

# LITTLE BURSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

November 2011





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# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 The Purpose of the Management Plan**

Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and to submit these proposals for public consideration.

Conservation management planning should be based on an understanding of the significance of a place and the values attached to it. The Little Burstead Conservation Area Appraisal outlines the special architectural and historic interest of the area and provides an assessment of its character and appearance. This Management Plan outlines Basildon Borough Council's approach to managing future change in the area.

## **1.2 The Importance of Conservation Areas**

Historic areas are now widely recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural heritage, economic well-being and quality of life. Numerous studies produced by CABI, English Heritage, etc. have shown that there are a wide range of benefits of Conservation Area status, including:

- Locally valued buildings, trees and spaces are protected
- The retention and enhancement of buildings, features and spaces that make the Conservation Area special ensure that residents, workers and visitors continue to enjoy a unique area, improving the quality of their lives
- Property values are generally improved within Conservation Areas, particularly when traditional features and details are retained and enhanced
- Opportunities to repair and reinstate traditional buildings and to improve the streetscape

Conservation Areas often represent familiar and cherished local scenes and the protection of this special character ensures that the qualities that make Little Burstead Conservation Area appealing are enhanced.

## **1.3 The Need for Action**

Historic areas have always changed, and our expectation should be that they will continue to change and evolve. Change should not be taken as automatically undermining the integrity of a historic place; the challenge is to facilitate and manage change in ways that maintain and if possible reinforce the area's special qualities.

The character of Conservation Areas is rarely static and is susceptible to incremental change (such as the replacement of windows and doors) as well as dramatic change (such as the wholesale redevelopment of a building). Positive management is essential if such pressure for change, which alters the very character that makes the area attractive, is to be limited.

## 2. CONSERVATION AREA POLICY

### 2.1 National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPS 5) sets out the Government's national planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. *The policies in this PPS are a 'material consideration' (planning related factors / issues) which must be taken into account when local authorities exercise their planning powers.* Guidance for the implementation of these policies is provided in a companion document, *Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide*.

A Conservation Area is a 'designated heritage asset' as set out in the companion guide. Conservation Areas are designated, usually by local authorities, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for their special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Other designated heritage assets are:

**Scheduled Monuments** – designated under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 by the Secretary of State for their national importance.

**Listed Buildings** – designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 by the Secretary of State for their special architectural or historic interest.

**Registered Parks and Gardens** – designated by English Heritage under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 (as amended by the National Heritage Act 1983) for their special historic interest.

The Government's overarching aim in PPS 5 is 'that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations'. It seeks to do this through the implementation of the policies within PPS 5, utilising the Practice Guide. The relevant policies of the PPS and paragraphs of the Practice Guide to the preparation of this Management Plan are summarised below:

- Policy HE1: *Heritage assets and climate change*
  - Para 24 of the companion guide
- Policy HE2: *Evidence base for plan-making*
  - Para 27 of the companion guide
- Policy HE3: *Regional and local planning approaches*
- Policy HE4: *Permitted development and Article 4 Directions*
- Policy HE5: *Monitoring Indicators*

### 2.2 Local Planning Policy

The Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies document (as approved by the Secretary of State through a Direction issued on 20th September 2007) sets out the local planning policy background against which development within the Little Burstead Conservation Area will be assessed. Saved

Policies are policies that were originally part of the Basildon District Local Plan, adopted on March 1998, with Alterations in September 1999.

The policies of direct relevance to the Little Burstead Conservation Area are (and are provided in full in Appendix 1):

**Green Belt** – Policy BAS GB3, GB4, GB5 and GB7

**Built Environment** – Policy BAS BE12 and BE24

Changes in planning law, however, mean that Basildon Council must now produce a new type of development plan called the Local Development Framework (LDF), to replace its old 'Local Plan' of 1998. Unlike the Local Plan which was a single very large document, the new LDF can best be described as a collection of planning documents which will be prepared by Basildon Council.

The LDF will aim to meet the local community's future economic, environmental and social needs by establishing the Council's policy on the control of land-use and development throughout Basildon Borough up until 2021. Work continues to produce the Basildon LDF which, when formally adopted, will become the basis upon which planning applications are judged.

