Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Plan 2026-2046 Made Plan





Foreword

Our neighbourhood reflects the 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 the public realm lags behind.

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. A Neighbourhood Plan gives local residents and businesses the opportunity to shape the future of their area by introducing local planning policies that reflect its character, needs and aspirations.

How are they created?

A Neighbourhood Plan is shaped by the people who live and work in the area. It must be developed through community consultation and supported by a formal referendum. Our residents and businesses contributed ideas, shared views and responded to consultations and surveys. Our first draft Plan was published in 2018, followed by further consultation and refinements.

Our Neighbourhood Plan has now been formally adopted, marking an important milestone for our community. It provides locally supported planning policies to help protect our neighbourhoods character and guide its future development.

How will this make our area better?

The Plan introduces policies designed to deliver a range of benefits; supporting high-quality living spaces, encouraging energy-efficient buildings and helping address climate change. It seeks to conserve the historic architectural features on the fronts of buildings while allowing greater design freedom at the rear. It also provides guidance on improved street lighting and more attractive shopfronts. Importantly, it aims to preserve our area's leafy, garden-rich character through tree planting, protection of garden spaces and conservation of our green environment.

The adopted Plan now forms part of the statutory planning framework for our neighbourhood. Its policies will be used by Westminster City Council's Planning Team when considering relevant planning applications, helping ensure future development respects local character and reflects community priorities.



Image 1

How will it work?

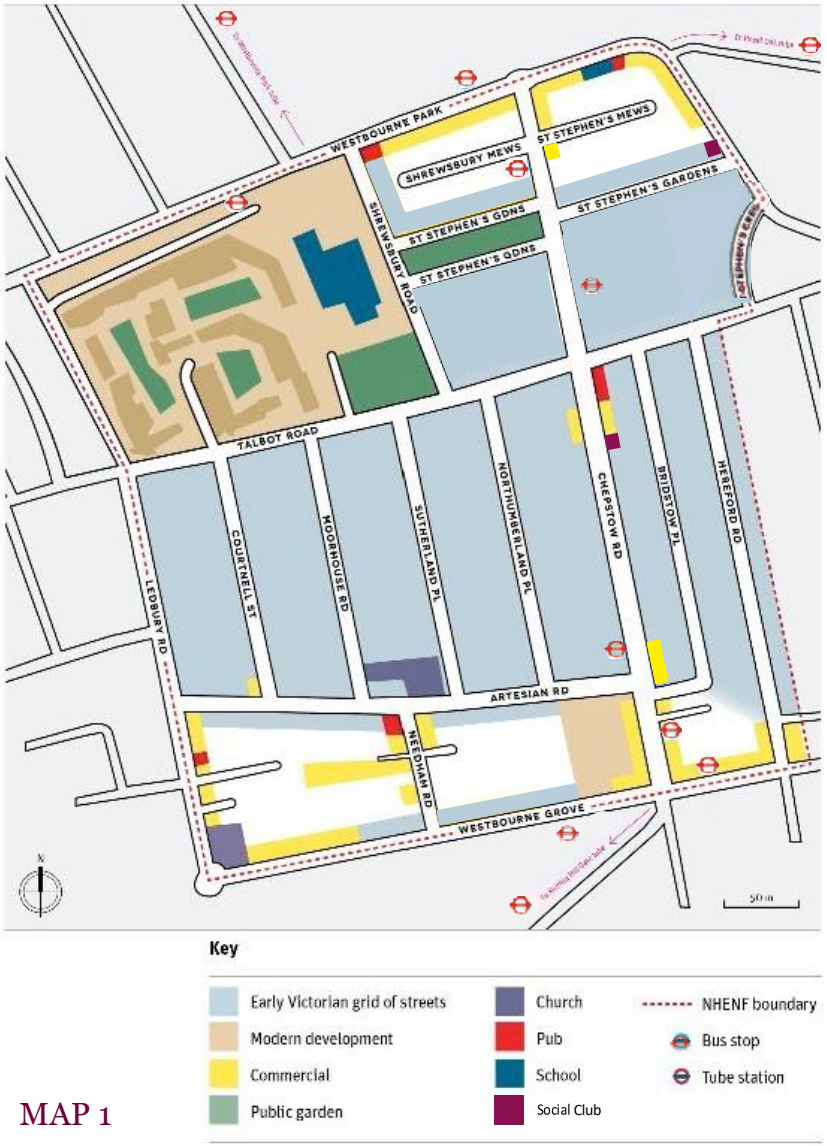
The Neighbourhood Forum has taken the ideas and comments from our consultations and surveys, refined them, and created a set of policies and their Justifications. Now that our plan has been adopted, these will become our planning guidance and controls for the next 20 years. While policies must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the London Plan and the 2019-2040 Westminster City Plan, we have added policies or 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



MAP 1

Our Objectives

Our overall aim is to protect our architectural integrity, prevent over-development 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:

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 of 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 Policies

The following policies emerged from the consultation process

NHE1 - Local Green Space

designate Shrewsbury Gardens as a Local Green Space to preserve it for community use and hopefully attract investment from community funds.

NHE2 -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.

NHE3 - Our Gardens

proposals to protect front and back gardens. The ambition is to preserve our neighbourhood's garden heritage for generations to come.

NHE4 - Reinstatement of Architectural Detail

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

NHE5 - Energy Conservation and Generation

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

NHE6 - Underground Development

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

NHE7 - Roof Extensions and Mansards

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

NHE 8 - Rear Extensions and 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.

NHE9 - Commercial Shopfronts

proposals aimed at upgrading the design of shop and storefronts that are complementary to the neighbourhood area.

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 adding furniture and elements to encourage social interaction.

PR3 - Needham / Artesian Roads

rearrange pavements and plantings at Needham and Artesian Roads.

PR4 - The Interior Streets

slow traffic on the interior streets through pavement changes and allow temporary closures for social and community gatherings.

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 & GUIDANCE	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 Local Green Space	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 Local Green Space, Appendix 9 Trees (guidance only), NHE2 Rooftop Terraces, NHE3 Our Gardens, NHE6 Underground Development, NHE8 Rear Extensions, NHE12 Commercial Buildings and Developments		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.	Appendix 9 Trees (guidance only)		WCC Trees
4	Protect and restore the historic features on the street facing elevations of our buildings and encourage the reinstatement of lost features.	NHE4 Reinstatement of Architectural Detail, NHE7 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.	NHE2 Rooftop Terraces, Appendix 10 Light Pollution (Guidance only). NHE5 Energy Conservation, NHE7 Roof Extensions, NHE8 Rear 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.	NHE9 Commercial Shopfronts	PR9 Business Support and Branding	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 Roads PR5 Wessex Gardens, PR6 Pedestrian Crosswalks, PR1 Fiveways	WCC, TFL, NHENF, RBKC
11	Reduce harmful air, light and noise pollution.	Appendix 10 Light Pollution (guidance only), NHE8 Rear 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 Local Green Space	PR2 St. Stephen's Gardens, PR4 The Interior Streets, PR1 Fiveways	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.	NHE9 Commercial Shopfronts	PR1 Fiveways PR9 Business Support and Branding	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.	Appendix 9 Trees (guidance only)	PR3 Needham/ Artesian Roads PR12 Additional Street Trees, PR1 Fiveways	NHENF WCC

Consultation Statement Summary

Our consultations:

- 2010 and 2012 -The WNA amenity society does basement surveys and mansard surveys to get residents' views on development in the area.
- 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.
- 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 (first time).
- Spring 2022 - Survey on specific policy refinements.
- Spring 2023 - Two-day plan display at the Cock and Bottle.
- June 2023 - Regulation 14 Consultation (second time).
- September 2023 to September 2025 - Updates and public realm improvements.



Image 2



Image 3

SECTION 1 - RESIDENTIAL AMENITY AND OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Local Green Space (NHE1)

Introduction

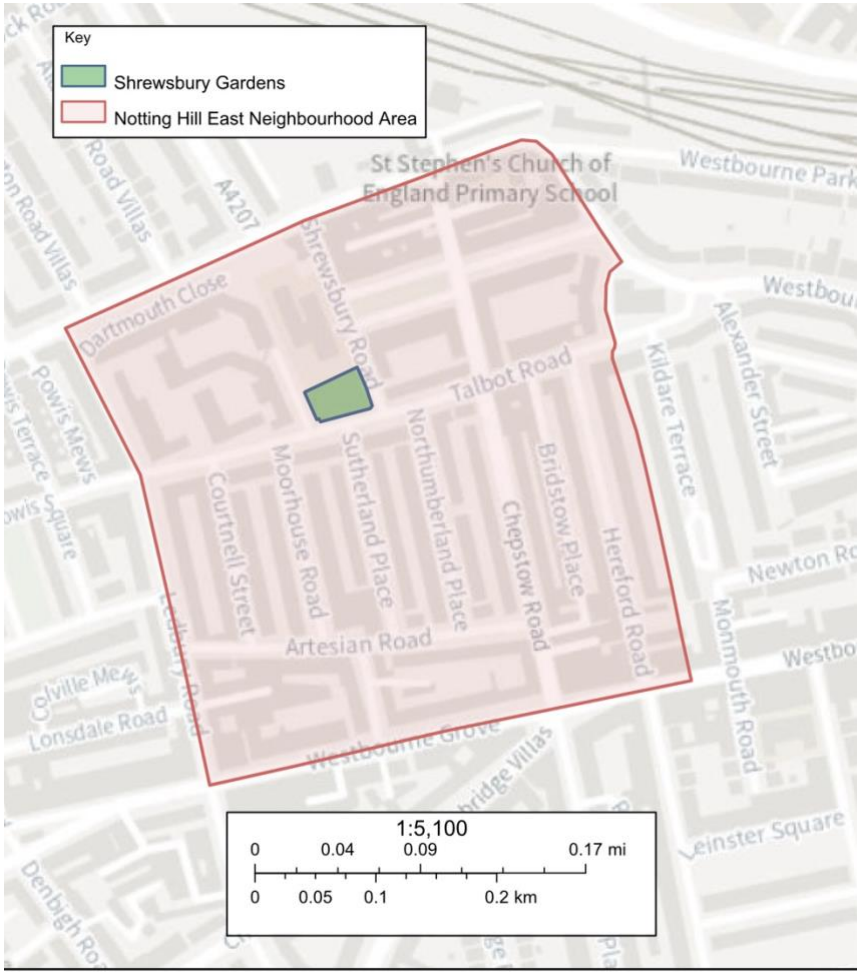
We have two public gardens within our area, St. Stephen's Gardens and Shrewsbury Gardens. They provide a good balance of amenities, including a children's play area, quiet corners for reading or sunning, table tennis, and a dog friendly space for owners to meet one another. St. Stephen's Gardens is already protected by the London Squares Act. We wish to protect Shrewsbury Gardens by designating it as Local Green Space.

Policy NHE1

A. Shrewsbury Gardens, as shown in Map 2, is designated as Local Green Space.

Justification

1. As the area has few open green spaces we wish to preserve this common area and prevent its removal for future development.
2. All of our green infrastructure is important to retain and enhance for recreation and social interaction.
3. Any development should protect and/or improve the environment and levels of biodiversity



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MAP 2

Rooftop terraces, greening, structures and supporting privacy (NHE2)

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 some cases, noise reverberating up from back gardens can be more intrusive. Roof terraces are typically small, with limited capacity, and most are used infrequently for quiet enjoyment. However, we have developed the following policies to address potential concerns.



Image 4

Policy NHE2

A. Greening of existing and new roof spaces is generally supported.

B. Greened and screened roof terraces on rear extensions and upper level balconies and belvederes, and embedded terraces will be supported where they can demonstrate appropriate design and do not result in undue impact on the amenity of surrounding properties.

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

- Adequate boundary/screening is set inside the parapet wall in such a way that protects the privacy of immediate neighbours.
- The placement of terraces should ensure there is no eye-level intrusion into private spaces.
- Where existing rear extensions exceed the projection limits in NHE8, roof terraces should be no deeper than these new limits.

B.2 Proposals are strongly encouraged to use live plants.

B.3 Impact on neighbour amenity should be considered

C. Solid canopies above roof extension terraces should be avoided without clear justification. Lightweight or open structures for climbing plants that require planning permission will be supported where design and amenity impacts have been considered.



Image 5



Image 6

EMBEDDED TERRACE WITHIN RAISED PARAPET WALLS

Image 5 shows how embedded terraces can be created by lowering ceiling of rear extension and raising parapet walls to ensure privacy. In image 6 the roof terrace contradicts B1 because users are at eye level with main 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 neighbouring windows.



Image 8



Image 9



Image provided by the Garden Trellis Company

Image 7

SCREENED ROOF TERRACE

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

Images 8 and 9 show examples of existing roof terraces. Image 8 is from another part of Westminster, Image 9 is from our area

Justification:

1. Planting trees and climbers at ground level can provide additional privacy for those with concerns. We encourage tree planting in our back 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.

