

Signage, Shopfronts and Commercial Areas (NHE11)

Introduction

We are in favour of mixed residential / commercial neighbourhoods. Our businesses supply vital goods and services in convenient proximity to all of us and we want to support their efforts. The signage and lighting guidelines below are designed to promote an integrated and cohesive appearance that will benefit residents and shop owners alike.

NHE11

Proposals for shopfronts in the NHENF area should meet the following requirements:

- A. Shopfront signs must be of a high quality, made of sustainable materials, or painted onto a rendered fascia band.
- B. Where a historic painted fascia band exists, this band should be maintained at the same level and height across different properties.
- C. Any missing architectural features on the shopfront facade should be reinstated, especially shared corbels on the party wall.
- D. Lighting on shopfront signs should be spotlights or warm white strip lighting, shielded so that bulbs are not visible, and in a downward direction to protect the amenity of any residential windows above. No upward light or internal lighting in box signs will be permitted. Normally, plastic signs shall not be allowed with the exception of those demonstrating significant creativity and artistic merit.
- E. Signs and advertisements on street furniture at ground level shall not be permitted, and there should be no other promotional material on pavements.
- F. Proposals for planters or other greenery should be supported, provided they do not interfere with pedestrian movement.
- G. On our primary commercial streets, change of use from commercial to residential will be resisted.

Justifications

- 1. Westminster's City plan prohibits signs and advertisements on pavements, and this should be enforced to reduce the visual and physical clutter in our retail areas.
- 2. Planters with live plants add to the overall greening of an area, can enhance a shopfront and help soften the harsh asphalt and paved surfaces in front of commercial premises.
- 3. Changing use from commercial to residential breaks the retail frontage, decreasing footfall appeal and eventually results in retail desertification.
- 4. Using sustainable materials such as timber and metal for shopfronts contributes to environmental considerations and retains the character of our conservation area.
- 5. Lighting on urban streets plays an important role in creating a particular character and ambiance. Harsh backlit signs and unshielded cold LED lighting can feel aggressive and diminish the appearance of an area, whereas well-designed ambient lighting is inviting and can encourage participation. Refer to <https://www.darksky.org/our-work/lighting/>
- 6. Maintaining or restoring the original architectural details of the shopfronts, such as corbels and signboards adds to the charm and appeal of the area.



Storefronts in our area and others nearby showing painted sign bands, inviting lighting, hospitable pavements with planters.



SECTION 4 - OUR PROJECTS

Introduction

The form and function of our streets is as significant to our well-being as the places in which we live and work.

Development control alone is not sufficient to either describe or realise the aspirations we have for conserving and improving our area. Development control and building regulations only come into play when there are changes proposed to our building stock, and the cumulative effect on the neighbourhood is a slow one, even in periods of rapid redevelopment. There is still the street itself, which is the canvas onto which our properties sit. In changing how our streets are organised and what is on them, we can realise significant benefits to our neighbourhood. We therefore feel it necessary to spell out a vision for our streets and green spaces as central to our plan.

The projects in this section have been identified through a series of workshops with residents and are those things that will improve the quality of our streets and public spaces. There are two categories of projects, the larger scale projects, which will require significant funding and the cooperation of our neighbours in RBK&C and/ or stakeholders such as TFL, and the smaller projects that can be achieved more easily and quickly. They include changes to our street configuration, tree planting, improvements to our public gardens, monitoring of air quality, and additional community resources such as a notice board and drinking fountain.

Projects are possible when funding becomes available, and this comes from a variety of sources. Neighbourhood CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds are accrued when there is development in our area. Our Councillors have ward budgets that can be applied. There are also grants for the improvement of green spaces, lottery funding, and funding from the Mayor's office and Westminster for various programmes. Finally there is crowd funding and other ways to raise money locally, depending on the incentive.

Priorities are established during meetings with the community, and will be reviewed periodically.

Larger Scale Projects

- PR1 Fiveways
- PR2 St. Stephen's Gardens
- PR3 Needham Road
- PR4 Toaster Streets
- PR5 Wessex Gardens
- PR6 Pedestrian Crossings

Smaller Scale Projects

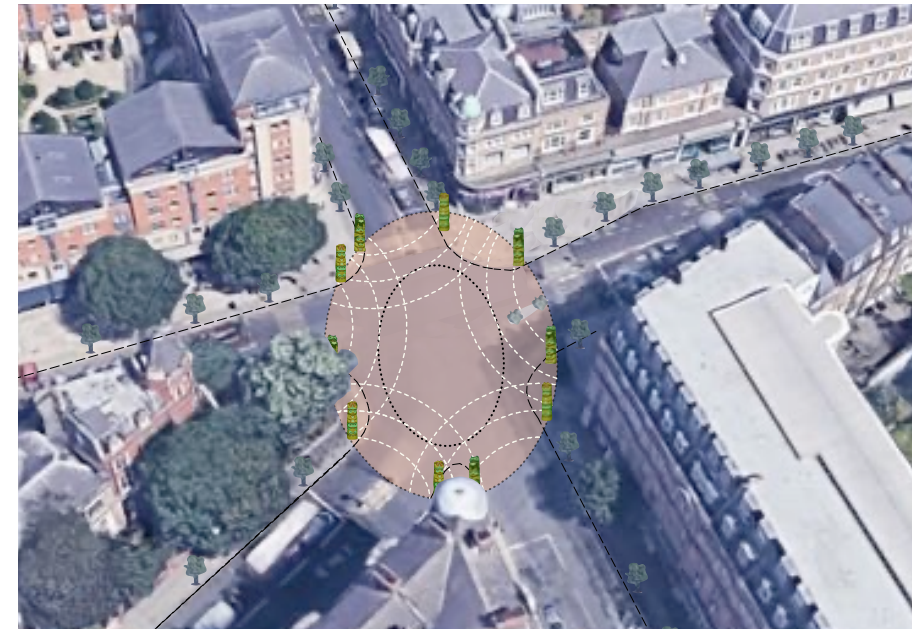
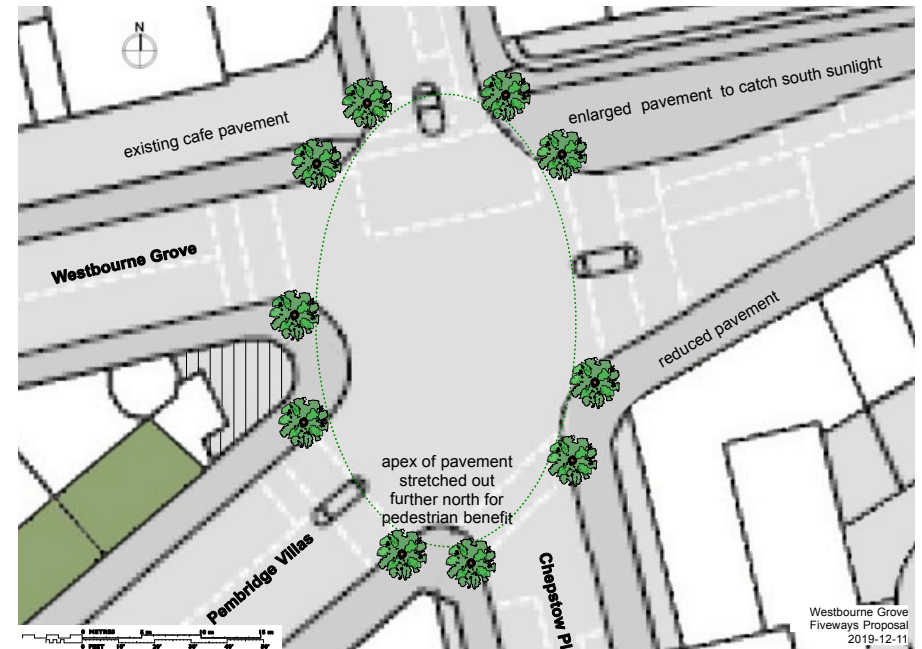
- PR7 Air Quality Monitoring
- PR8 Street Lamp Replacement
- PR9 Business support and branding
- PR10 Drinking Fountain
- PR11 Public Art
- PR12 Additional Street Trees
- PR13 Notting Hill East Design Guide