## **3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION**

### **3.1 Local Authorities' Duties**

Basildon Borough Council has a duty under Section 69 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 [Planning (LB&CA) Act 1990] to review their areas from time to time to consider whether further designation of Conservation Areas is necessary. It should seek to establish consistent local standards for its designations and should periodically review existing Conservation Areas and their boundaries against those standards. Cancellation of designation should be considered where an area or part of an area is no longer considered to possess the special interest which led to its original designation.

Section 71 of the Planning (LB&CA) Act 1990 places a duty on Basildon Borough Council to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Little Burstead Conservation Area. The production of, and consultation on, the Little Burstead Appraisal and this Management Plan seeks to fulfil this duty.

In exercising their planning powers, Basildon Borough Council has a duty under Section 72 of the Planning (LB&CA) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the Little Burstead Conservation Area. The desirability of preserving or enhancing the areas should also be a 'material consideration' in the Council's consideration of development proposals which are outside the Conservation Area, but would affect its setting or views into or out of the area.

### **3.2 Implications for Owners and Residents**

Legislation in 2008 and 2010 has extended 'permitted development rights' on some development, including in Conservation Areas. However, Conservation Area designation still requires a planning application to be made for certain types of development which are elsewhere classified as permitted development. Appendix 2 provides details of when some common householder developments do or do not need planning permission. In April 2010, new legislation also extended permitted development rights for some non-residential buildings, although flats still do not have any permitted development rights. For further information on the legislation, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/> carries the relevant legislation and their accompanying explanatory documents.

### **3.3 Need for Community Involvement**

The historic environment provides a tangible link with our past and contributes to our sense of national, local and community identity. People care about and want to conserve those elements of the historic environment that hold heritage value for them. The historic environment is a living and integral part of their local scene and can support the regeneration and sustainable economic and social development of communities.

In order to ensure that the historic environment continues to enhance the quality of people's daily lives, proactive and intelligent management is required. High quality places bring wider community benefits and the historic environment can play a key role in defining a place and in building local

pride. However, the value that a place holds for some communities may not be obvious from expert advice or research alone and it is therefore important to incorporate the views and information of the local community to add to the understanding of Conservation Areas.

## 4. THE SPECIAL INTEREST OF LITTLE BURSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA

### 4.1 Key Characteristics

The key characteristics of the Conservation Area are described in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal. They may be summarised as follows:

1. The village is centred on the green which sits at the junction of three roads, along which the village has grown.
2. The village has a strong linear form which is only interrupted by the later 'Plotlands' development along Broomhills Chase which is largely outside the Conservation Area.
3. It is an affluent area and the good condition of the houses generally reflects this, although the large number of cars has resulted in the construction of many large garage buildings.
4. There is a typical village mix of properties dating from the fifteenth century onwards and including large houses, smaller cottages and farm buildings and most sit within generous plots. Most properties are modest in scale and rarely rise above two storeys, although the grander houses have attic rooms.
5. Trees and hedges are an important part of the verdant rural landscape in which the village sits and provide good enclosure to the street.

### 4.2 Analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The following table is a 'SWOT' analysis of Little Burstead Conservation Area.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
A sought-after and affluent village	No local services and a lack of adequate community facilities	Encourage visiting or temporary services and redevelop village hall	Households with easy access to cars discourages local services
Pleasant rural lanes and public realm with low key street furniture	The green is a little cluttered with signage and the village suffers with relatively heavy traffic because of the residents' reliance on cars	Removal/amalgamation of street furniture when considering new/replacement signage. Further sensitively designed traffic calming measures	Greater car ownership

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Attractive historic buildings give a strong sense of place	Some mid twentieth century development has diluted the character	Ensure further building respects the character	Further development which is out of place, in terms of design detailing with traditional buildings
Long views and a strong sense of connection with the countryside	Some views compromised by development	Protect views within and out of the Conservation Area	Development pressure
Well maintained buildings and surroundings	A very small number of negative elements which detract from the Conservation Area	High property prices in locality will encourage action	Absent owners
Significant trees and hedges contribute to rural appearance	Non-native species and leylandii can have an overbearing and alien appearance	Further TPOs could be considered	Development pressure could see tree numbers and quality reduced

## 5. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

### 5.1 Resources

Designation of a Conservation Area and the production of a Character Appraisal and Management Plan, without the commitment of sufficient resources to fulfil the duties that follow can seriously undermine the purpose and value of a Conservation Area. Basildon Borough Council has, in common with many local planning authorities, limited resources, and a balance will need to be struck, giving priority to key issues.