Image 10



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

Image 11

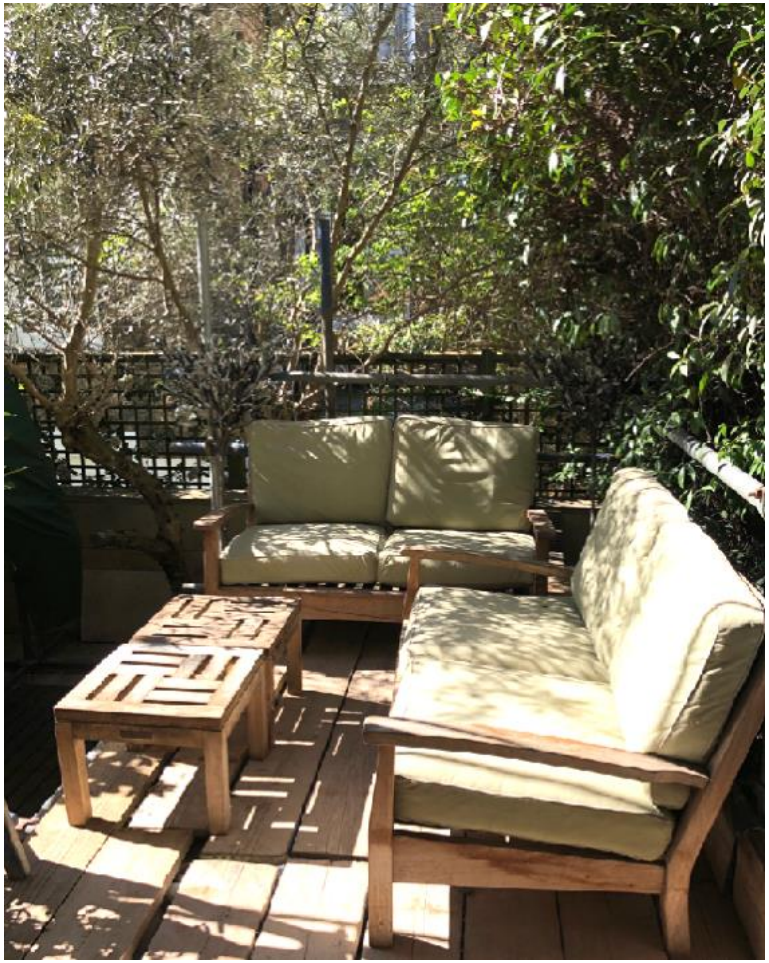


Image 12

This back garden at ground level in our area has been planted for privacy. This approach also adds beneficial trees and greenery to our rear landscape.

Our Gardens (NHE3)

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 and flats. We want to maintain and enhance these green spaces, not only to benefit our residents and their air quality, but to aid carbon capture and support a nature positive and climate cooling environment.

Heavy rainstorms are becoming increasingly frequent and front garden plantings can help absorb excess water to prevent surface flooding. Paving a front garden with non-permeable materials has the opposite effect. Since 2008, Permitted Development legislation limits the use of such materials to just 5 square metres (1 m x 5 m). Beyond this limit, planning permission is required.



Image 13

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.

Policy NHE3

Front and Rear Gardens

A. New or redesigned gardens will be supported which show how they have responded to the Design Guidance on Front Gardens (Appendix 5) and how they are:

A.1 Following Sustainable Urban Drainage principles and

A.2 Maximising the use of permeable paving materials and adding new planted areas, including green walls.

Front (Street Facing) Gardens

B. Where proposals include alterations to or new front boundary treatments, these should be defined with railings above stone plinths on all streets where these are historically appropriate and/or the prevailing character. Exceptions are Bridstow Place, the Mews, the north side of Artesian Road and Hereford Road, which should follow their own historic precedents.

B.1 Railing heights should be comparable to historical railings in the surrounding townscape and style should follow that in the Conservation Area Audit, if identified, or otherwise be of a historically appropriate design.

B.2 In order to maximise greening, applications for the reinstatement or replacement of railings that are accompanied by in-ground planting schemes are encouraged.

B.3 Bin storage structures should be designed and located to minimise their visual impact. The use of natural/planted material is supported. The location of bin stores behind front railings is discouraged to maximise drainage and soft landscaping opportunities. Impact on neighbour amenity should be considered.

Policy NHE3 continued

Rear Gardens

C. Rear gardens, where possible, 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.

D. Proposals for the raising of rear garden levels with soil or other structure that would require building up walls and screening will be assessed on whether they would give rise to unacceptable impact on the setting of the main building and on surrounding residential amenity.

Non policy guidance - Front Gardens

Link to SuDs principals -https://www.susdrain.org/delivering-suds/using-suds/background/urban-drainage.html

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

In contrast, artificial plantings do not contribute to the above. They also deteriorate in colour and appearance over time and are actively discouraged.

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

We recommend planting schemes (hedges, shrubs, trees and other live plants) being planted in the important drainage zone immediately behind railings to aid with pollution mitigation and to maintain a common characteristic of the Conservation Area. Kerbs around this planted area that would divert rainwater into footways and roadways are discouraged.

Local railing designs shown on Page 65

Non policy guidance - Rear Gardens

Excavation within 600 millimetres around the perimeter walls is discouraged because of potential to damage original garden walls, disrupt neighbours, and would remove beneficial original soil for planted screening where it might be needed.

Gardens should include plantable 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.



Image 14

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

At right, gravel borders around patio paving used for additional drainage.



Image 15

Justifications

1. Our front and rear gardens are a defining characteristic of our area. The use of front gardens as parking spaces or hard standing 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 (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 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/uksi/2015/596/schedule/2/part/1/crossheading/class-f-hard-surfaces-incidental-to-the-enjoyment-of-a-dwellinghouse/made . Our policies suggest additional ways to enhance and preserve front garden spaces.

3. Deeply excavated gardens remove original soil and have reduced natural light. This prevents normal plant growth at the new lower 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 adjacent residents. This is a particular problem during the summer months when garden doors are open. Conversion of gardens to paved yards should be discouraged.

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. Link to National Standards for Sustainable Drainage here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a79d1a240f0b66d161ae5d2/suds-consult-annexa-national-standards-111221.pdf

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. 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. 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.

12. It has been shown that planted gardens are stress relieving.https://www.nationalparkcity.london//being-positive/191-green-front-gardens-really-are-stress-relieving

13. Noise in gardens can be absorbed through planting. See:.https://www.buckinghamshirelandscapegardeners.com/news/15-ways-to-make-your-garden-quieter

14. Research has shown London is deficient on drainable ground - see here: https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/global-sponge-cities-snapshot

SECTION 2: BUILDINGS, DESIGN, HERITAGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Reinstatement of Architectural Detail (NHE4)

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 is balanced by other policies that promote innovative solutions to rear extensions and climate change mitigation.

Policy NHE4

Reinstatement of any missing historical architectural details (e.g., ironwork, corbels, cornices, etc.) is strongly encouraged.

Non-policy guidance

The extent, design and materials of missing details and the scope of the reinstatement that is required will be advised by WCC conservation officers.

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.

Removal of original architectural detail from street facing elevations is not permitted in Conservation areas.

Before starting any building work, it is important to check to see if building regulations approval is required. https://www.gov.uk/building-regulations-approval



Our buildings in the 1970s *photograph Jonathan Barker*

Image 16

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 past social and economic downturns.
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.



Image 17



Image 18



Image 19



Image 20



Image 21

Historic detail sometimes missing from the fronts of our houses.



Image 22

Energy conservation and generation (NHE5)

Introduction

Throughout our plan there are policies to counter the ill effects of climate change: planted front and back 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 the climate emergency requires a shift in priorities such that in some instances a difference in the appearance of buildings may be acceptable where the public good is better served through climate change mitigation.

Policy NHE5

A. Appropriate double glazed replacement heritage windows and doors will be supported provided they aren't considered to cause harm to the special historic or architectural significance of the host building or Conservation Area.

B. Solar panels, solar slates, and other energy capturing devices on roofs will be supported where they are integrated within the overall design, particularly in terms of profile and colour, and where they do not unacceptably harm heritage significance.

C. Alternative energy sources such as heat pumps will be supported, provided proposals show care in the siting and visual impact of equipment. 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 glazed and vacuum 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 being increasingly installed in listed buildings in the UK.
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 back of our buildings.
3. Heat pumps and other alternative energy solutions can contribute to a zero-carbon future.

Non-policy guidance

Replacement windows and doors should replicate as closely as possible the original historic material, sections and arrangement of any glazing bars, with methods of construction to be determined in conjunction with Conservation officers. See also: https://www.westminster.gov.uk/planning-building-control-and-environmental-regulations/planning-and-climate-emergency/planning-householder-retrofit-how-guides/make-your-windows-more-energy-efficient

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

Image 23

Underground Development (NHE6)

Introduction

The NHENF area has had many basement developments, and while underground development has provided valuable extra space for some, it has caused significant concern to others, particularly to those adjacent, who worry about the effect on their properties and the displacement of groundwater. Excessive underground development below front and back gardens has led to the paving over of these gardens, compromising drainage and resulting in a loss of flora and fauna.

The policies below would still allow for some extra accommodation, access, storage or utility space below ground while maintaining the remainder for deep planting. Gardens in the NHENF area are contiguous and should therefore be considered as part of a wider context and greater scope.

Policy NHE6

A. Applications for underground development in front gardens are strongly encouraged to include a planting plan showing:

A.1 Retention of, or an increase in planted material, especially in the area immediately behind railings.

A.2 Provision of a minimum depth of soil.

Justification

1. See Justifications for NHE3 (page 18) for the many reasons to preserve deep garden space.
2. The Mayor's London Environmental Strategy 2018 commits to increasing green cover to at least 50% by 2050
3. Limiting hardscape and preserving planted areas in exterior gardens will help to contribute to the 10% increase in biodiversity requirements
4. Any application must conform to the advice in the Westminster City Plan 2019-2040, Policy 50, point 50.10.

Non-policy guidance:

The optimal zone of development is under the entrance pathway, where in most cases, there are already coal vaults underground

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.

Material excavated from basement digging should be electrically extracted via an overhead conveyor belt into a street sited skip, and the WCC licence number should be displayed on all hoardings.

Building work and associated activities should not take place on footway pavements. Controlling basement excavation and prohibiting pavement building work will ensure that no pedestrian will be forced out into the street.

If underground utility space is used to house a boiler, boiler flues should be discreetly positioned to avoid nuisance to adjoining owners and run up to and above high rooftop of house level so this is not venting into neighbours' gardens.



Planting in soil behind front railings.

Roof Extensions and Mansards (NHE7)

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.

Policy NHE7

A. Where appropriate, upward development on residential buildings will be supported which addresses the following considerations:

A.1 Such development should be set back behind the parapets.

A.2 Upwards expansion is allowed within an area defined by a semicircular arc (see Diagrams 1 and 2) and where development is consistent with prevailing extensions within a terraced group or where development comes forward as a joint application for a row of terraced homes each receiving the same extensions.

A.3 The preferred option for these roof structures is the historic or true mansard, double pitched and ridged. (see Diagram 1)

A.4 Only the parapet, dormer windows, and chimneys will be outside the semicircular arc.

A.5 Chimney stacks with pots should be extended in matching brick to preserve the rhythm of the surrounding roofscapes, and applications are strongly encouraged to include the reinstatement of missing parts or details from front elevations. Butterfly parapets should be retained and restored.

A.6 Flat topped mansard extensions are discouraged for environmental reasons except where these are the prevailing roof form. If a proposal is submitted for a flat topped mansard extension, it is strongly encouraged to include a sedum/planted roof or solar panels.

A.7 Consistent views from street level are preferred; however, roof extensions that include an internal roof garden or one at the rear which is suitably screened and an appropriate design may be acceptable (see Diagram 2).

A.8 At the ends of terraces, where hipped roof mansards are the prevailing roof form, these should have the same roof angles and form on the side as the front elevation. Any existing chimneys should be raised and integrated into the new sloping roof pitches.

A.9 Mechanical equipment, e.g. heat pumps or air conditioning units, are to be carefully designed, sited and detailed or screened where appropriate, so as to not detrimentally impact on the surrounding townscape.

A.10 The reinstatement of missing architectural details to the principal elevations is strongly encouraged.

B. In order to create opportunities to deliver new residential properties, upward development in Wessex Gardens may be supported, provided they are suitably integrated into the architecture of the buildings and provide additional greening opportunities (e.g. rooftop greening).

C. Proposals for roof extensions on Needham Road, Artesian Road, Ledbury Road and the crescent on Westbourne Park Road will be supported when they are submitted as a group application to ensure uniformity of design.

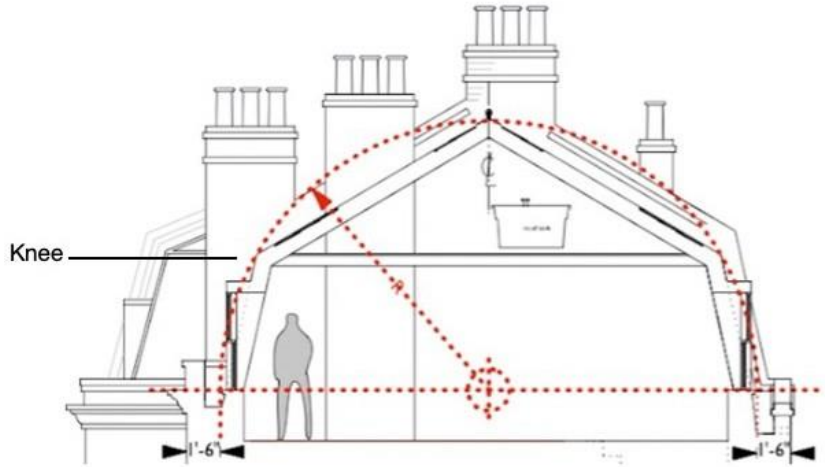


Diagram 1 *- section through double pitched mansard.*

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 = 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.