Fiveways (PR1)

Fiveways sits at the boundary of two boroughs – Westminster and RBK&C, and is part of three Amenity Societies/ Neighbourhood Forums: NHENF, the Pembridge Association (PA) & the Bayswater Residents' Association (BRA). A key pedestrian route running east west - Queensway to Portobello, and south north - Notting Hill Gate to Queens Park, and part of five bus routes, it is one of the most significant junctions in West London. Nearly everyone north of the park passes through, but few pedestrians stop, or even pause because the confusing peripheral chain of crossings encourages them to skirt the junction or avoid it altogether.

The current intersection has generous edges and some optical depth and perspective making it an important focal point; these could be optimised with some transformational pavement widening and enhancement. The proposed changes include an ellipse of paired greened markers to define the five street entries, and Oxford Circus-like crossing from any and all corners simultaneously to improve pedestrian circulation and safety. Expanding the south-facing pavements and corner apexes would push traffic away from the edges and provide more space for greenery between a newly configured traffic flow and a lively ring of pavement cafes and food sellers. A domed central road surface will slow traffic and give pedestrians a lift as they pass across. Like Seven Dials, this would become a place to go to and linger, becoming a community asset.

The scheme was developed in conjunction with the Pembridge Association and will require coordination between RBK&C and Westminster; both have expressed an interest in participating. NHENF would work with the PA, BRA, RBK&C, WCC highways and TFL to fund and implement these changes.



DAVID REA
ARCHITECTS

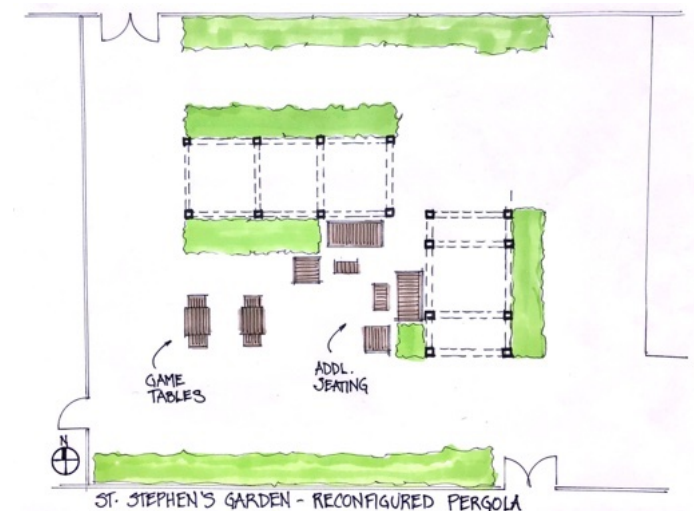
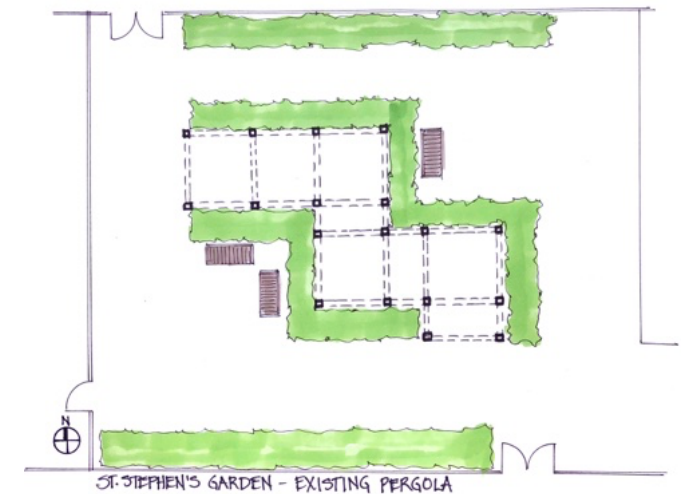
PROJECT : 5 Way Junction Design

St. Stephen's Gardens (PR2)

St. Stephen's Garden provides a good variety of recreation: children's play area, table tennis, a grass "hill" for sunbathing, and a quiet area on the east end with bench to read a book. The pergola provides structure but is dark and awkward to pass through.