The additional implications that Conservation Area designation makes on local authority staff time can be significant. Basildon Borough Council calls on the conservation expertise of Essex County Council officers in assessing and negotiating on development proposals that impact on the special interest of Conservation Areas. Essex County Council's conservation expertise is also used to advise on appropriate quality is achieved in the implementation of planning permissions that would affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area (and to advise on the acceptability of Conservation Area consent applications for the demolition of unlisted buildings).

Following recent changes in the Borough Council's enforcement priorities, greater attention should be placed on monitoring unauthorised changes in the Conservation Area.

Conservation Area Designation also means that all proposed works to trees within the boundary have to be notified to Basildon Borough Council at least 6 weeks in advance. This, inevitably, involves resources, mainly the time of the Borough Council's Planning and Arboricultural Officers as they are responsible for dealing with tree works applications – considered further in section 5.8. However, Little Burstead Conservation Area has been designated since 1983 and the work generated by Tree Works Applications is not substantial and has been accommodated within the workloads of the officers.

It is essential for all departments within Basildon Borough Council to understand the significance of Little Burstead's Conservation Area status and to work corporately and strategically with Essex County Council to ensure that development control decisions are appropriate to the historic context. It is also important to ensure that a good working relationship is established with those departments and authorities that do not traditionally work in a 'development team' manner, to ensure that issues such as street management do not damage the historic fabric or appearance of the Conservation Area.

#### ***Priorities within Little Burstead Conservation Area***

The following is a summary of key issues affecting the Conservation Area and suggested actions. They are explored in more detail in subsequent sections of the Management Plan.

##### *1. Design Guidance*

Produce guidelines to control the pressure for larger replacement dwellings, extensions to existing dwellings and infill development within the Conservation Area.

## *2. Enhancement Opportunities*

Consider enhancement proposals to secure visual improvements to the Conservation Area and the public realm.

## *3. Development Opportunities*

Prepare design briefs for the redevelopment of identified sites within the Conservation Area.

## *4. Buildings of Local Interest*

Prepare criteria for / draw up a list of buildings of local interest (or local heritage assets) *and, perhaps with the help of local amenity groups, prepare the list for Little Burstead.*

## **5.2 Consistency**

The production of a Conservation Area Appraisal and associated Management Plan provides a clear and accurate assessment of the Conservation Area's character and appearance, against which decisions can be made. The Little Burstead Conservation Area Appraisal sets out the key characteristics of the area which should be respected when development proposals are drawn up. The Management Plan identifies actions and provides design guidance which offers clear advice regarding what is required and acceptable within the Little Burstead Conservation Area.

Allied to the provision of clear advice in the Conservation Area documents, is the recommendation that guidance leaflets are produced (see section 7.2). The consistent application of this advice by all those concerned with submitting and determining development proposals (including Planning Inspectors at appeals where planning, etc. permission is refused) is necessary to preserve and enhance the area in accordance with statutory duties.

## **5.3 Enforcement**

Most local authorities subscribe to the Cabinet Office Enforcement Concordat, which sets out best practice principles for enforcement, such as openness, consistency, proportionality and responding to complaints. The Borough Council does subscribe to this Concordat and should take its existing enforcement procedures forward into a more detailed enforcement strategy in order to:

- Explain the scope of planning enforcement;
- Openly define priorities;
- Set measurable standards for service delivery;
- Explain how investigations are carried out; and
- Explain enforcement procedures and enforcement actions.