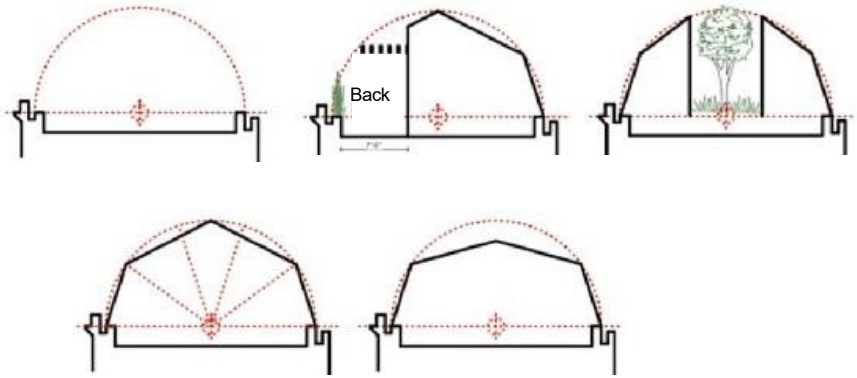


Diagram 2 *- mansard profiles and roof terrace locations.*

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



Double pitched mansard roof extension in our area. *Image 25*



Image 26

At left, a roof outside of our area shows the chimney raised and incorporated into the sloping roof pitch.

At right, 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.



Image 27



Image 28

Photos of mansards on Northumberland Place show 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.

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



Image 29

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, which can result in higher insurance premiums. 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.
5. 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.



Image 30

East side of Chepstow Rd. (formerly Richmond Rd.) at end of 19th c. showing central pavilion with pediment and flanking balustrades These would have been stone coloured render.

Justifications continued

6. 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.
7. Of the groups of houses in our area without roof extensions, 3 on Artesian Road, 8 on Needham Road, 10 on Ledbury Road, and 10 in the crescent on Westbourne Park Road provide 31 potential opportunities for better and expanded family accommodation. A requirement for group applications will ensure the desired consistency of design and should include a drawing of the group context.
8. Eight properties on the east end of the north side of St. Stephen's Gardens are out of level with the three houses to the west and could present an opportunity for a group application for a sheer attic storey, provided it stepped down to maintain the proportions of the houses to the west.

Non-policy guidance

Fire escapes and emergency egress from roof levels are important and should be as light in scale as possible.

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.

Exhaust and other air outputs should vent above roof structure.

Flat roofed mansards and other extensions can result in a higher insurance premium.



Image 31

Shown above, eight houses on the north side of St. Stephen's Square with mansard roof extensions are out of step with those to the left.



Image 32



Image 33

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.



Image 34

Rear Extensions and Green Valleys (NHE8)

Introduction

The front elevations of the houses in the NHENF area form the walls to our streets and depict an historic conformity and design while containing differing elements.

The backs of the houses tended to be of a more informal design. Rear extensions were originally added to provide service spaces. Their modest scale did not compromise the main rooms or their windows at the rear of the houses, preserving good natural light and a strong visual connection with the garden behind. Some had glass ‘lanterns’ at the top and later additions used an informal design language in a variety of materials, often of light construction. See Appendix 7.

There was a caprice to these designs, which included timber framed structures, oriel windows, balconies and terraces which reflected the owner’s needs and desire for small amounts of additional space.

Excessive construction over the years has compromised the collective ‘gardenscape’ at the back, in contrast to the street or townscape at the front, which has remained largely intact.

Planning policy in recent decades has prioritised uniformity of form, materials and fenestration at the back without policy to preserve gardens, which provide drainage, biodiversity, climate mitigation, and outdoor spaces to enjoy. The result has been a proliferation of oversized, tall and deep brick box-shaped structures built out further and further, to the detriment of the gardens and houses behind and the spaces between neighbours.

The climate emergency encourages retaining green spaces, and greater weight needs to be given to the collective value of individual contiguous gardens. The reintroduction of an informal design language, with energy conservation at the forefront and the use of energy efficient materials and methods of construction, can help play a complementary role in sustainability.

NHENF policies, parts A to E below have been developed to protect gardens from the over-expansion of buildings and improve carbon impact. Homeowners will have the opportunity to design spaces that better meet their needs, possibly choosing to pare back their existing extensions to maximise the connection of house with its garden.

Contiguous gardens create a green valley between our houses (image 35).

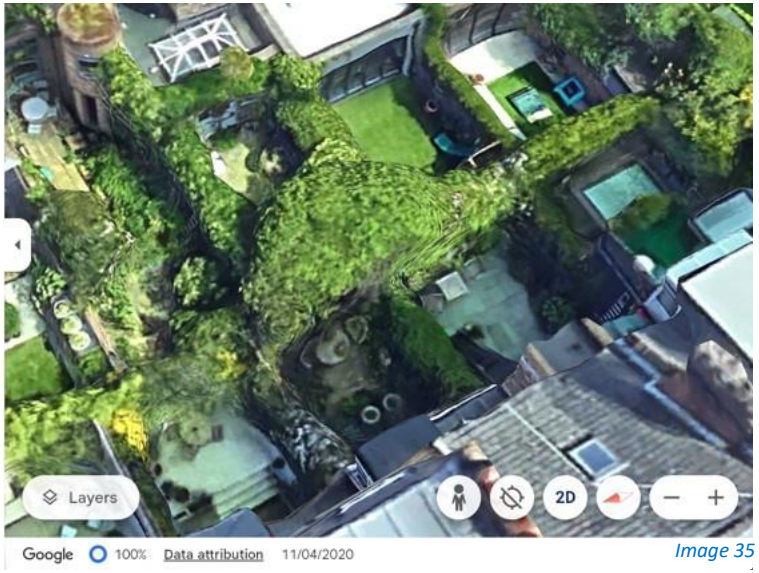


Image 35

This historic illustration (image 36) shows the back of a row of houses without lower level extensions, allowing 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.



Image 36

Houses without rear extensions, with sunlight to all windows and a direct connection to the gardens behind (image 37).



Image 37



Image 38



Image 39

Large extensions compromise space between.

TOWERING BRICK EXTENSIONS OVERSHADOW OUR HOUSES AND GARDENS

Tall brick rear extensions in the "closet wing" location tower over houses and gardens, leave dark spaces between and compromise the main rooms at the back of the house. These effects are made worse by the paving over of back gardens, amplifying sound and creating a landscape devoid of natural features.

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

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.

While illustrated examples may not meet limits of policy NHE8, they are examples of varied forms that could be designed and built within recommended limits.



Image 40



Image 41

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 and all preserve a 'square' of garden. (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 (oriel), and fenestration but no extensions at ground level, maximising garden space and the views to it from the interior of the house.*
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 with green roof and no infill.*

Rear Extensions and Green Valleys (NHE8)

Policy NHE8

Preserving gardens and space between buildings.

Proposals for rear extensions – new or reworked, should show how they have responded to Design Guidance on Rear Extensions (Appendix 6).

A. Rear extensions in the closet wing location should be designed to optimise the retention of useable garden space and minimise disturbance to neighbour amenity in terms of overshadowing and sense of enclosure. To achieve this:

A.1. The length of retained garden space should normally be at least equal to the width of the property, e.g. “a square of garden” minimum. Upward development on existing deeper extensions is subject to this limit.

A.2. Multiple storey rear extensions that are not infills between existing closet wings should normally be limited to less than half the width of the house.

A.3 Rear extensions should remain a full storey below the rear elevational height of the host building excluding mansard. They should be in keeping with the pattern of extensions within the group of terraced houses (normally 3 storeys).

Supporting innovation, energy conservation and good design

B. All extensions should be of high design quality, detailing, and construction.

B.1 Inventive design solutions and robust materials that minimise energy consumption and enhance the character of the conservation area or listed building are supported in principle.

B.2 Where flat roofs are proposed, the use of green roofs or solar panels is encouraged.

Improved amenity, natural light and personal space for residents

C. Shallow projecting single or multi-storey oriel-like extensions at upper levels on the rear elevation may be supported where they are of an appropriate design and do not harm the amenity of residents below.

D. To allow more natural light in internal spaces, roof lanterns and roof lights will be supported where they are of appropriate design and do not adversely impact on the amenity of adjoining residential properties.

E. Transparent infill extensions between the more solid rear closet wing extensions can 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, as long as they are keeping with the surrounding context, and subject to recommended garden retention and other principles shown in the Design Guidance on Rear Extensions (Appendix 6).

A framework setting out rear extensions according to a proportional design system to prevent tunnelling and preserve or enlarge garden spaces.

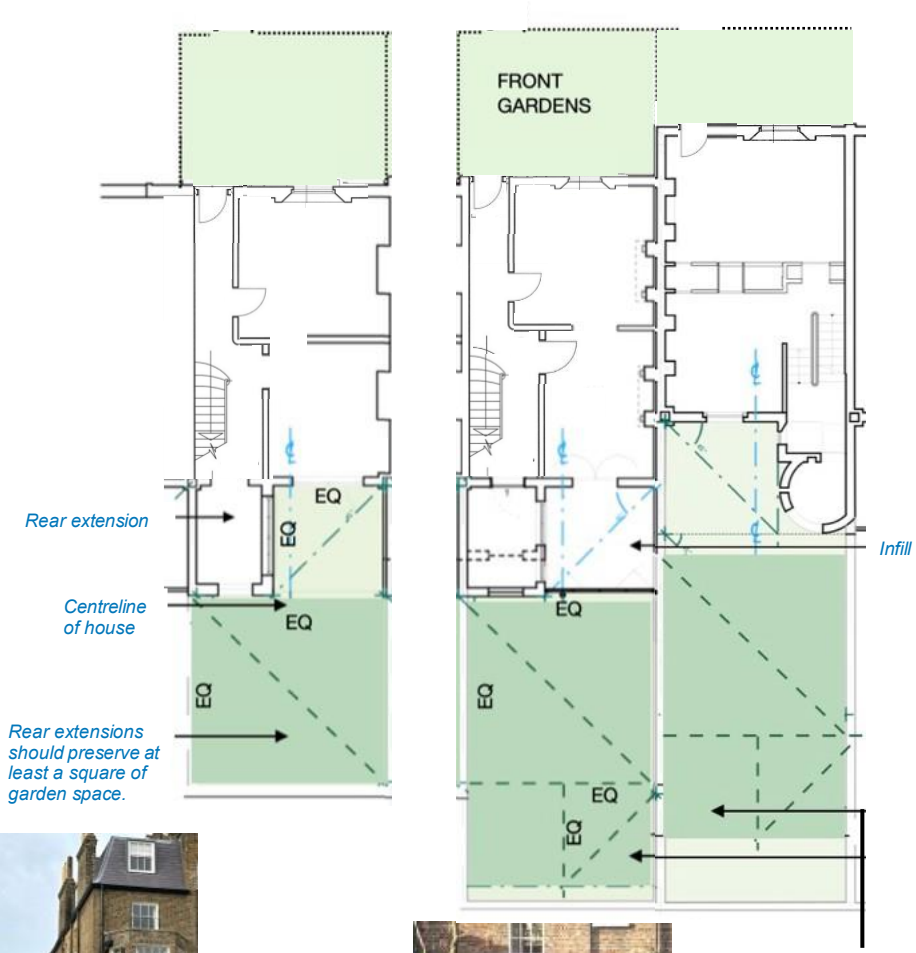




Image 42

At left, 45 degree corners with sash windows to increase interior light.

At right, extension with lightweight timber and glass 3-sided lantern on top storey.



Image 43

In properties with deeper gardens, preservation of more than a square of garden is encouraged. A square and a half shown here.

Justifications:

1. In 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 back closet wing extensions preserves the quality of the garden spaces between these extensions.

2. Back 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 accumulating along the backs of our buildings. Importantly, these policies will maintain the hierarchy between host building to rear extension which should be subordinate to host building.

4. The best views to the rear are normally from the principal rooms of the house and through the infill spaces between rear extensions. Overly wide rear extensions compromise the natural light to main rooms at the backs of buildings, whereas limiting the width of these solid extensions increases the space between them, avoids compromising the windows, ameliorates the tunnelling effect and allows the principal rooms to maintain their connection with the garden. Setting the extensions back from the centreline of the building also leaves space for the downpipe, hopper and fixings for attachment immediately below the low point of the butterfly, eliminating the need for pipework cutting horizontally across the rear elevation.

5. 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.

6. Sky views from buildings and back gardens are often limited, especially where gardens are small. Depending on orientation, rear extensions can cast extensive shadows over a neighbour’s property. Extending upwards can cause particular problems by reducing light to already narrow spaces between these extensions and visually dominating neighbouring properties and gardens.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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 rear extensions that should be maintained.

10. Using lighter weight materials can shorten construction times, e.g. a timber and glass lantern-style extension can be prefabricated offsite, which limits the impacts on our environment, gardens and neighbours by requiring fewer skips and parking suspensions, creating less site noise, etc. Wet trades such as masonry and concrete works can extend building programmes as they are weather reliant and need time to cure.

11. 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.

12. 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. For these reasons, we discourage tall brick extensions which can have a detrimental effect on neighbours' amenity and can limit potential urban greening opportunities.

13. While there is uniformity on the fronts of some of our buildings, on the backs, while extensions appear on early maps, they are shown in plan form without evidence that they were uniformly brick in elevation. In fact, many early examples have lightweight lantern structures at the top, as shown in our examples. With the climate crisis accelerating, and modern materials playing an important role in energy conservation and should always be supported.

Justifications continued:

14. Provided oriel window extensions are shallow, they provide useful additional space for those in upper-level flats without overly impacting neighbours below or to either side. Even a shallow extension can 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.
15. 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.
16. Adding infills between rear extensions is a sustainable way to add more living space as their location is often less viable for plantings. In contrast, extending the primary closet wing extensions removes garden space and associated permeability and plantings which are important for the environment. The height of glazed infills is limited to preserve privacy and prevent light pollution being introduced into neighbours' windows.

Non-policy guidance

Applicants wishing to expand upward on an existing deep rear extension are encouraged to consider rebuilding it from the ground up, which provides an opportunity for the square of garden and space between buildings to be retrieved.

Steps from upper infills or upper ground floors to garden level should ideally preserve neighbours' privacy and restrict views into neighbours' gardens.