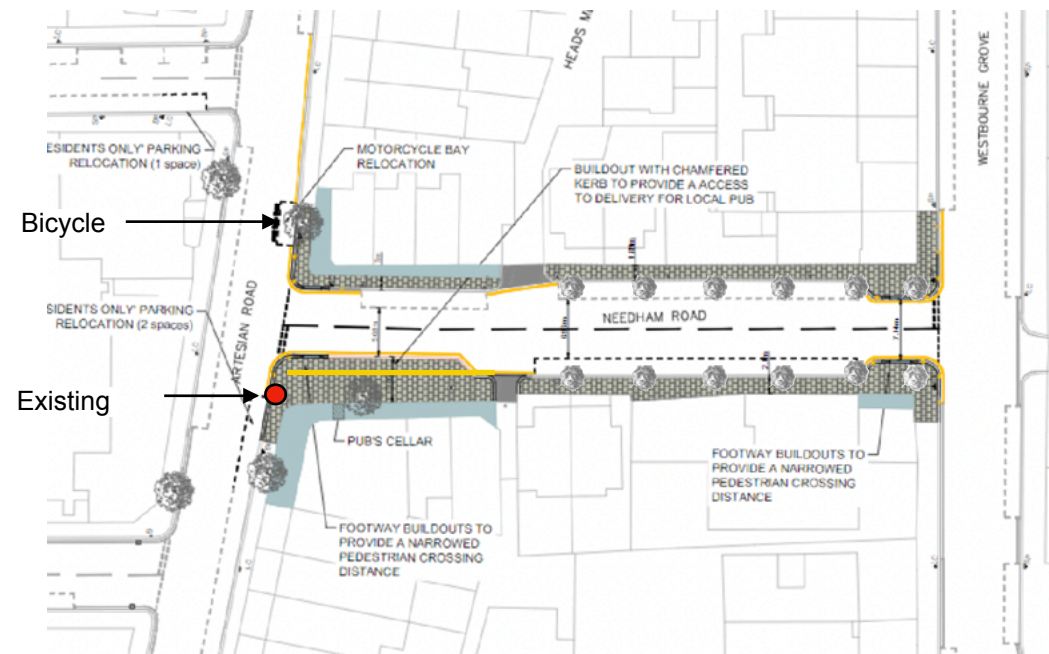
Our proposals for the garden include some revision to the pergola to open it up and add some small tables and chairs to facilitate the playing of outdoor board games.

With additional help from an urban designer, we would like to investigate how St. Stephen's Garden square might be connected to its extension on the east side of Chepstow Road through landscaping changes, explore a connection with St. Mary of the Angels school across Shrewsbury Road, and look at how it might become part of a wider greenway link to the canals of Little Venice and a path to Kensington Gardens.



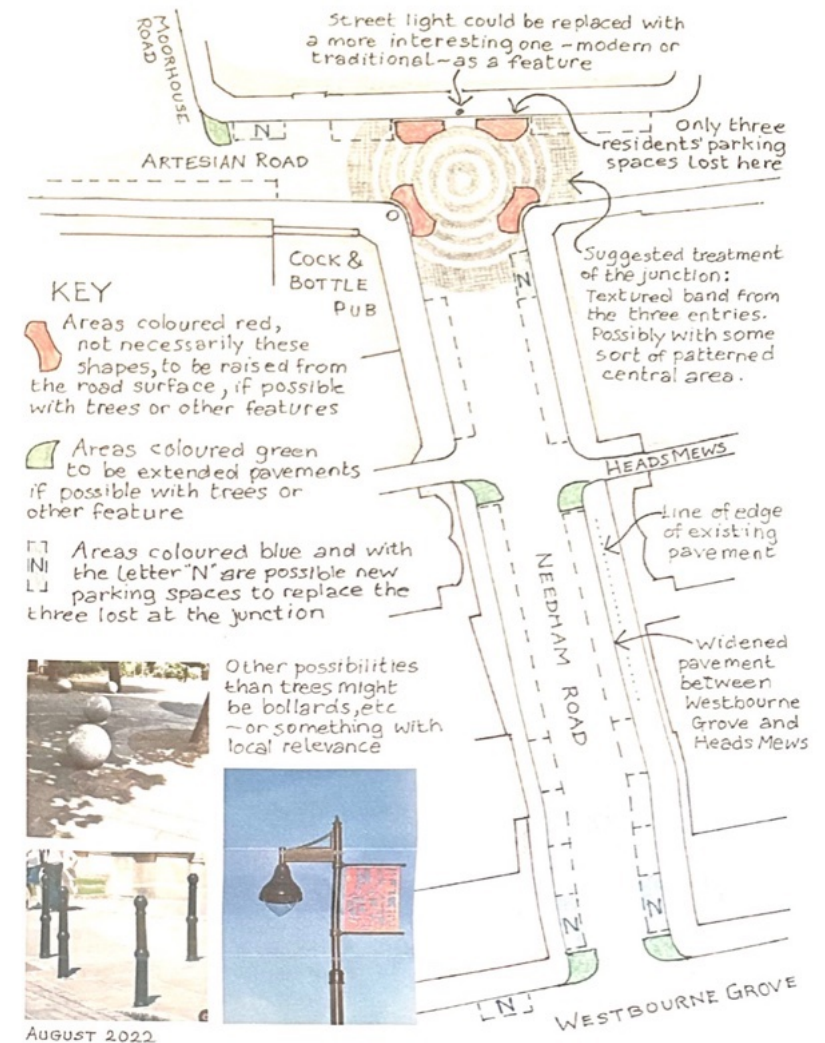
Needham Road (PR3)

Needham Road was once a destination for pedestrians with its charming shops and art galleries and popular pub. The road is short and wide with attractive architecture mirrored on each side and a significant focal point, St. Mary of the Angels church at the north end. These features suggest an opportunity to consider landscape changes to enhance the public space and intersection with Artesian Road. Proposals for pavement changes, trees and some rearranging of parking and street furniture have been generated by residents on several occasions, shown in the drawings below. Feasibility and funding will determine the final scheme, and residents will have the opportunity to have an ongoing role in the decisions.



SUGGESTIONS FOR NEEDHAM ROAD AND THE JUNCTION WITH ARTESIAN ROAD

AIM: TO SLOW THE TRAFFIC AND TO MAKE THIS A MORE PLEASANT PLACE



The Interior Streets (PR4)

The completely residential toaster streets (so named because they resemble a toaster on a map), and other interior streets are sometimes used as rat runs, jeopardising their function as spaces for social interaction and children's play. Their traditional separation of road and pavement gives users of motor vehicles a sense of entitlement and priority over others on the actual road surface. This attitude interferes with turning these and our other streets into places, where adults and children alike can meet, greet and play. We have no intention of stopping any vehicle using our streets, but driving in or through them needs to be done with the utmost concern and care for other street users. (But it is assumed that the point of 'peak car' has passed and with driverless technologies the motor vehicle should be a less dominant element of our streetscape in the future. This will release, through time, more space from from parking to other activities.) We are going to move towards SLOWER STREETS by a series of major and minor adjustments.

Research has shown that the best way to return streets to all users and turn them into places is to challenge the driver by changing the street architecture, so they longer feel they have priority. This is called "shared space" and reminds drivers that they are only one road user in charge of a potentially dangerous weapon and must proceed with great care. The best way to create PLACES is to entirely extinguish the demarcation of road and pavement.