At present, enforcement staff are responsible for monitoring compliance with planning conditions. This process, which is triggered by commencement notices under the Building Regulations, is effective, but it leaves mainstream enforcement as a purely reactive practice.

An enforcement strategy would make clear the policies and procedures that are needed to ensure firstly the protection of the natural environment and secondly the protection of the built heritage, particularly in relation to heritage assets which should generally have the next highest priority, because so much historic fabric is irreplaceable. However, active enforcement in the historic

environment does require the input of specialist skills, including a conservation officer. (This skill is provided by Essex County Council via a service level agreement.)

The strategy should also explain the circumstances when the Borough Council would make use of Repairs Notices, Urgent Works Notices and Amenity (Section 215) Notices (see section 5.7 for further details).

Within the Little Burstead Conservation Area, there are very few instances where enforcement opportunities appear to have been missed. The installation of PVCu windows into Coopers Cottages is highly unfortunate, but it is likely that this occurred before the properties were listed, although this should be investigated. Other alterations to other properties may have also occurred and may have been in place for some time, but without further research it is difficult to accurately confirm where or indeed if, breaches of planning control have occurred.

If, however, on further investigation it is ascertained that a breach of planning control has occurred, the case for enforcement action will be carefully considered, taking into account the nature of the change and acknowledging local pressures on resources. Some changes are benign – the restoration of missing features, for instance. Others may be considered damaging, but how badly? There are questions of:

- Sensitivity – A replacement window that differs only in a few minor but crucial respects may be destructive to a precious listed building but tolerable elsewhere;
- Relativity – Some changes matter more than others;
- Magnitude – A replacement window that required the removal of masonry to alter the proportions would almost certainly be far worse than one that fitted the existing opening;
- Accumulation – Small-scale changes that are inoffensive in a single iteration may have an erosive effect through repetition;
- Speed – The rate of change, which can be measured by successive surveys, may itself be a cause for alarm;
- Extent – An alteration may be so widespread that it is regarded as neutral rather than bad: television aerials, for instance, are rarely expressed as a major issue; and
- Survival – Some changes that would have been considered negative have survived the test of time to become cherished rarities. An example might be an art deco shopfront on a Victorian building,

Different Borough priorities in the past have limited the enforcement resources available to suitably address the incremental changes that have occurred in the Conservation Area.

#### **5.4 Conservation Area Boundary Review**

The Little Burstead Conservation Area Appraisal, which is the sister document to this Management Plan, does not suggest any changes to the boundary. Extending the boundary to encompass the Church and the Common was considered, but was rejected because they were not felt to be an integral part of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Their position within the Green Belt affords them strong protection and incorporation into the Conservation Area is not therefore considered necessary.

Following full public consultation with the public and other interested parties and organisations, Basildon Borough Council will be able to consider any boundary proposals put forward and decide whether to formally adopt them.

### **5.5 Article 4 Directions**

Article 4 directions are not recommended for Little Burstead. Many of the village's buildings have already been altered to provide greater living accommodation and to meet modern living expectations; for example, there are many double garages, fences, a number of electric gates and intercom entry points, and these have altered the rural feel of the village to some extent.

Villagers tend to over- rather than under-maintain their properties so poor quality 'improvements' are less likely than in some other Conservation Areas. There are no longer any rows of identical houses the group value of which would be spoilt if an architectural feature were to be altered. The village is also within the Green Belt which imposes strict controls on development. Nonetheless, property owners are encouraged to undertake appropriate alterations.

Guidance encouraging appropriate repairs and alterations to properties will be produced as part of the actions of this Management Plan in order to further public understanding and support for the Conservation Area. Such guidance should refer to the economic benefits of reinstating traditional features which is likely to be a strong driver in persuading property owners to address unsympathetic changes to their buildings. English Heritage's 2009 report 'Conservation Areas at Risk' refers to a survey of estate agents in which revealed that:

- unsympathetic replacement windows and doors, particularly plastic/PVCu, is the single biggest threat to property values in conservation areas;
- unsympathetic extensions and alterations are also considered to be particular problems;
- 82% feel that original features tend to add financial value to properties and 78% think they help a property to sell more quickly;
- three-quarters believe that a well-maintained conservation area adds to the value of the properties within it. Confidence in the area keeping its character and the attractive environment are the two key reasons;
- residential properties within conservation areas sell for more than equivalent properties not in a conservation area; and
- 82% of estate agents feel that only a minority of their clients have a reasonable understanding of the additional controls in conservation areas.