Wherever additional hard surfaces have been added to the rear of our buildings, applications should show an increase in planted material to help absorb additional acoustical effects. https://www.buckinghamshirelandscapegardeners.com/news/15-ways-to-make-your-garden-quieter

Examples at right, top row left to right: rear extension of timber panel construction, circular rear extension with green roof and rainwater attenuation, rear extension with shaped gable end and roof. Second row: a rear extension with pitched gable end and dormer windows, oriel windows of various designs. Bottom row: a more traditional two storey infill in our area, a modern infill outside the NHENF area and illustration of a glass lantern on the roof to bring more light into interior spaces.



Image 44



ANDREW PILKINGTON ARCHITECTS

Image 45



Image 46



Image 47



Image 48



Image 49



Image 50



Image 51



BELSIZE ARCHITECTS

Image 52

Roof lantern, with solid top to avoid light

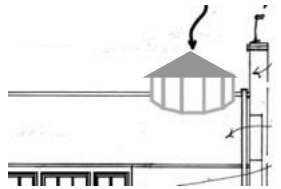


Image 53

SECTION 3 - PUBLIC REALM AND OUR COMMUNITY

Commercial Shopfronts (NHE9)

Introduction

We are in favour of mixed residential and 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 improved and cohesive appearance that will benefit residents and shop owners alike.

Policy NHE9

A. Proposals for shopfronts in the neighbourhood area should meet the following requirements:

   A.1 Shopfront signs should be of a high quality, made of sustainable materials, or painted onto a rendered fascia band.

   A.2 Where a historic fascia band to the shopfront exists in its original position, this band should be maintained in that position.

   A.3 Reinstatement of any missing architectural features on the shopfront facade is strongly encouraged, especially shared corbels on the party wall.

   A.4 Lighting on shopfront signs should preferably be from an external source, shielded so that bulbs are not visible, and in a downward direction to protect the amenity of any residential windows above.

B. Proposals for planters or other greenery are supported in principle, provided they do not significantly impede pedestrian movement.

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. Additional guidance can be found in the new Public Realm SPD: https://www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/documents/westminster's-streets-and-spaces-public-realm-guidance-spd.pdf

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.

7. Research shows that beautiful shopfronts can attract customers: https://dkdesigner.co.uk/the-impact-of-a-well-designed-shop-front-why-strong-branding-boosts-sales-in-small-town-retail/



Image 54

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



Image 55



Image 56



Image 57



Image 58

SECTION 4 - OUR PROJECTS

Introduction

Development control alone is not sufficient to either describe or realise the aspirations we have for conserving and improving our area. The form and function of our streets and green spaces are as significant to our well-being as the places in which we live and work. To achieve our vision for our streets and green spaces, there are several local projects outside of planning control and neighbourhood planning policies that the community and the forum would like to see implemented.

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 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/ Artesian Roads
PR4 Interior 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.
- Oxford Circus-like crossing from any and all corners simultaneously to improve pedestrian circulation and safety.
- Expansion of 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 to 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.

This area is included in Westminster's High Streets regeneration programme, and has undergone consultation with the public, RBK&C and members of other Resident Groups in the neighbourhood. NHENF will continue to work with these bodies to ensure an outcome that is supported by local residents.

The latest proposals can be found here: https://paddington-bayswaterhighstreets.commonplace.is/enGB/proposals/v3/queensway-westbourne-grove-place-strategy?step=step1



Image 59



Image 60

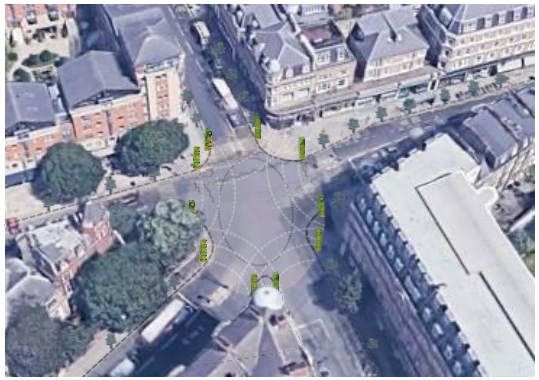


Image 61

NHENF schemes

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 benches to read a book. The pergola has recently been reconfigured to open it up, making it possible to add new chess tables.

We will continue to consider what changes might bring more people into this green space.

With additional help from an urban designer, we would also 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.



Image 62



Image 63



Image 64

Needham/Artesian Roads (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. Although trees have recently been planted, opportunities remain for additional improvements. Ideas have been generated by residents on several occasions; some of which are shown in the drawings below. Feasibility and funding for any additional changes will determine the final scheme, and residents will have the opportunity to have an ongoing role in the decisions.

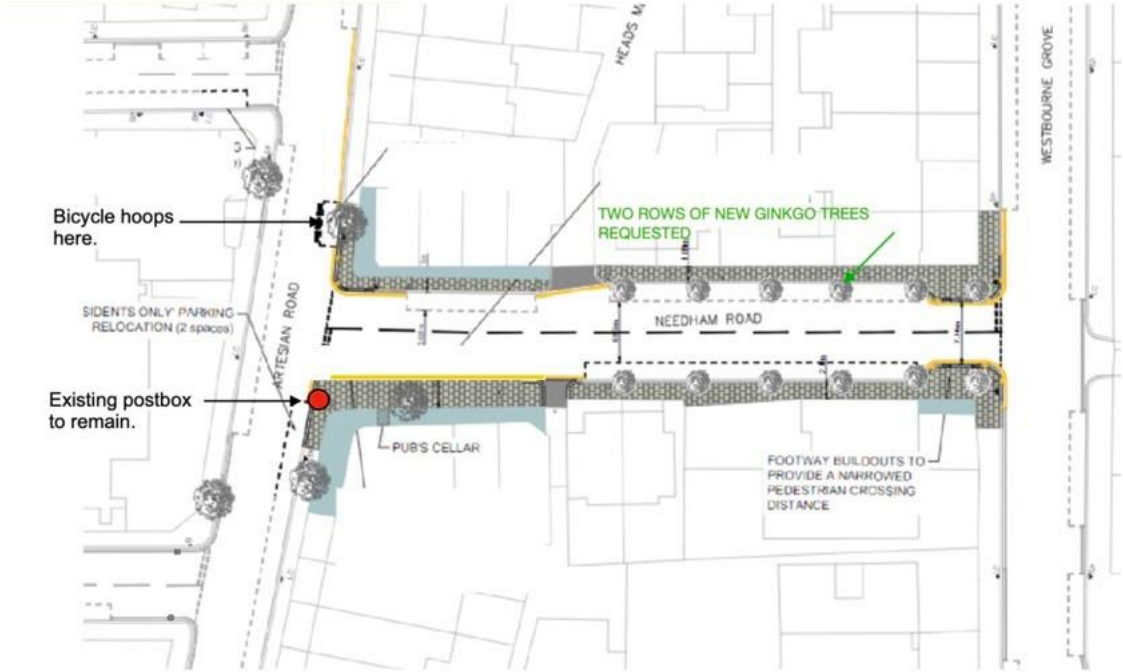


Image 65

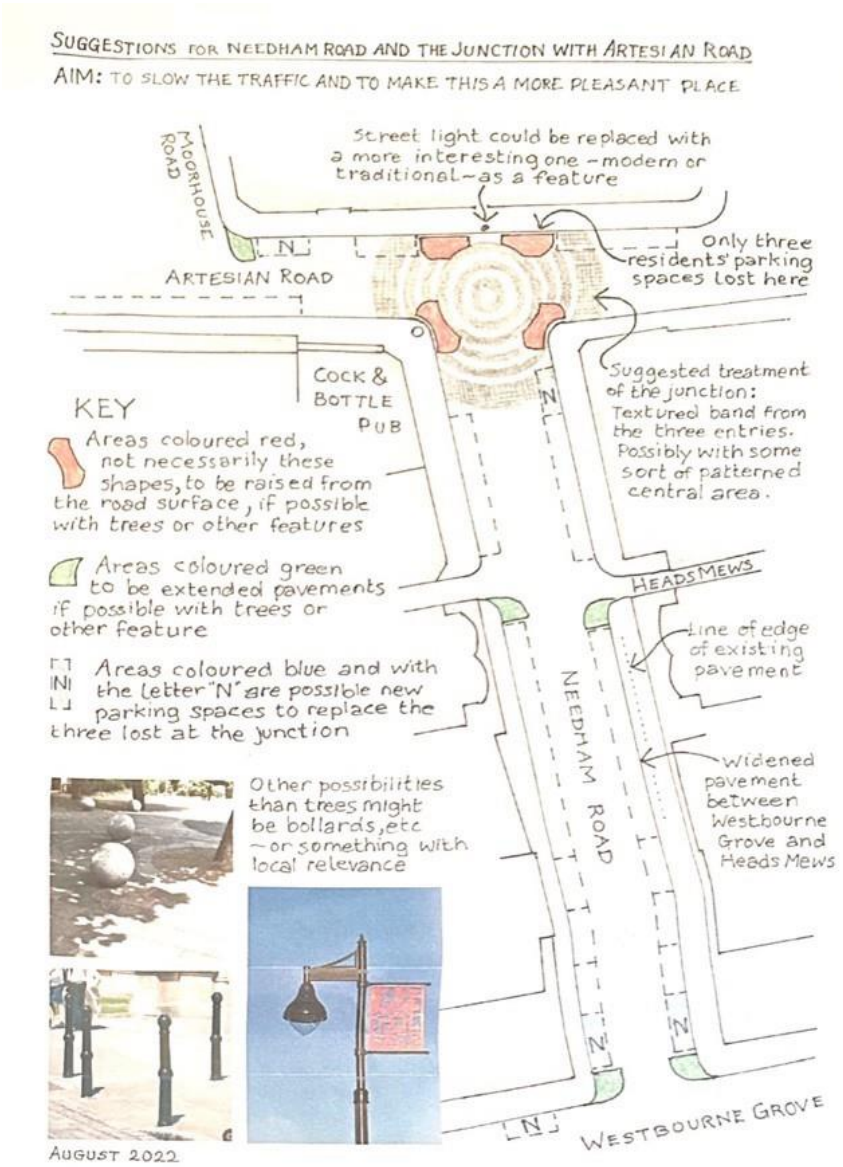


Image 66

The Interior Streets (PR4)

The completely residential 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. We have always desired SLOWER STREETS and the new 20 mph speed limit has helped with this goal.

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 amongst many, and must proceed with great care.

We will continue to 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 on a temporary and flexible basis, but no more than one street at any time. All traffic can still easily get through by using an alternative road. Road closures would be dependent on agreement by the Council.



Image 67

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

Base Drawings from Westbourne Conservation Area Audit



Image 68



Image 69

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.



Image 70



Image 71

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. A long sought zebra crossing has recently been constructed across Ledbury Road at Westbourne Grove, and we will work with RBK&C to consider a crossing 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.

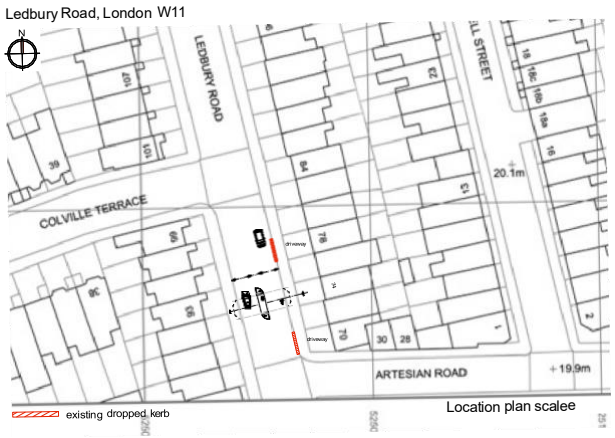


Image 72

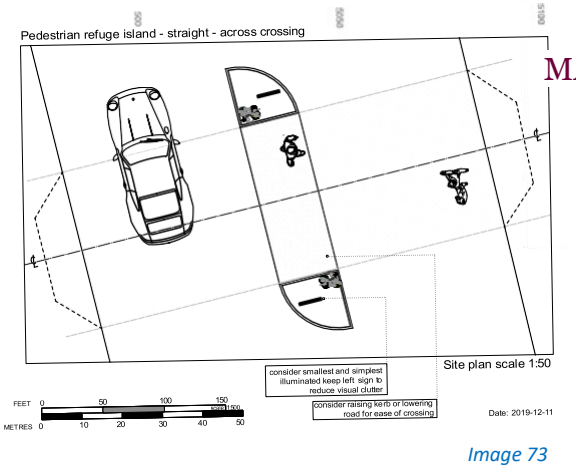
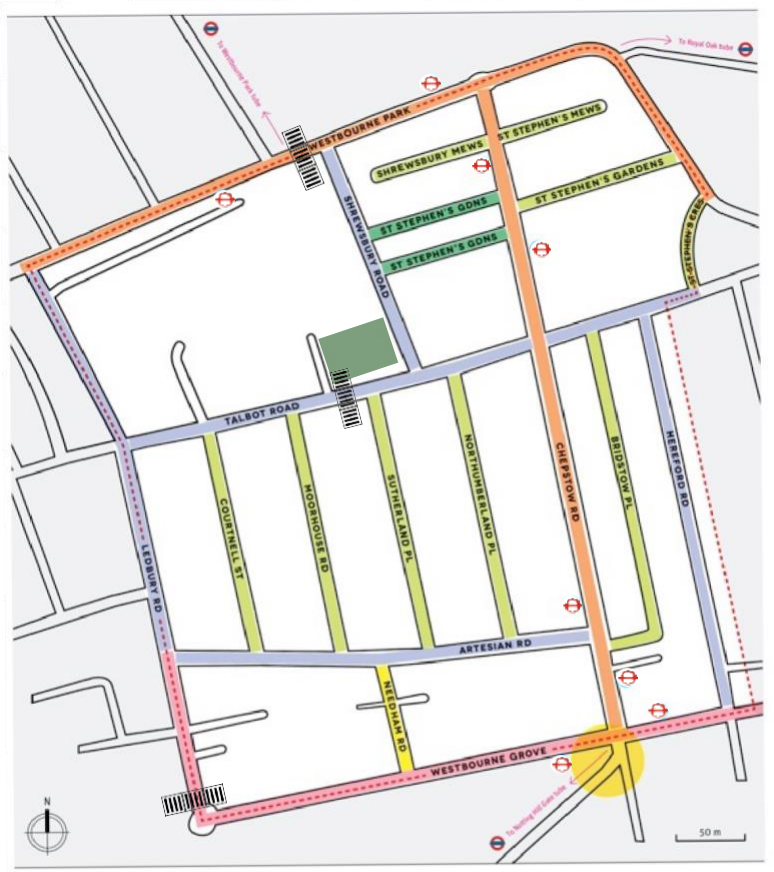


Image 73

MAP 4



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.