We will work with residents to evaluate options for permanent and temporary changes at the beginning and ends of streets and possibly in the centre, to ensure that traffic in all local streets moves slowly, safely and efficiently, and is always aware of the greater right of other users.

In addition we will allow any of the interior streets to be closed off for organised events and play time, but no more than one street at any time. All traffic can still easily get through by using an alternative road.



Shown above, narrower entrance/exit, shown at right, wider pavements, shown below, Play Street.

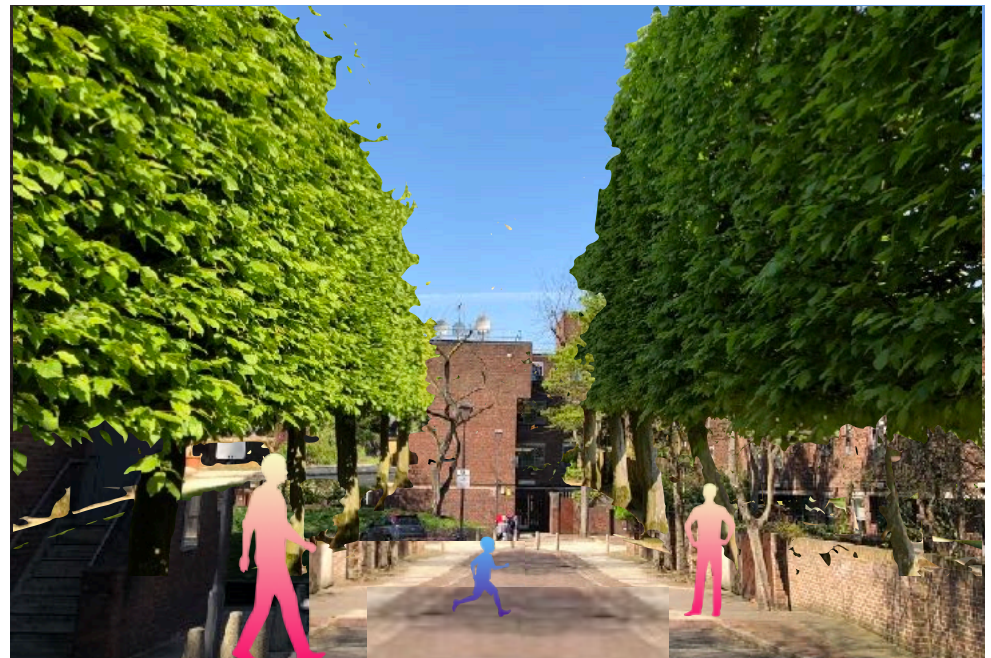
Base Drawings from Westbourne Conservation Area Audit



Wessex Gardens (PR5)

The entrances into Wessex Gardens are either pedestrian switchbacks or service roads. There is no visual or physical connection to the rest of the neighbourhood to the south and east. Crossing Talbot Road en-route to the shops on Westbourne Grove, Notting Hill Gate transport links and various schools on Moorhouse and farther south can be dangerous because of car speeds and lack of crossings. Exterior lighting at entrances to buildings is harsh and uninviting. Residents would like these things improved.

Our proposals would be developed to connect Wessex Gardens firmly with the rest of the area. These changes could include raised crossings or shared surfaces at the service roads to allow unimpeded walking along the north side of Talbot Road, protected crossings across Talbot Road, and additional ground level and vertical landscape features to assert the pedestrian priority of these service roads and deemphasise the vehicular use. We would also want to study ways to protect and improve the amphitheatre-like qualities of the interior garden spaces and replace exterior lighting with more attractive types.



Adding landscape features at the front of service roads or creating corridors of greenery can de-emphasise vehicular dominance and create a more inviting pedestrian entrance and space within.

Pedestrian Crossings (PR6)

Ledbury Road is a busy thoroughfare intersecting a busy shopping section of Westbourne Grove. Although there is a zebra crossing across Westbourne Grove, there aren't any protected crossings across Ledbury. As this is at the boundary of our area, we will work with RBK&C to try to add a crossing here, or further north near Artesian Road.

Talbot Road, despite being designated a Quiet Way, has significant traffic, and because of its width and length, speeding is an issue. There is family pedestrian traffic from Wessex to points south, including the daycare at St. Mary of the Angels, and a pedestrian crossing across Talbot would be beneficial.

A pedestrian crossing at the top of Shrewsbury Road across Westbourne Park Road, and some modification of the railings on the north side of Westbourne Park Road opposite the end of Shrewsbury Road would enable pedestrians and cyclists to cross there and enjoy traveling through the green spaces of the Brunel Estate on their way to the Westbourne Park Tube stop.

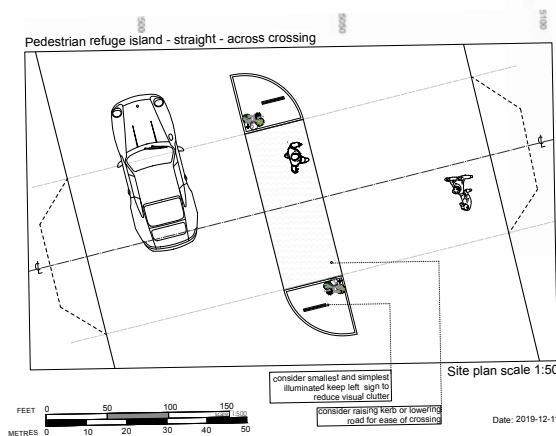
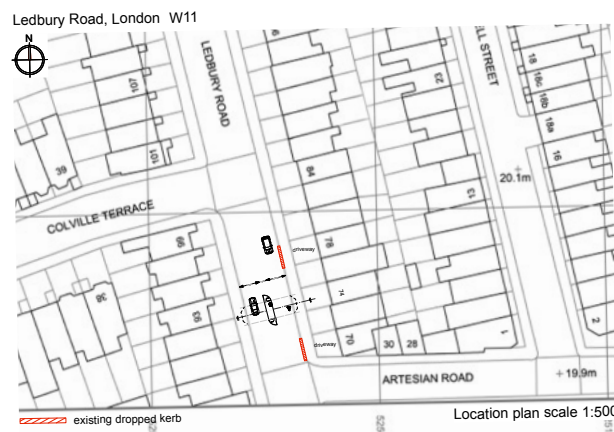


Key

Local street	Local place	NHENF boundary
Local connector	Town Square	Bus stop
High street		Tube station
Connector		



Three new pedestrian crossings. Exact locations to be reviewed with WCC Highways (and RBK&C at Ledbury Road).