### **5.6 Urgent Works and Repairs Notices and Section 215 Notices**

There is no specific duty on owners to keep their buildings in a good state of repair, though it is in their best interest to do so. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) provides local councils with powers to intervene when it becomes evident that a building is falling into decay. There are other statutory powers under the Housing Acts (e.g. Empty Dwelling Management Orders, Section 133 of the 2004 Housing Act) to deal with long term vacant property and under the Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure the removal of eyesores (see below).

### ***Urgent Works Notices***

In Conservation Areas, 'urgent works notices' (usually served under section 54 of the 1990 Act on the unoccupied parts of listed buildings) may be served, in exceptional circumstances, under section 76 of the 1990 Act on the unoccupied parts of non-listed buildings where the preservation of the building is important for maintaining the character or appearance of the area. These notices announce the intention of a local authority to undertake immediate and urgent work itself if the owner does not, and to recover the costs of the works from the owner. The works that can be implemented include:

- Making the building weather tight;
- Making the building safe from structural collapse; and
- Preventing unauthorised entry, vandalism or theft.

The Council must serve a notice giving the details of what is required, 7-days before it intends to enter to implement the works. There is no appeal against this notice.

### ***Repairs Notices***

A Repairs Notice can be served under Section 48 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, only in relation to a listed building. The works allow for a much more comprehensive repairs scheme than the Urgent Works Notice. The Notice requires the building owner to comply with a schedule of works, which can be used to put the building back into the condition as of the date of listing.

For further information on Urgent Works and Repairs Notices, consult English Heritage's *Stopping the Rot* guidance which is available from [www.helm.org.uk](http://www.helm.org.uk).

### ***Section 215 Notice***

Basildon Borough Council may also use its general planning powers under the Planning Act 1990 to serve a Section 215 Notice on the owner (or occupier) of any land or building whose condition is adversely affecting the amenity of the Conservation Area. Such a notice requires the person responsible to clean up the site or building, or the local authority can carry out the work itself and reclaim the cost from the owner (under Section 219).

Section 215 is a relatively straightforward power that can deliver important, substantial and lasting improvements to amenity. Ideally, the use of Section 215 Notices should be pro-active and not complaint-led. Further advice on the use of Section 215 Notices can be found in the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Section 215: Best Practice Guidance* (January 2005) by the then ODPM.

## **5.7 Important Trees and Green Spaces**

Trees are an important part of the character of the Conservation Area and are very much in the foreground in views within the Conservation Area, more so than the buildings. They also provide a visual connection with the countryside and the surrounding Metropolitan Green Belt. Significant trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (see <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/protectedtreesguide.pdf>) and planning legislation requires owners wishing

to top, lop or fell non-protected trees within the Conservation Area boundary to inform the local authority of their intention, giving the Council six weeks' notice. In Conservation Areas, notice is required for works to trees that have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm when measured at 1.5m from ground level (or more than 100mm if reducing the number of trees to benefit the growth of other trees). During the six week notification period, the Council considers whether to permit the work or serve a Tree Preservation Order.



*The Green – view to Hope House*



*The Green – War Memorial*

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies significant groups of trees within the Conservation Area and it is considered important to ensure that these are protected. Further Tree Preservation Orders could be considered in these areas. The Conservation Area Appraisal also identifies the key views within the Conservation Area and looking out from it. It is important to ensure that new development preserves these, particularly as they tend to focus on buildings.

Little Burstead's only true open space is the Green at the junction of the Conservation Area's three roads. It is a flat expanse of grass which contains the few public elements of the village such as the War Memorial, the telephone box and bus stop. It was traditionally used for recreation and is likely to be ancient in origin. Views from it, looking out of village are limited, but it is well defined and attractive space.