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. We will coordinate with the Council's ongoing economic programs and policies.

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.



Botts Mews Lantern

Image 74



Addison Avenue Street Lamps

Image 75



Spain - The appeal of a public drinking fountain.

Image 76

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 continue to work with WCC's tree department to get more trees planted in 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.



Image 77

One of Talbot Road's new 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. *Image 78*



Image 79

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 NHE5, NHE6 and NHE7.
- Support government policies that tax unoccupied homes.
- Implement policies requiring that front gardens remain planted areas as these require attention and care. See policy NHE3.
- 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 NHE3.
- Proposals must show evidence that applicants have identified and, where appropriate, copied the best examples in the street or terrace, and consulted archived designed 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 neighbour's windows, damage to foundations, and shading of other plants.

Solution

Relax the constraints as described in policies NHE5, NHE7, NHE8 and Appendix 10.



Lime tree in our area

Image 80

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 (some 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 NHE3, NHE4, NHE5, NHE7 & NHE8.

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.



Terraced houses on Northumberland Place looking south *Image 81*



The Westbourne *Image 82*



Wessex Gardens *Image 83*

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. Projects PR2 and PR3.



Bridstow Place *Image 84*



St. Stephen's Gardens *Image 85*



Needham Road *Image 86*



Image 87



Image 88

Botts Mews (image 87) and Heads Mews (image 88)..

4. Our Green Space, parks, play and relaxation areas:

- 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 right (image 89), and St. Stephen's below (image 90).



Image 89



Image 90

5. Our Primary Public Space and Our Routes:

- Shown below, the Five-Way intersection where Westbourne Grove meets Pembridge Crescent, Chepstow Road and Chepstow Place - always a busy crossroads and a destination and meeting point. 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.



Image 91

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 NHE9 and project PR9.



Image 92



Image 95

Shops on Chepstow Road

Other Institutions:

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



Image 93

Paddington British Legion Social Club



St. Stephen's School Image 94



Image 96

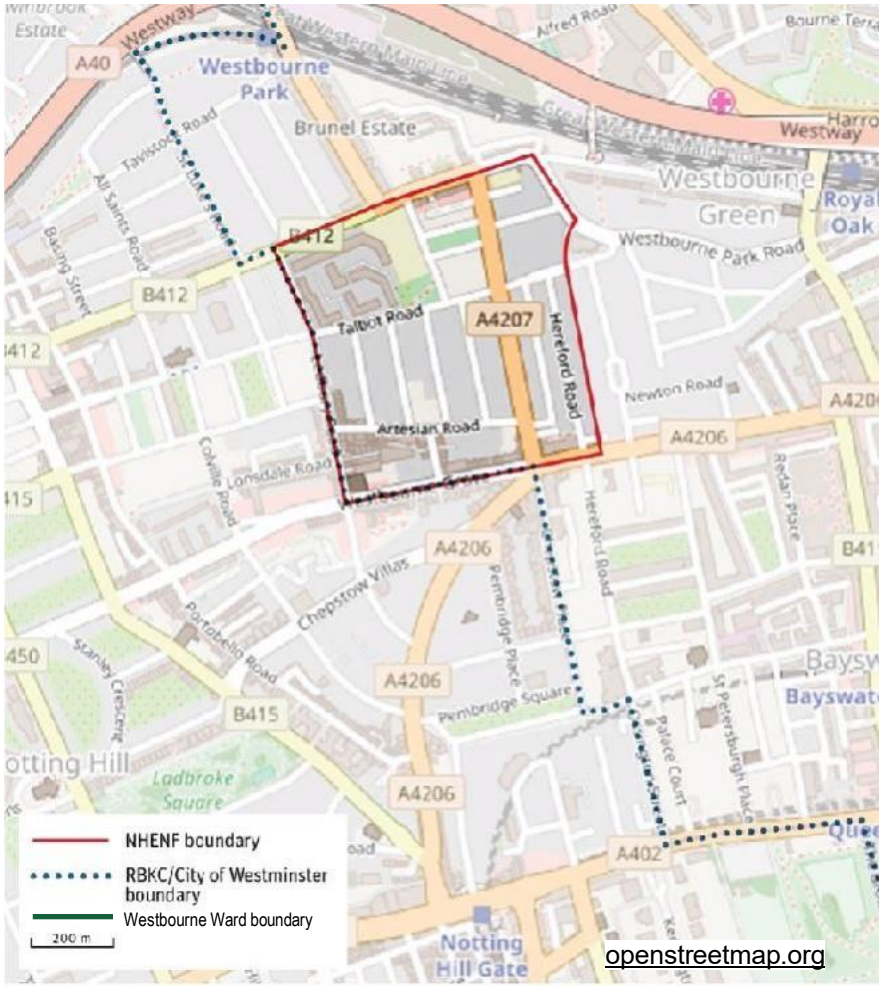
The Cock and Bottle Pub



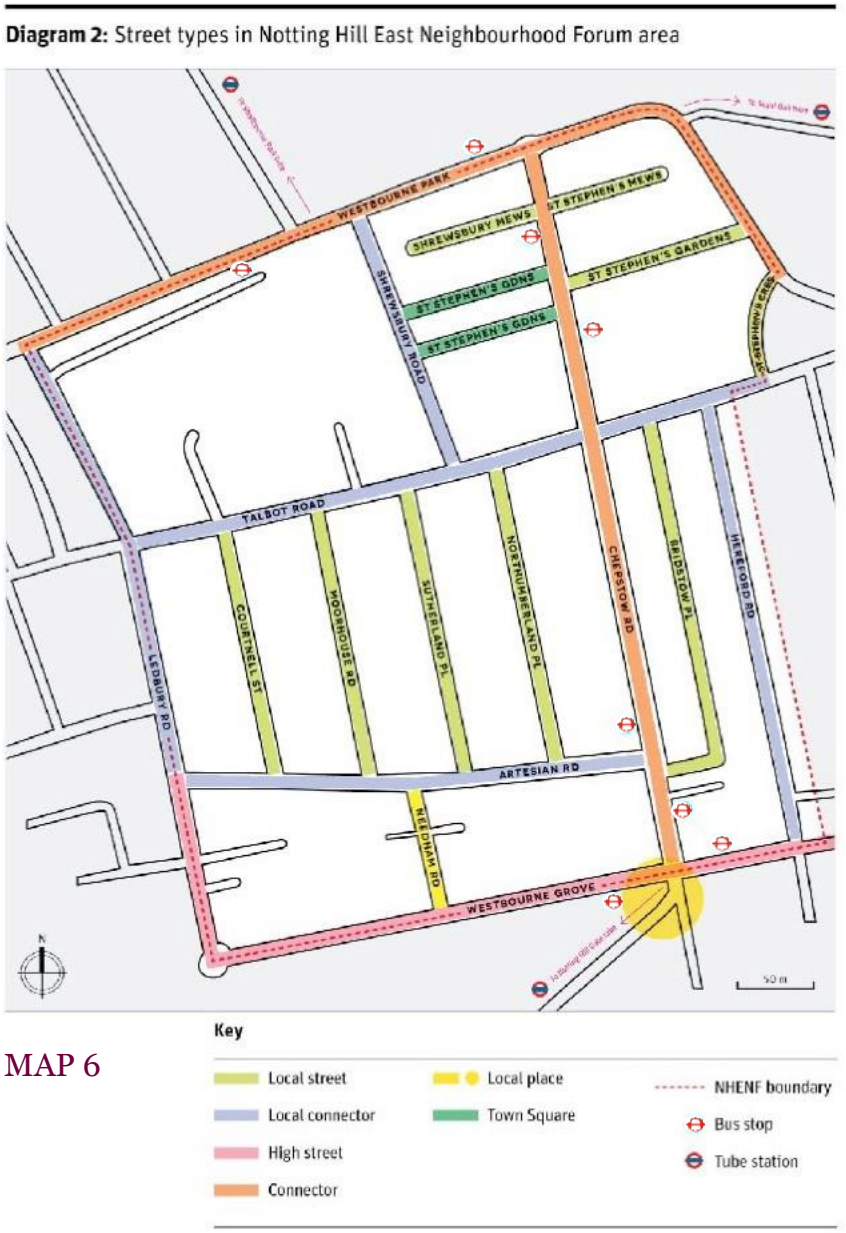
Image 97

St. Mary of the Angels Church

Appendix 4 - Location Map and Street Map



MAP 5



MAP 6

Appendix 5 - Design Gudiance on Front Gardens

The examples below illustrate the general gudiance for our front gardens. There are many variations in the layout of levels and location of stairs and entrances in the front of our buildings, but in general:

A. Gardens should include plantings in the ground wherever possible, but especially in the zone behind railings. This helps to absorb water and prevent it running into the footways and roadways, and contributes to biodiversity and neighbourhood amenity.

B. Built structures such as bin or bicycle storage should be made of natural materials and discretely located.

C. Paving materials should be permeable when installed over soil below.

D. On most of our houses, the front boundary wall should typically be metal railings installed into a low stone plinth with a matching gate. Railing heads should match the historic example if known, or the most common pattern on the street. Exceptions are the Mews, Bridstow Place, some houses on Artesian, and Hereford Road, which has stone balustrades.



Image 98



Image 101



Image 99

At left, gardens with plantings behind railings and around garden space with minimal paving. Above, gravel and plantings provide drainage. Top right, even gardens with parking can have drainage and plantings. Bottom right, metal railings set into plinth.



Image 100



Image 102

Appendix 6 - Design Guidance on Rear Extensions

This design principles shows a framework for the setting out and design of rear extensions according to a proportional design system, which seeks to draw attention to the impacts of rear extensions on the immediate and neighbouring garden spaces. Following this supplementary guidance will preserve or enlarge garden spaces, maintain the space between buildings at upper and lower levels, and encourage sustainable development.

A. Maintain a Square of Garden

Where new or replacement rear extensions on terraced properties are proposed, they should leave a square of garden remaining. (length is equal to or *more than* width of property). Where possible, more than a square of garden is recommended.

B. Limit Width:

Provided the minimum square or square and a half of garden (see illustration at right) remains, the width of “closet wing” extensions at upper levels should generally be less than half the width of the building, preserving light for back windows and avoiding the creation of dark tunnels between buildings.

C. Limit Height:

The heights of any rear extension should normally be a maximum of 3 storeys and remain at least a full storey below back elevation of the building. Any proposals for taller extensions should consider the impact on the space between the proposed extension and any opposing property.

Diagram 4

shows floor plans illustrating the principle of leaving a square of garden remaining (or greater in properties with deeper gardens) In essence, these limits preserve the ‘breathing space’ and light between and around the buildings.

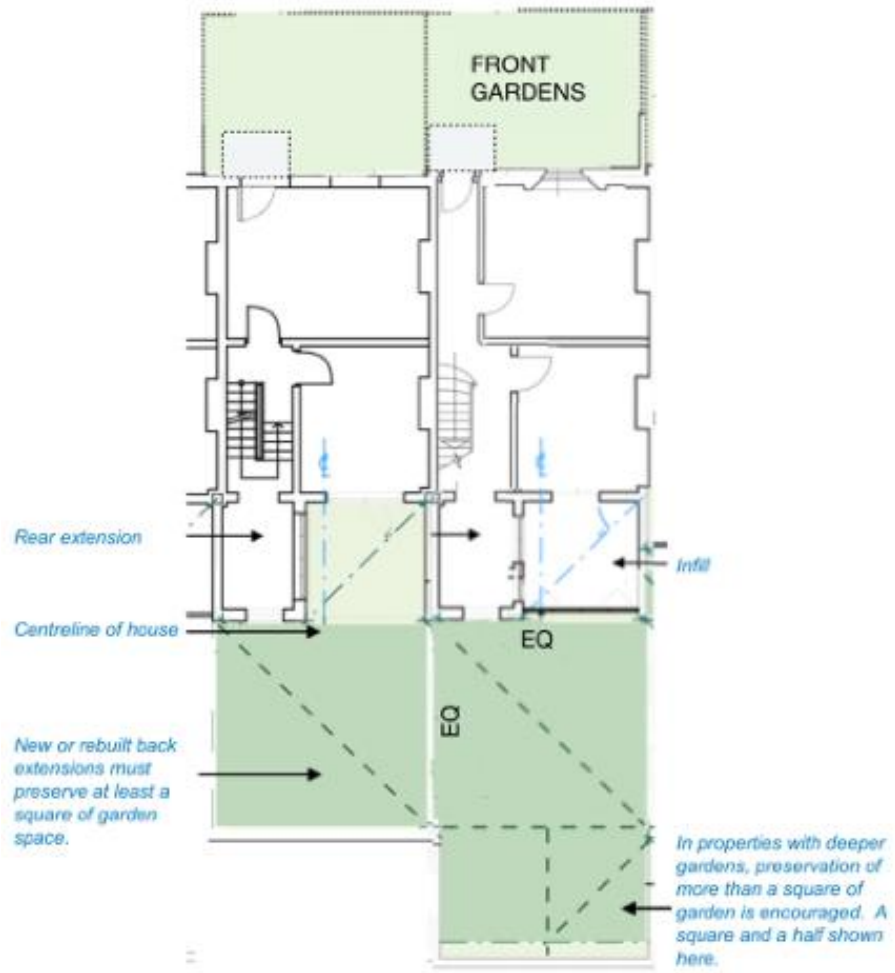


Diagram 5 shows rear extensions that have reduced mass as they get taller, which can be achieved by stepping back, using lighter more skeletal materials like timber and glass, having a sloping or pitched roof or shaped corners, etc.