Air Quality Monitoring (PR7)

We live in a neighbourhood with high levels of pollution, and residents should know what local levels are so they can be alerted on bad days. We will work with TFL and WCC to install air quality monitoring devices in our area.

Street Lamp Replacement (PR8)

We have modern and light polluting street lamps in our area, and residents have overwhelmingly supported the idea of replacement with more historic and less bright models. In order to cut down on the light pollution entering residents' windows, especially upper storey ones, we will work with Westminster lighting officers to replace our street lamps with lower ones in a more heritage style, similar to those in Botts Mews and Addison Avenue, shown at right, foot level lighting where appropriate, or a "smart lighting system" now being installed in other cities.



Botts Mews Lantern



Addison Avenue Street Lamps

Business Support and Branding (PR9)

We will work with a branding or retail consultant to create an alternative advertising element that is exclusive to our area and to strengthen the identity of our area as a destination, and with our businesses to raise awareness about those things that we feel will aesthetically enhance our area and increase their appeal.

Drinking Fountain (PR10)

To help cut down on plastic waste, we will work with our Councillors to determine the best place for a drinking fountain in our area, and initiate a design competition to design one.



Spain - The appeal of a public drinking fountain.

Public Art (PR11)

Public Art supports the artist and elevates the public realm. We will ask residents to suggest places where public art might be appropriate and will work with them to select the art and raise the funds.

Additional Street Trees (PR12)

We will work with WCC's tree department to get more trees planted on Talbot Road and in other locations identified by our residents.

Notting Hill East Design Guide (PR13)

There is currently very little information to guide residents when reinstating historic elements to their buildings, and professional advice is expensive. Reinstating the correct historic detail is important to the street as a whole. We would like to provide this information so that residents have a better chance at positive outcomes when applying for permission to alter their homes and gardens. We will work with Westminster's oversight in drafting a Design Guide for our area, similar to Pimlico's Design Guide. Additionally, we would like to have a say in the design and placement of street and park furniture for our area, and will work with the appropriate departments at Westminster to ensure we are consulted when changes are considered.



Talbot Road is one location identified as a place for additional street trees.

Appendix 1 - History of the Forum

The Localism Act of 2011 made it possible for members of our community to get involved with neighbourhood planning at a local level. In 2012 and 2013, members of our existing amenity society, the Westbourne Neighbourhood Association (WNA) attended courses at Urban Design London and decided to try to become a neighbourhood forum. After a large meeting in our local church and with the support of the community, we submitted an application with 30 signatories, including councillors, to become a designated area and forum. During this time, members of our association attended meetings of the Wessex Gardens residents' association, who chose to be a part of Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum (NHENF), not the Westbourne Neighbourhood Forum. Our area was designated by Westminster in 2014 and was accepted as a forum later that year. The NHENF has a Steering Committee of 9 and, spanning two wards, 6 local Councillors who have been involved with and support the objectives of the Plan.

The popularity of our area rests on several obvious factors: the quiet charm of many of our tree-lined streets and well tended front gardens, a close proximity to a wide variety of pubs, shops and restaurants, five useful bus routes and three underground stations just a short walk away. Queensway, Portobello Road market and Kensington Gardens are nearby. But there are less obvious factors at work attracting and retaining people, such as a well established community, perhaps a result of a large proportion of residents working from home and remaining at weekends. Children play in our streets. There are well attended churches and several respected GP practices.

The 2011 Census reveals that the demographic composition of the area mirrors closely that of London as a whole with a variety of cultures and backgrounds. There are rich and poor living in close proximity, with over 30% being described of having at least 1 of 4 factors of deprivation. 33% of homes are owned, 27% are social rented and 36% are private rented.

As an area of architectural and social interest, it has attracted waves of incomers - artists, actors, professional people, and following London's "Big Bang" in 1986, more people from the business and financial sector. This influx has resulted in a great deal of construction activity including basement developments. For all of these changes, there is strong community spirit evidenced by steady attendance at community gatherings. Whilst a problem in London, there is currently little evidence of many local properties being left unoccupied. The Council's policy of supporting and encouraging the provision of family-sized units seems to have halted subdivision and any subsequent social blight, and has preserved our streets and estates as good places to bring up families.

The density of development - 223 residents per hectare, puts pressure on existing spaces as households grow. This Plan is designed to allow properties to develop in ways that enhance the well-being of occupiers by fully incorporating modern standards of comfort, convenience, and sustainability whilst at the same time improving the design and external qualities of the buildings, and retaining the reasonable privacy of neighbours. An attempt has been made to ensure that developments always give back something positive to the community in terms of restoring architectural detail and enhancing ecological wellbeing.

Our ever-improving private spaces have not been matched in the public realm and the projects in our plan seek to address this imbalance. They are designed to make our streets safer, greener and more user-friendly, shifting the priority of street users towards pedestrians and cyclists, and at the same time implementing proposals designed to make our public spaces more beautiful.

Our history as an active amenity society means that we see our Neighbourhood Plan as but one step in an ongoing effort to enhance our environment. The participation we've had at events addressing our plan ensures that this document has been the result of an iterative process of debate and consultation with residents, council officers, councillors, and other agencies.

Appendix 2 - Our Challenges

Whilst our area is innately attractive it has great potential to be even better.

Our public realm is sub-optimal in several important ways. Vehicles often use our streets as rat runs, reducing our ability to turn our streets into **Places**. Chepstow Road (A4207) lined with grade 2 listed houses of great architectural significance and carrying 4 bus routes, bisects our area and leads to the congested five-way intersection with Westbourne Grove, imposing noise, vibration and pollution. Some of our streets have utilitarian street furniture and cheap paving. Our parks, while improving, could still be optimised with furniture, plantings and amenities like a drinking fountain or coffee cart.

Solution

Develop priorities for public realm improvements through consultations with residents, and direct CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds to these, such as enhancements to our parks. Work closely with Highways during the yearly street improvements to gradually turn our streets into “places” through the reconfiguration of pavements. Work with adjacent Amenity Societies in RBKC and other interest groups and stakeholders on a scheme for the previously mentioned Fiveways junction to get traffic moving efficiently and improve the pedestrian areas. These solutions are further described in our Projects section.



Paving on some of our streets.



Like many areas of London, ours could be susceptible to the sort of investment demand in ‘buy to leave’ properties that hollows out an area.