Rear extensions using alternatives to solid masonry with innovative and energy conserving materials that enhance the architecture and conservation area are encouraged.

Green or sedum roofs or solar panels are encouraged on any rear extensions with flat roofs. A roof terrace could be supported provided it meets the conditions of Policy NHE2.

These elevations illustrate the principle of limiting width which leaves a wider space between rear extensions for infills or views from principal rooms, preserving amenity for occupants and the wider area.

The houses on the left start at ground level, and houses on the right start at lower ground level, both configurations can be found within our neighbourhood.



Diagram 5

Diagram 6

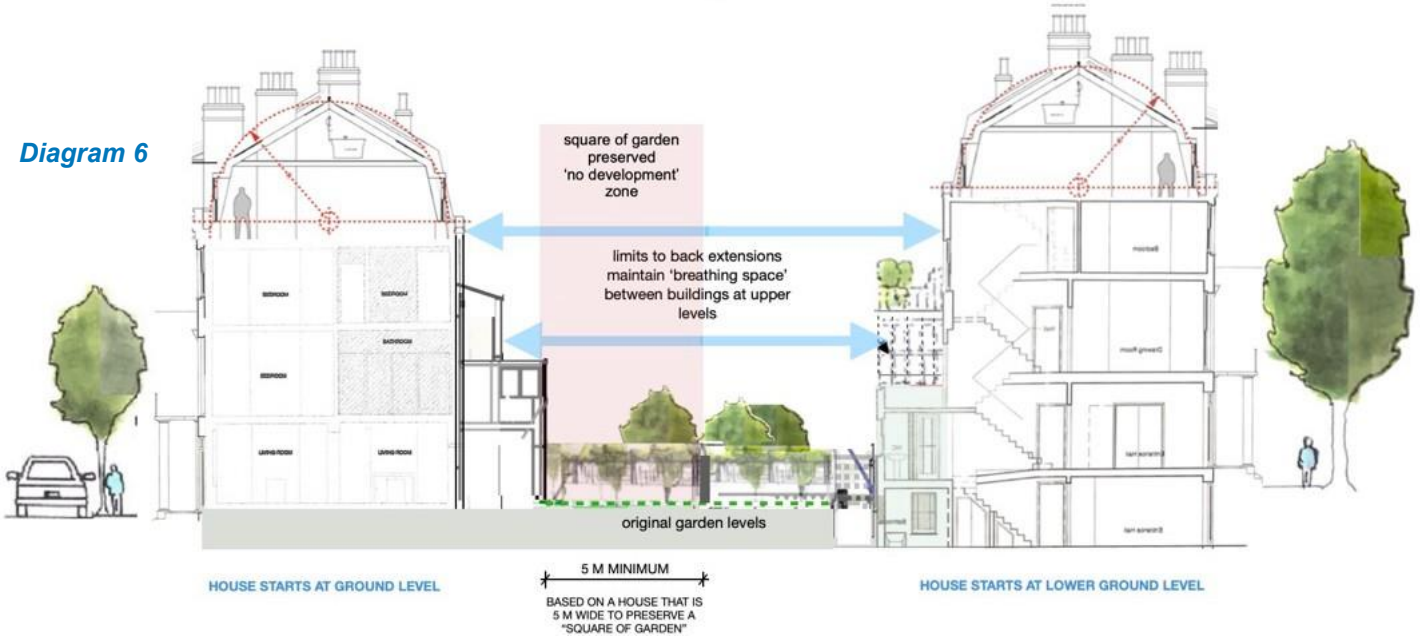


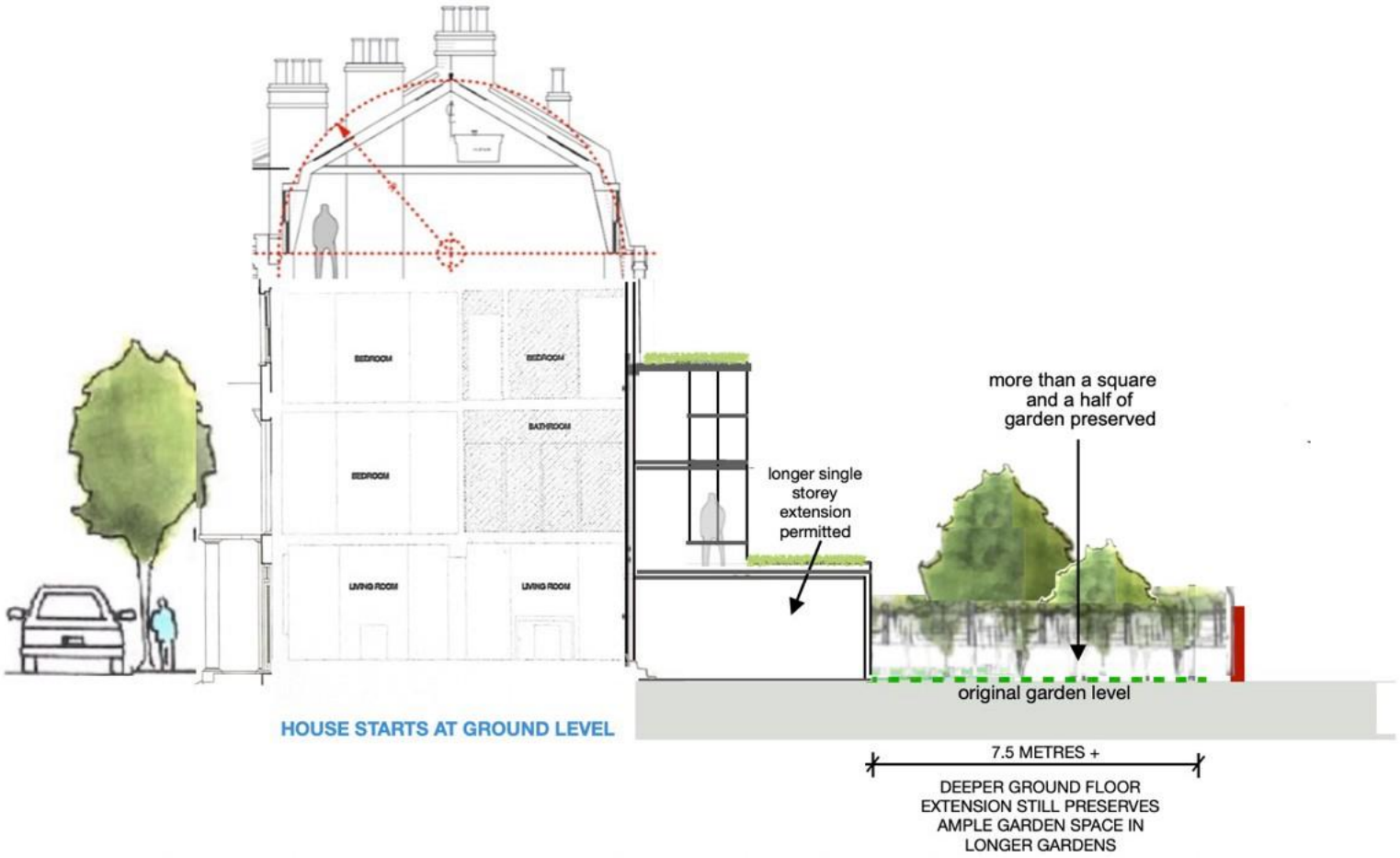
Illustration of back-to-back houses (Diagram 6) showing the relationship of rear extensions to one another and their gardens

NHE8 policies are designed to avoid crowding of properties and maintain open views across garden spaces.

NHE3 policies encourage maintaining original garden levels to allow green views along the backs of our terraces

Diagram 7

illustration showing a deeper single storey extension where a longer garden exists, preserving generous garden space.



Example of NHE8

Principle A limits the proposed extension depth based on garden retention, and principle B limits the extension width based on house proportions.

Both principles are considered when evaluating the suitability of a **multi-storey** proposal.

A full-width **single storey** extension is permitted provided principle A is maintained, so proposal 1 at right would be permitted if the extension is **single storey** only. See following page.

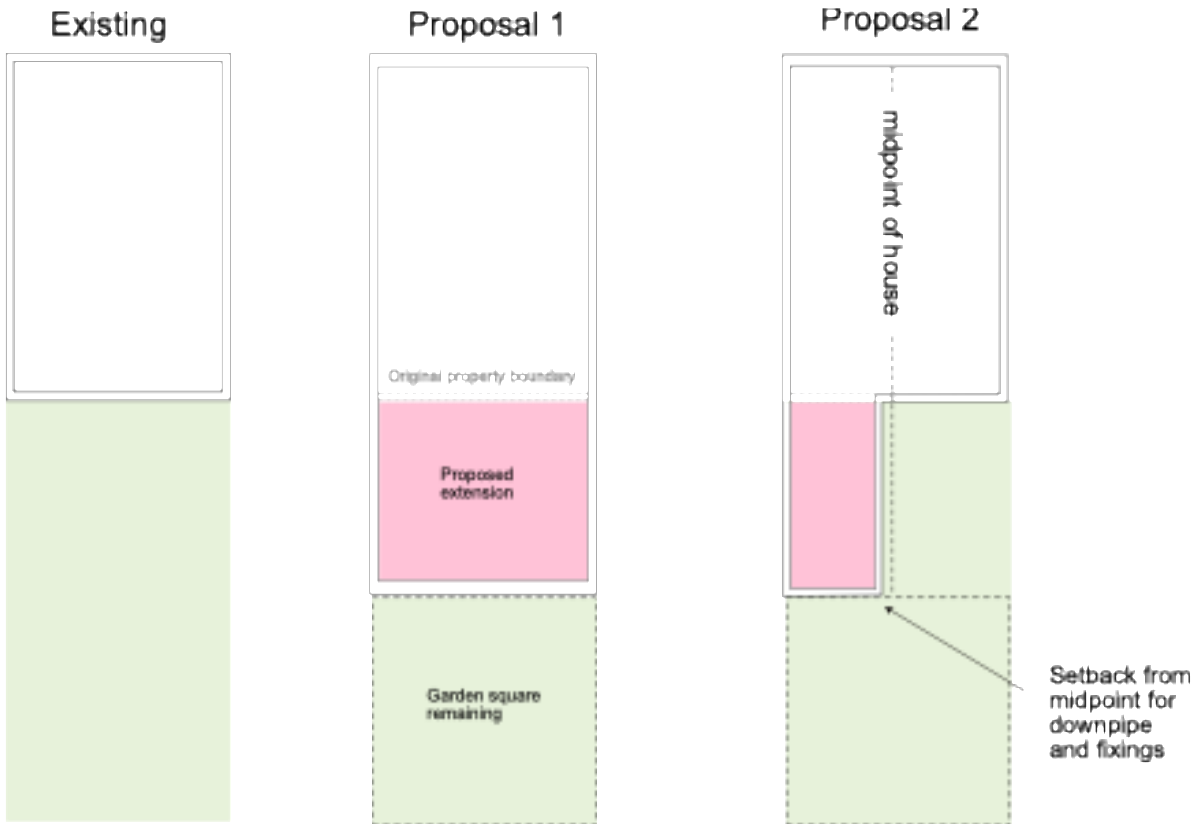


Diagram 8

Principle A
Maintain at least a square of garden

Principle B
Extension width should be less than half the width of the building

Principle A - **single storey** extension proposals in relation to properties gardens beyond the typical terrace size.

Principle A relates to garden retention. Generally "at least a square" of garden should remain, as illustrated on the left. For properties with gardens beyond the typical terrace property size, this is greater, as illustrated on the right. Where extra garden exists, larger **single storey** extensions should aim to maintain as much garden as possible, and ensure that some of the footprint is left uncovered.

Proposals for these larger extensions should show that environmental impacts have been considered.

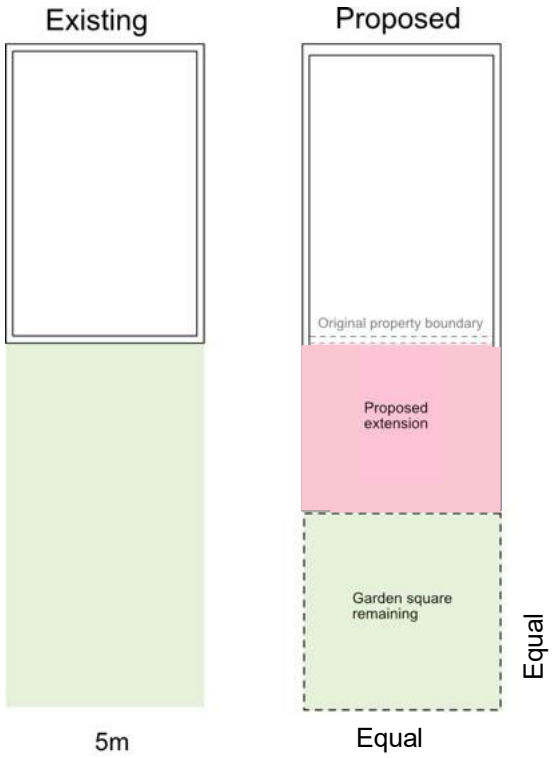
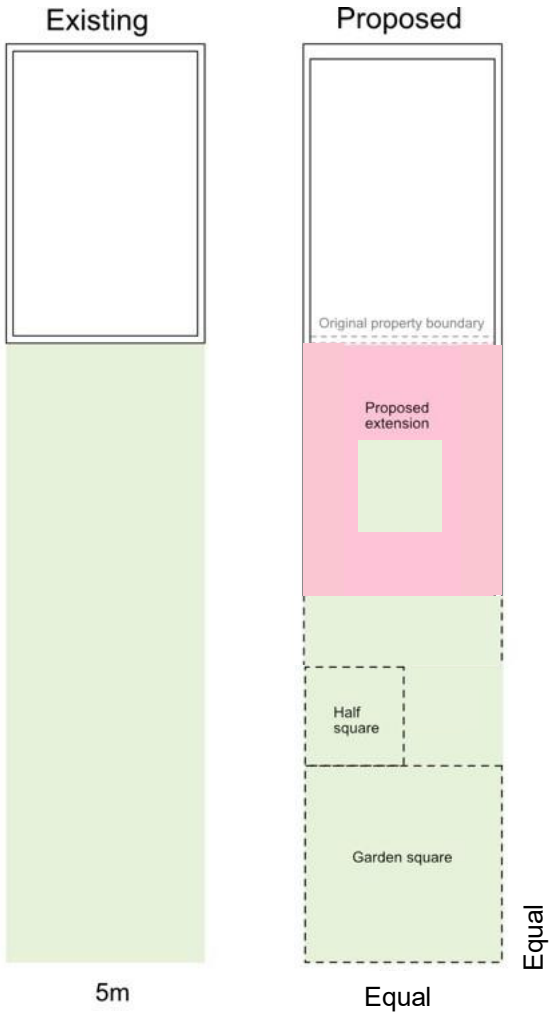


Diagram 9

Principle A (normal)

Maintain at least a square of garden



Principle A (long gardens)

Maintain as much as possible of the garden space beyond the “square” of garden, preferably at least a square and a half of garden.

D.Support innovation, energy conservation and good design

All extensions should be of high design quality, detailing, and construction. New ideas and inventive design solutions that enhance the character of the conservation area should be encouraged. These need not be only of masonry construction. Alternative materials, particularly those which provide a more sustainable approach to energy conservation, e.g. timber / timber panel, should be supported.



Image 103



Image 104



Image 105



Image 106



Image 107



Image 108

Left to right, top row: Historic rear extensions with glass lantern storeys and stepping back above (image 103), rear extension with timber conservatory type lantern (104), a two storey timber oriel window (105). Second row: A Chepstow Road roof lantern used to bring light into interior spaces (106) and similar roof lantern on nearby Chepstow Place (107), rear extension with curving roof and glass fan light at end (108).

E. Infill extensions should be subservient to the host building

E.1 Single storey infill extensions between the more solid back closet wing extensions can be supported in principle, and two storey infill extensions can be considered in cases where:

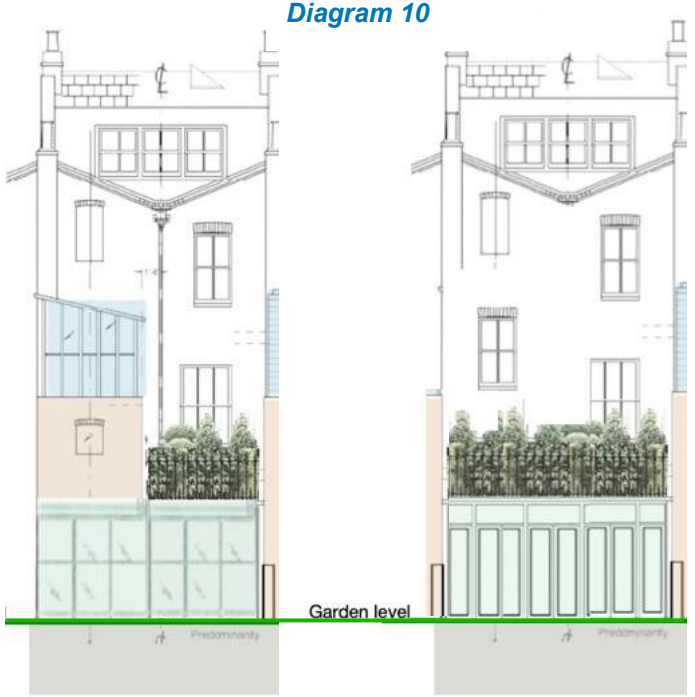
- there is a pattern of them in the terrace and;
- where the infill extension would remain at least a floor level below both flanking closet wings and;
- where the infill would not extend beyond the back elevation line of each of the two flanking closet wings.
- where the infill extension maintains the “square of garden”, including where an existing rear extension intrudes into the square.

Such extensions do not need to be of uniform design and may, but, do not need to occupy the entire side return space.

E.2 Infills that are part of a continuous elevational composition at ground level could be supported provided the minimum garden sizes specified above remain. Different solutions to fenestration should be allowed, e.g., a steel and glass door system or matching pairs of French doors.

E.3 End of terraces should be considered separately because of their impact on rear gardens and windows that are perpendicular

Diagram 10



E.2 Infill that is part of a continuous projection.

E.2 Single storey across the entire back.

At right: 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 can be supported 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.



IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE GARDEN TRELLIS COMPANY

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

Image 109

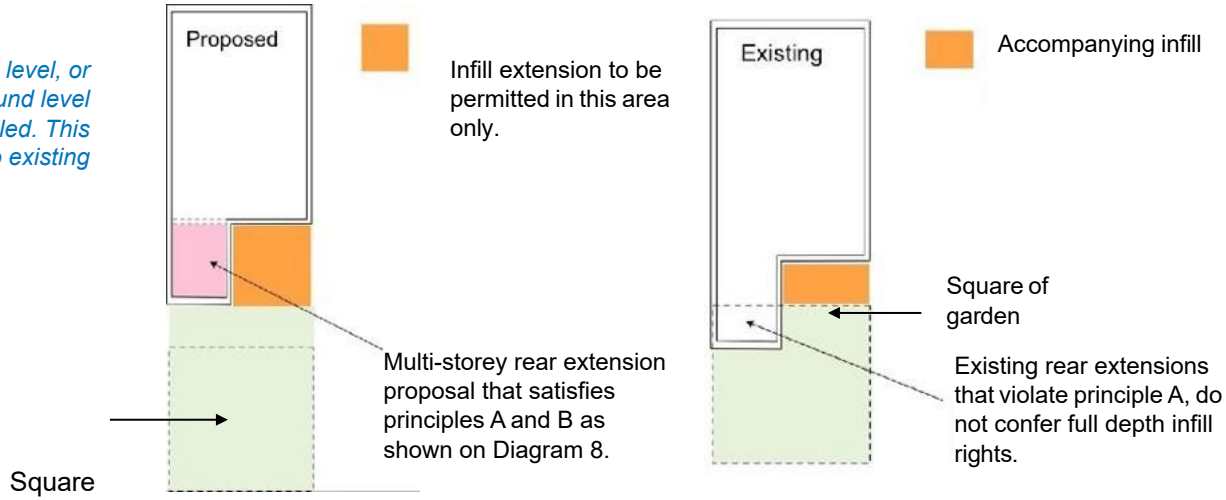


Diagram 11

Appendix 7 -Rear Extensions - Supporting Evidence

Houses in our area dating back to the 1840s and 50s were originally built in groups, and while there is some general uniformity on the street-facing elevations of some of these groups, there is also variation in the metalwork, window patterns and surface details. Maps from 1863 show that most buildings at that time had rear extensions, but they varied in size from group to group and street to street.

Images from Google Earth of the NHENF area show the wide variety of shapes, sizes and materials used for rear extensions. There is no uniformity or prevailing pattern and a multitude of different window fenestration and roof forms can be seen. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maintain this freedom in design at the back, but within certain boundaries to protect the valuable garden spaces beyond.

With policies to ensure high quality design and construction methods, we feel that rear extensions can be upgraded in appearance, optimised to meet the users' needs, improve the energy efficiency of the buildings and also enhance the existing views behind the NHENF houses.