Solution

- Within limits, have policies that allow a wide range of property alterations and expansions to encourage residents to adapt their properties to changing family needs rather than moving, thus reducing the number of properties churning. See policies NHE7, NHE8 and NHE9.
- Support government policies that tax unoccupied homes.
- Implement policies requiring that front gardens remain planted areas as these require attention and care. See policy NHE5.
- Encourage residents to continue to give input about improvements to the area and participate in community events to create a greater sense of community and a reluctance to leave.

Despite being in a conservation area, original design detail and planted garden areas are often lost during redevelopment and improvement.

Solution

- Wherever possible, planning proposals need to include specific detailed greening and slow water run-off by replacing paved fronts with more soft landscaping and porous, spaced pavers. See policy NHE5.
- Proposals must show evidence that applicants have identified and, where appropriate, copied the best examples in the street or terrace, and consulted archived design guides, e.g. Westminster’s “Roofs - A Guide to Alterations and Extensions on Domestic Buildings”. See policy NHE7.

The problem with short term lets.

Whilst the occasional letting of rooms to holiday makers or holiday property exchanges are often to the benefit of the home occupiers and the community as a whole, the wholesale letting of properties not suitable or safe for short term letting poses dangers as well as problems of noise, litter and fire risk. They are also unfair competition to businesses that conform to regulations and pay taxes.

Solution

Refer to Westminster City Council policy on short lets, updated February 2021.

Urban blight resulting from dilapidation, lack of maintenance, and visual clutter from household equipment.

Solution

- Endorse existing policies that prohibit unsightly hanging wires, aerials and satellite dishes, and put pressure on disinterested landlords to maintain their property.
- Annual neighbourhood inspection with ward councillors and appropriate council officers to make and implement an action list.

Some existing constraints, justified on debatable historic or ecological grounds provide few perceivable public benefits.

The tension between preserving historical or ecological features must be balanced with their technical performance and the utility of the user. Conservation and listing has never meant to prohibit all change and the need for providing modern standards of amenity and more usable living space within our older buildings need to be reflected in what is permissible. Releasing more usable living space out of our buildings makes sense in periods of housing shortage and high property prices.

- e.g. 1. The jagged roof line of several of our streets has been ossified when a conservation audit was interpreted as requiring a prohibition on roof extensions.
- e.g. 2. The standard rear extension model in stock brick can condemn our backs to a monotonous repetition of over-dominant, architecturally uninspired shoebox extensions
- e.g. 3. The prohibition of appropriate modern discrete glazing insulation solutions on graded properties condemns occupiers to archaic living conditions.
- e.g. 4. Protection of inappropriate trees in inappropriate locations result in the darkening of neighbours windows, damage to foundations, and shading of other plants.

Solution

Relax the constraints as described in policies NHE7, NHE9, NHE10 and NHE2.



Lime tree in our area

Appendix 3 - Composition of our area

Our area has three distinct architectural parts:

1. The early Victorian grid of streets

The first and most dominant is a grid of streets with mainly early Victorian terraces (often referred to as the toast rack or toaster streets), built rapidly between 1845 and 1860. Not being part of any great estate, these streets were laid out and built speculatively as terraces, often with elaborate ironwork, butterfly roofs behind straight parapets, and small front and rear gardens. These streets are somewhat different from each other in style but often with internal coherence in the street itself. Much of Chepstow Road (reminiscent of Nash terraces) Hereford Road, and a row of properties on Sutherland Place are of enough architectural significance to be grade 2 listed. Some streets are better tended than others, but the general impression is that the area is one of comfortable houses and flats with well kept front gardens. Sadly, car parking space has replaced some of these. In addition to the terraced houses, some streets contain small mansion blocks, and Bridstow Place, tucked between Hereford Road and Chepstow Road, has charming pairs of small cottages.

Our plan will conserve the essential historic character of these properties but will allow ecological and architectural adaptation to benefit the inhabitants and the neighbourhood as a whole. See policies NHE5, NHE6, NHE7, NHE9 & NHE10.



Terraced houses on Northumberland Place looking south

2. The Modern garden courtyard housing developments

Forming integral parts of our area are Wessex Gardens and the Westbourne apartments, built between 1978 and 1985. Wessex Gardens, a social and private housing project of 1978 situated in the Westbourne Ward, is composed of 7 modernist red brick structures of various heights, balconied and terraced, and overlooking several amphitheatre-like green spaces. It is adjacent to a public garden and a primary school but has no direct connection. The newer Westbourne is a 5 storey private post-modern development surrounding a well-maintained and pleasant garden courtyard for residents, reminiscent of the quad of a university college.

Of the two, our plan focuses more on Wessex Gardens and suggests preserving the internal green spaces, implementing landscaping projects to integrate this estate better with its neighbours to the south and east, and studying, with residents, opportunities for adding additional storeys to some of the buildings to add to housing stock in the neighbourhood, or rooftop greening or other amenities. See project PR5.



The Westbourne



Wessex Gardens

3. Two significant spaces and several mews and alleys:

The third and final architectural part includes buildings much grander in scale than the smaller Victorian single family houses; the white terraces flanking St Stephen's Gardens and extending beyond Chepstow Road to the east. Due to their size, they are now mostly divided into flats. Needham Road, at a smaller scale, presents an opportunity for enhancement at street level due to its width, matching bow-fronted buildings with their formal classical proportions, and the remaining small charming shop fronts. In addition to these two more formal spaces are the Bridstow Place cottages and a variety of modern and historic mews and alleys.

In our plan, we will explore opportunities for St. Stephen's Gardens and Needham Road to include additional greening, modified pavement surfaces and links to pedestrian areas outside of the area which could improve the success of small independent shops. Policies PR3 and PR3.



Needham Road looking north.



Bridstow Place



St. Stephen's Gardens



Botts Mews at left and Heads Mews at right.



4. Our Green Spaces:

- Shrewsbury Gardens - informal, dogs allowed. (Westbourne Ward)
- St. Stephen's Gardens - more formal, children's play space. (Bayswater Ward)
- Two spaces within Wessex Gardens - more formal, some play space. (Westbourne Ward)
- The back gardens of our terraced houses which when combined, form large green spaces.

Our plan will address the deficiencies of these spaces and suggest projects for improvements. See projects PR2, PR5 and PR6.



*Shrewsbury at left,
St. Stephen's below.*



5. The Routes and Junctions:

- Shown below, the Five-Way intersection where Westbourne Grove meets Pembridge Crescent, Chepstow Road and Chepstow Place - always a busy crossroads. Previously known as Bradleys' Corner after the large Bradley and Sons store at the corner of Westbourne Grove and Chepstow Place, (now Baynards Apartments) and ringed by other buildings of architectural interest: the iconic 'gothic' triangular building, formerly the National Provincial Bank, the art nouveau building on the northeast corner that was Elliot's Shoe Shop, and Viscount Court on the southwest corner with its pair of cupola towers, this junction was sometimes described as "Little Paris".
- The major routes: Chepstow (A4207) Ledbury, Westbourne Grove, & Westbourne Park Rd.
- The minor routes: Talbot & Hereford Roads, now both Quietway cycle routes.