Uniformity in fronts of houses in contrast to the rear



Image 110

Backs of Ledbury Road facing Courtnell - showing multiple lantern top storeys

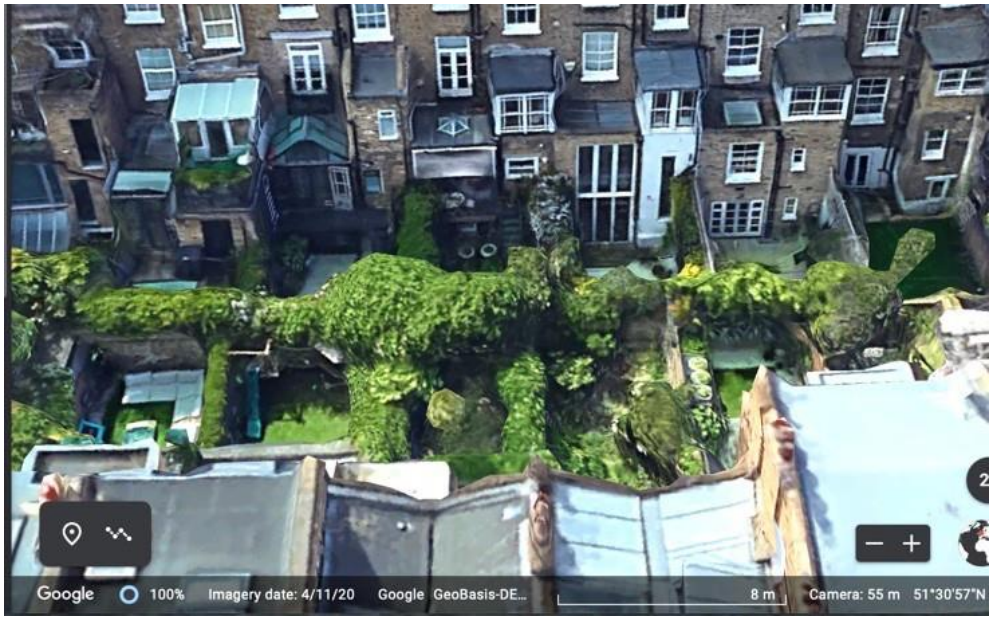


Image 111

Backs of Westbourne Grove facing Artesian

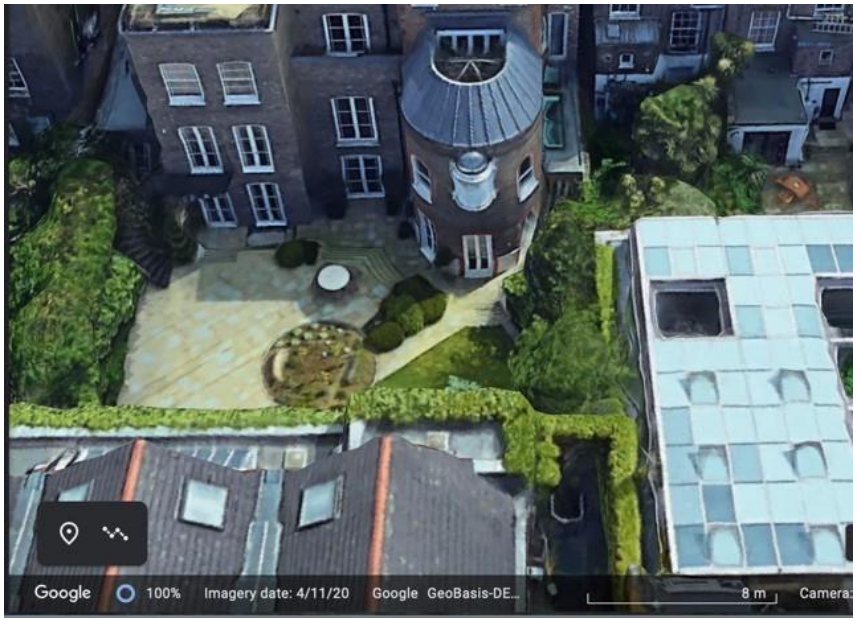


Image 112

Backs of Chepstow facing Northumberland

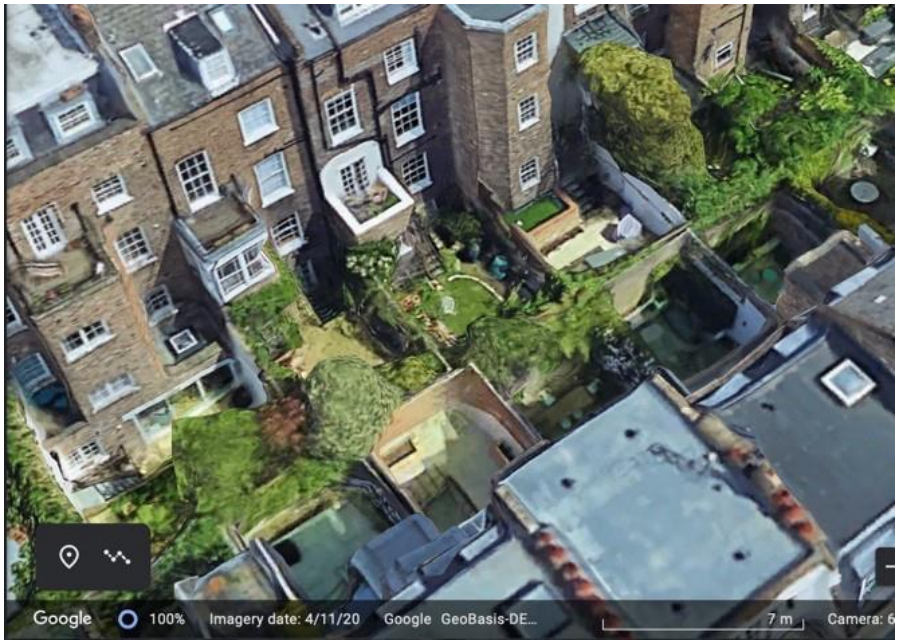


Image 113

Backs of Artesian facing Westbourne Grove

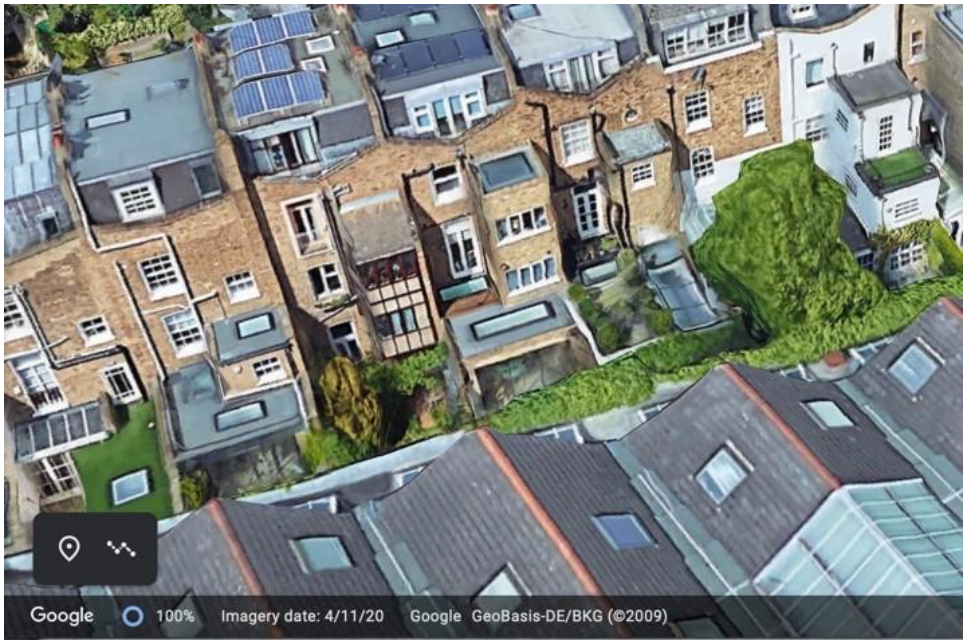


Image 114

Backs of Courtnell Street facing Ledbury



Image 117

Views From Hereford Road facing Kildare and lantern extensions on Kildare



Image 115



Image 116

The historic extension shown below on Sutherland Place conforms to NHENF's policies for rear extensions and like others with top storey lanterns, shows historic precedent. The projection is shallow, the height is limited to three storeys, and the top storey is of lightweight materials with a sloping roof which minimises overall mass.

The permitted modern timber extension shown at right on Artesian Road also conforms to NHENF's policies. The projection is also shallow, the height is limited to three storeys, the roof is sloping and the materials used are all lightweight, which in today's construction, would allow maximum energy conservation though insulation and double or triple glazing.

A new rhythm of forms are created by applying NHENF's policies, which would enhance the conservation area while moving towards zero carbon.



Image 118



Image 119

Appendix 8 - Railing Types



Image 120

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



Image 121

Modern Northumberland Place railings



Image 122

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



Image 123



Image 124

Artesian and Chepstow Road railings



Image 125

Courtnell Street railings



Image 126

Talbot Road North railings



Talbot Road South railings Image 127



Image 128

St. Stephen's Gardens South railings



Image 129

St. Stephen's Gardens North railings

Appendix 9 – Light Pollution Guidance

Introduction

With increasing development resulting in less space between buildings, matters such as light pollution can become more acute. This is more problematic with harsher and brighter LEDs being used inside and outside of buildings. Surface mounted unshielded 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, historic patterned and stained glass, and blinds or other internal or external devices on glass openings.

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



Image 130



Image 131

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

Non Policy Guidance on Light Pollution

A. Security light sensors should be limited to the boundary of the property.

B. Interior lighting should be designed to minimise any nuisance to neighbours.

C. In general, when increasing glass in exterior walls, the design and placement of such structures should avoid harmful disturbance from light pollution. If glass is obscured or frosted, lighting should be designed sensitively to lessen ill effects to neighbours.

D. Landscape lighting should be turned off overnight to protect biodiversity and wildlife. These should be positioned at the base of plantings to light foliage only, which will minimise light spill. Stringing higher level lights across rear gardens should normally be avoided.

E. Light bulbs in exterior wall and ceiling lighting fixtures should be subtle or shielded and have a warm white colour temperature to maintain the townscape character of a conservation area and protect adjacent owners from harsh light pollution.

F. Dark Sky principles should be followed - https://darksky.org/resources/guides-and-how-tos/lighting-principles/

G. Upgrading of exterior lighting at Wessex Gardens with shielded light fixtures having a warmer colour temperature should be supported.

Appendix 10 – Tree Guidance

Non Policy Guidance For Trees

A. Householder applications for development that include new tree planting should show that due regard has been taken of the principle, 'right tree, right place' as set out in the Westminster City Council Environment Supplementary Planning Document or any successor document.

B. Applications to remove TPO-ed trees or carry out tree surgery are determined according to the merits of the individual trees. Should felling of private garden trees with TPOs be approved, the planting of acceptable replacement tree(s) in appropriate locations will usually be required and secured by condition.

C. Although planting trees in private gardens does not require planning permission, the impact on neighbour's amenity should always be considered. Consulting with your neighbours before planting is recommended.



Image 132

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 biodiversity. 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. Private 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 and if lost from a blight, would denude a significant area. We have prepared a comprehensive tree map of our area so that adequate variety in our tree stock can be encouraged as a protective measure. See Tree Map, Appendix 10 (Map 7).
3. Species diversity reduces the spread of disease, and more flowering trees were a neighbourhood request.
4. Applications for major tree works, e.g. significant reduction in size or felling, to a private garden tree that has a TPO (tree preservation order) are determined according to the merits of the individual trees, taking into account the amenity the tree provides, including contribution to wildlife and biodiversity, contribution to the character and appearance of the area and assessment of the condition of the trees, balanced with the reasons put forward for the proposed tree work.



Image 133



Image 135

Above (image 133), balanced trees that have a complementary scale can enhance the surrounding architecture.

Top right (image 134), overgrown trees can stifle growth of newer ones that could contribute to species diversification.

At left (image 135), large scale trees with dense leaf cover can darken the rooms of neighbours.

Bottom right (image 136), plane trees have been kept small through regular pruning. Evergreen hedges also contribute to pollution control year round



Image 134



Image 136

Tree Map of the NHENF Area

As at 2025; tree species to be verified by tree expert

MAP 7









Appendix 11 - Local Green Space Map and Matrix

Local Green Space Designation Requirements	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special	Local in character
Shrewsbury Gardens	In the heart of the NHENF area.	Used heavily by those seeking a place to rest, read, eat lunch, and exercise their dogs. Offers sun, shade, grass, flowers and benches and has fostered extensive social interaction among locals. This is an historic park, having been created in the 70's when the houses at the top end of Moorhouse Road were demolished, and has been used continuously by the community since then.	One of the characteristics of our area is its small planted private front gardens. Shrewsbury offers similar green space but on a larger scale for public community use.

Location of Shrewsbury Gardens

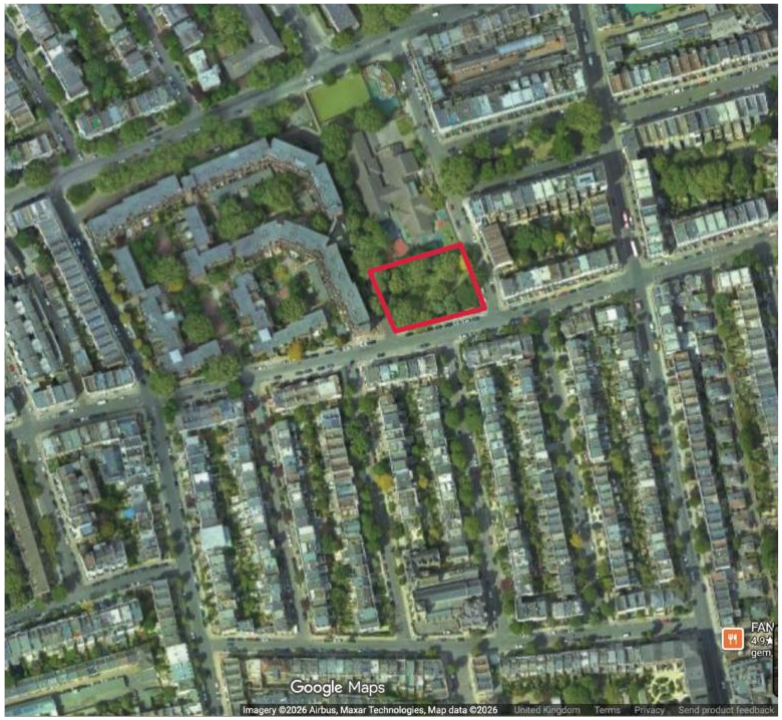


Image 137

Glossary of Terms used in the Plan

Amenity (Residential Amenity)
How comfortable and enjoyable a place is to live in — including light, privacy, noise levels, and access to green space.

Back / Rear Extension
An addition built onto the back of a house to create more living space

Balustrade
A row of small columns (balusters) topped by a rail, often used along balconies or roofs for safety and decoration.

Basement / Underground Development
Building extra rooms below ground level, often under the house or garden.

Biodiversity
The variety of plant and animal life in an area. More biodiversity = a healthier environment.

Building Line / Façade
The front face of a building, especially the part facing the street.

Conservation Area
A protected area where buildings and streets are preserved because of their historic or architectural importance.

Cornice
A decorative horizontal strip (often at roof level) that sticks out slightly from the building.

Corbel
A small projecting stone or bracket that supports a structure above (often decorative).

Curtilage
The land immediately surrounding a building (e.g. front and back garden).

Dormer Window
A window that projects from a sloping roof to create more space and light inside.

Double Glazing
Windows made of two layers of glass to improve insulation and reduce heat loss.

Elevation (Front / Rear Elevation)
A flat drawing or view of one side of a building.

Fenestration
The arrangement and design of windows and openings in a building.

Green Roof
A roof covered with plants to improve insulation, reduce heat, and support wildlife.

Infill Extension
A small extension that fills the gap between existing parts of a building.

Listed Building
A building officially protected because of its historical or architectural significance.

Mansard Roof
A roof with two slopes on each side — the lower slope is steep, creating extra usable space inside.

Oriel Window
A window that projects outward from an upper floor but does not touch the ground.

Glossary of Terms used in the Plan (cont.)

Parapet Wall
A low wall at the edge of a roof or terrace, often used for safety or to hide the roof behind it.

Permeable Surface
A surface (like gravel or grass) that allows rainwater to soak into the ground rather than run off.

Planning Permission
Official approval needed from the local authority before building or making major changes.

Public Realm
Shared outdoor spaces like streets, pavements, parks, and squares.

Roof Light / Roof Lantern
A window installed in a roof to bring natural light into a room below.

Setback
When part of a building is positioned further back from the front line of the building below it.

Sustainable Drainage (SuDS)
Design methods that manage rainwater naturally (e.g. through planting or permeable surfaces).

Terrace (Roof Terrace)
A flat outdoor space on a roof used for seating or planting.

Townscape
The overall look and feel of buildings and streets in an area.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
A legal protection that prevents certain trees from being cut down or heavily altered.

Urban Heat Island Effect
When cities become warmer than surrounding areas due to buildings and hard surfaces.

Vaulted Ceiling
A ceiling that slopes or curves upward, creating more height and space.

Green Valley (in this document)
The continuous stretch of gardens behind houses that together form a shared green space.

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. Our thanks go to Richard Perkins, NHENF Chairman from 2020 - 2023 who was instrumental in getting the Forum and Neighbourhood Plan underway back in 2014, and as a long term resident of the neighbourhood, provided valuable insights into both the strengths and challenges of the area.
3. Our thanks also go to Suzanne Forte, NHENF Chair from 2017 to 2020, who contributed alongside other members of the Plan Sub-committee, time and professional knowledge towards the production of this Plan
4. Other members of our Steering Committee who, over many years have provided essential help with communications, surveys and consultations, publicity, events and other crucial support to ensure a high level of community engagement.
5. Our Councillors from our two wards, past and present: Adam Hug, David Boothroyd, Emily Payne, Richard Elcho, Maggie Carmen, James Small-Edwards and Max Sullivan for their support of our ideas, policies and public realm improvements.
6. Our colleagues at the other Neighbourhood Forums in Westminster and RBK&C for their generous guidance and help to us, and their dedication to the improvement of Westminster and London as a whole.
7. The Planning Policy team at Westminster for their review of and suggestions for our Plan draft.
8. GB Sol for the use of their roof tiles image.
9. The Garden Trellis company for the use of trellis images.
10. Andrew Pilkington Architects and Belsize Architects for allowing us to show their tremendous work, which we hope will inspire our residents to achieve design excellence whenever they make changes to their buildings.
11. David Sear at Westminster Parks for his ongoing help with the improvement works on our two public gardens.