Our plan is to develop projects to make these more attractive, less polluting & more efficient. See project PR1.



6. The Businesses:

- Mainly shops along Westbourne Grove, Ledbury Road, Westbourne Park Road, and Chepstow Road.
- Offices on Needham Road.
- The many self-employed people who work from home.

Our plan includes several policies and projects to make these more inviting and help them to succeed. See policy NHE11 and project PR9.



Shops on Chepstow Road

7. Other Institutions:

There are two schools, two churches and five public houses.



St. Stephen's School



The Cock and Bottle Pub



St. Mary of the Angels Church

Appendix 4 - Location map and Street Types in the Notting Hill East Area

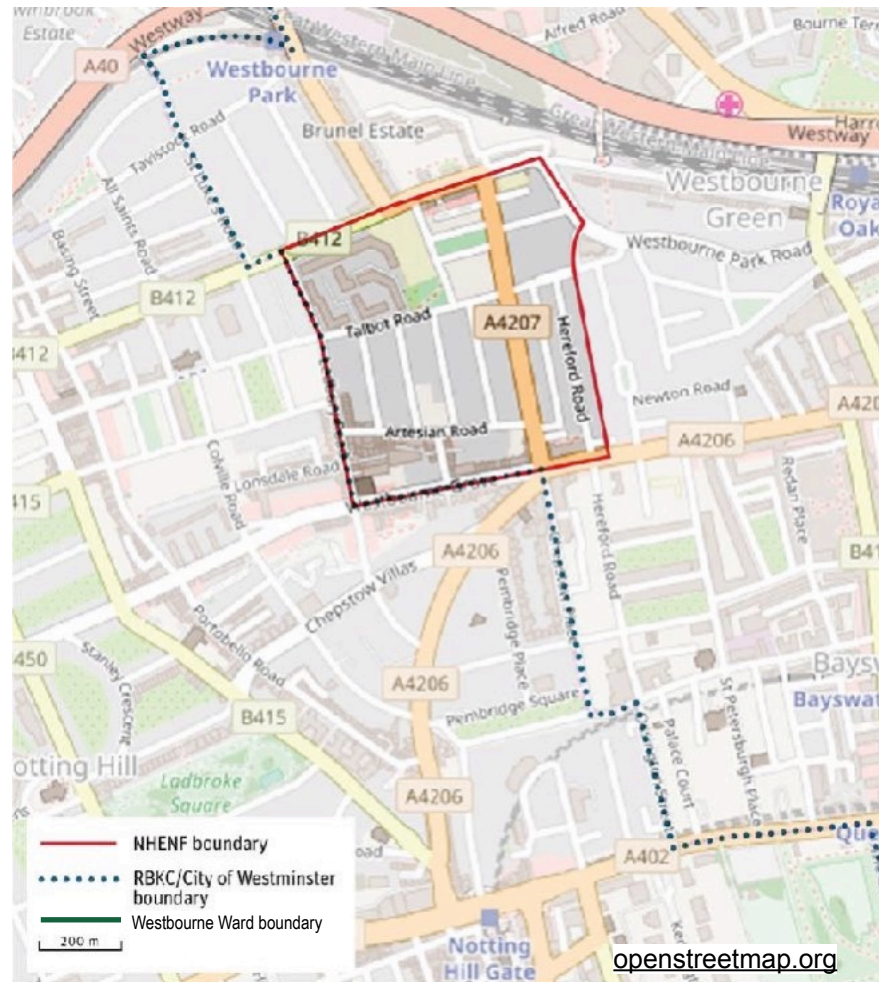
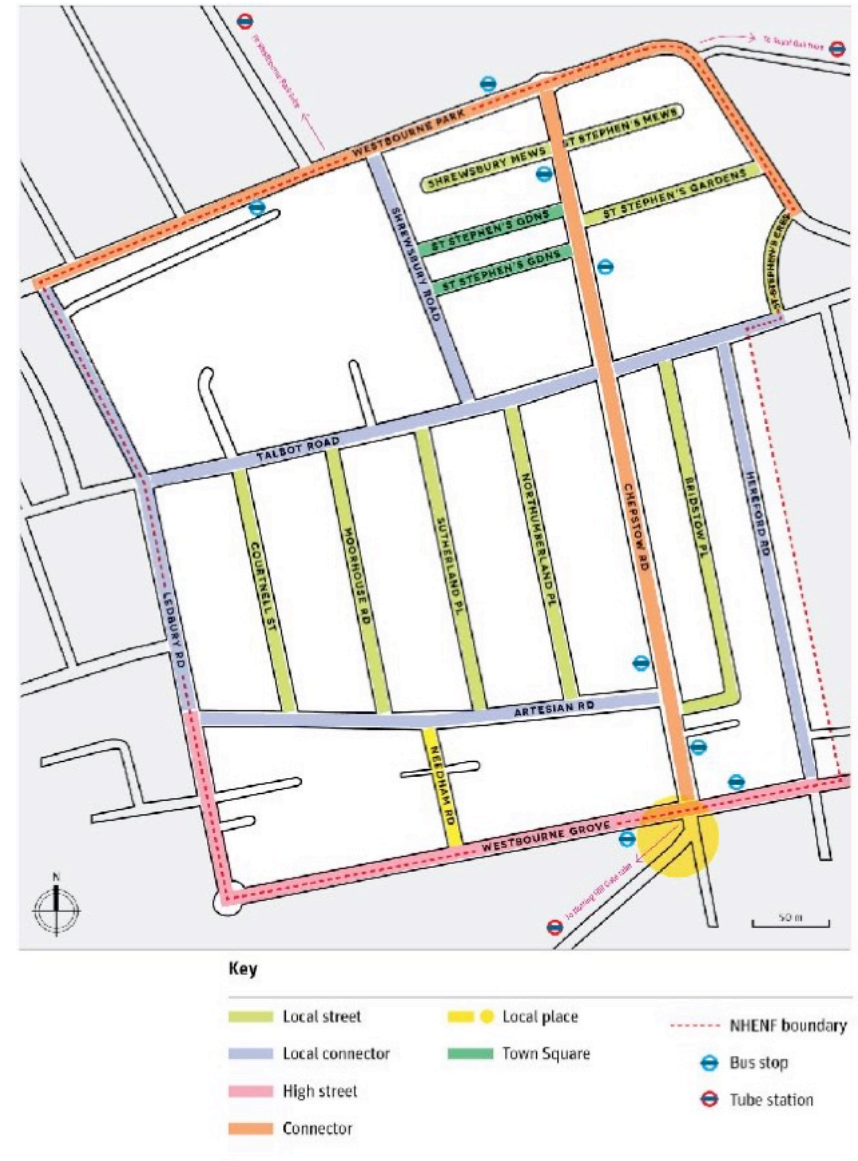


Diagram 2: Street types in Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum area



Appendix 5 - Design Elements, Railings



The original Northumberland Place railings had spear or fleur-de-lys shaped heads, and a secondary rail and dog bars at the base.



Modern Northumberland Place railings



Historic Sutherland Place railings at left, modern ones at right.



Artesian and Chepstow Road railings



Courtnell Street railings



Talbot Road North railings



Talbot Road South railings

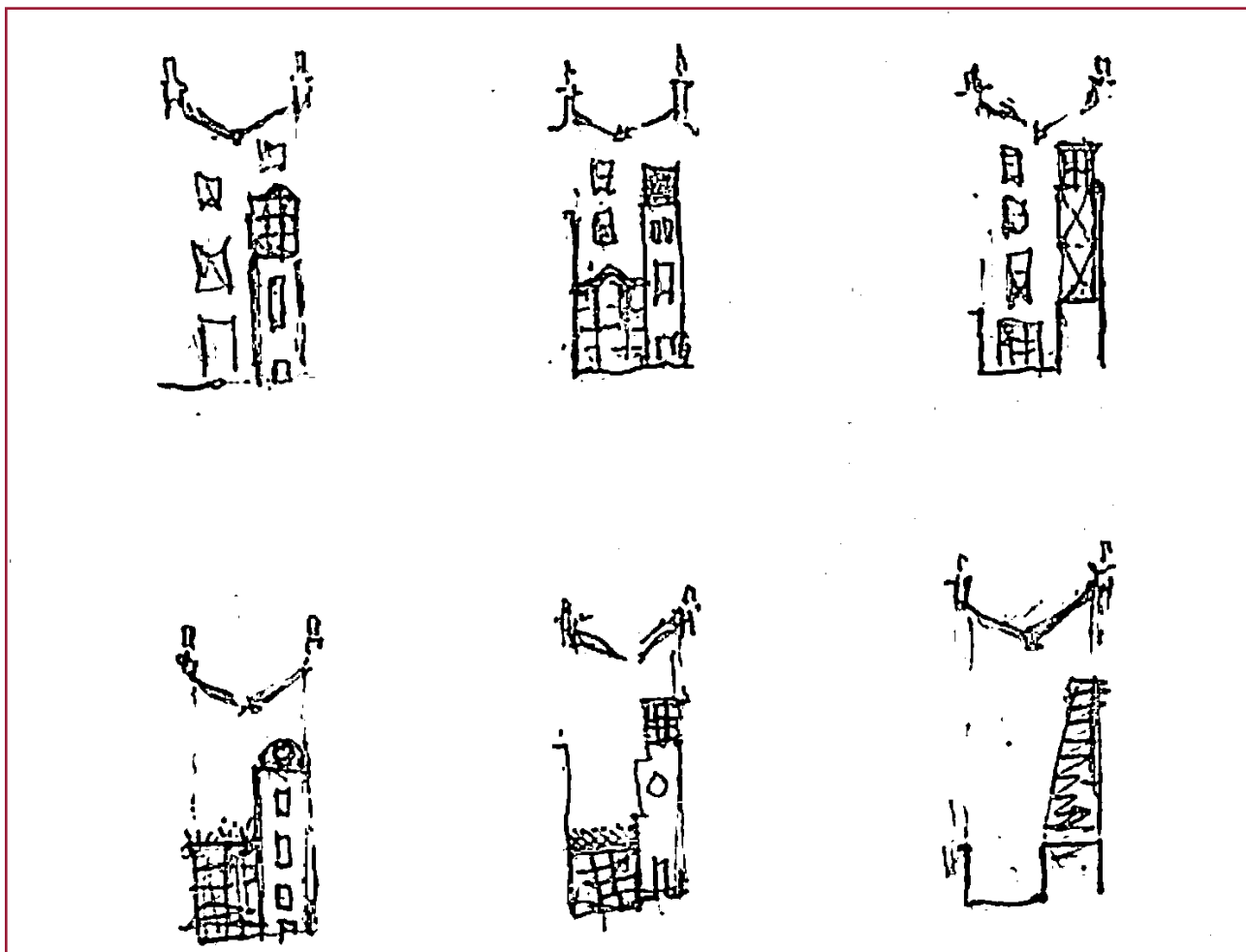


St. Stephen's Gardens South railings



St. Stephen's Gardens North railings

Design Elements, Schematic sketches to encourage innovative ideas for rear extensions



Schematic sketches showing innovative ideas for back extensions.

Design Elements - Inspiration



DOS ARCHITECTS - Duncan Terrace

Thinking outside the masonry box - rear extensions outside our area.



STUDIO 30 ARCHITECTS - The Study House



“The Sun Rain Room is a two storey extension and restoration of a Grade II listed Georgian townhouse. The extension reframes the rear of the building by amplifying the characteristics found within its fabric. Designed and constructed by Tonkin Liu in collaboration with local craftspeople, it serves as a both a studio for the practice and a home for the partners’ family.”

The project above by Tonkin Liu shows that an alternative approach to the recent standardisation of back extensions is possible. The scheme brings significant benefits to the host building and outdoor areas, and to the neighbouring buildings and adjacent gardens. The water absorbing and rainwater collecting roof adds to the building’s environmental credentials.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following individuals and groups for their help in putting this Plan together:

1. Our residents, who showed an interest in and appetite for improvements to our area, and continue to give us valuable ideas and feedback.
2. Richard Perkins, NHENF Chairman from 2020 - 2023 who was instrumental in getting the Forum and Neighbourhood Plan underway back in 2014, has been a steady contributor ever since, and as a long term resident of the neighbourhood, has provided valuable insight into both the strengths and challenges of the area.
3. Suzanne Forte, NHENF Chairman from 2017-2020 whose tireless efforts have been crucial in shaping our plan and who continues to be one of the key contributors to its development, both by shaping our policies and by acting as a vital link to other Westminster Forums and the WCC.
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13. David Sear at Westminster Parks for his ongoing help with the improvement works on our two public gardens.