In order to preserve the character of the Green and the 'public' trees within the Conservation Area, a management regime for this space should be set out. All proposals for landscaping schemes and other works in the Green must be based upon this management regime and could seek to maximise the benefit to biodiversity and the local community. The use of further Tree Preservation Orders should also be considered.

## **5.8 Climate Change**

The consequences of climate change which is generally considered to be brought about by carbon dioxide emissions are a major concern worldwide. The buildings that we live and work in produce almost half of all carbon dioxide produced in Britain. Making buildings more energy efficient could drastically reduce this.

Many of the buildings in Little Burstead Conservation Area were built before the First World War. They are built from traditional materials: brick, timber, clay and lime plaster. They have solid walls, and timber single glazed windows. Making these houses more energy efficient is desirable, both from the point of view of occupiers/owners and to benefit the environment, but there are several

issues to be looked at when measuring the sustainability of a building. The amount of energy required to make a product (the 'embodied energy') is important, as is the pollution caused by the transportation of products and the energy used in waste disposal.

Products which have long manufacturing processes, such as plastics, have high-embodied energy because they use up fuel and other resources. Timber, which in some cases just needs sawing before it is ready for use, has low embodied energy. The historic buildings in Conservation Areas were built using traditional materials which tend to have less embodied energy as little energy was usually spent in their production. These materials also tend to be longer lasting than their modern counterparts, meaning that whatever energy was used in their production is further reduced as it is spread out over the longer life of the materials.

The replacement of traditional timber windows with double glazed PVCu involves the long manufacturing process to produce the PVC (and the consequent production of toxic by-products) and the use of other chemicals to improve its stability and other qualities.

PVC is difficult to recycle, it does not biodegrade when it becomes waste and additives are susceptible to leaching in landfill sites. It is difficult to repair (usually the whole unit needs replacing) and produces toxic gases when it burns.

Importantly for the Conservation Area, PVCu window replacements change the character and appearance of an old building and replacement windows can gradually erode the character of the Conservation Area.

Repairing an existing window is more sustainable than throwing it away and making a new one. Timber in old windows is usually of higher quality than modern timber and therefore less likely to need wholesale replacement. They can be patch repaired, which requires much less material than wholesale replacement, and the amount of timber needed for repair is a renewable resource with low embodied energy. Repairs will ensure the original character is retained and a properly maintained timber window can last for hundreds of years.

Greenpeace have produced a leaflet 'Briefing No.1 Installing New Windows' which considers the pros and cons (including costs) of PVCu windows compared to traditional timber windows. This can be found at: <http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/MultimediaFiles/Live/FullReport/5588.pdf>.

Insulating our houses is an important way to save energy. Often, introducing secondary glazing, or shutters, or thick insulated curtains to the existing window would be a more sustainable option than a PVCu replacement, and would conserve the character of the building.

Mineral wools and oil-based products (e.g. polystyrene), used by most insulation installers, are non-renewable, have high embodied energy and are difficult to dispose of. They are also unpleasant to use. Organic insulation (wool, flax, cellulose, wood fibre, hemp) does not have these problems. It may also last longer than other types because it can absorb and release water without damage. This 'breathability' also makes organic products more suitable for old buildings.

Sustainability requires us to make the best use of what we already have. Reusing old buildings conserves embodied energy and is likely to be a more sustainable option than demolition and new

build. All the traditional materials used in old buildings are either recyclable or are a renewable resource.

Up to 90% of the internal surface of a building may be sealed with synthetic, petrochemical-based coverings. Indoor environments can be up to 10 times more polluted than the external environment (Source: US Environmental Protection Agency).

Oil-based paints contain up to 50% solvents. Solvents are persistent, and can build up in the body, causing serious illness. Water-based paints do not contain solvents, but require a large number of other chemicals to make them perform like oil paints. Leftover paint is classed as toxic waste. The combination of synthetic paints, chemicals in carpets and furniture, and lack of ventilation is now thought by many to increase susceptibility to allergies, headaches and other illnesses.

These products can also affect the health of your building. Houses built before the First World War usually have solid walls. Water vapour can be absorbed by the wall material and then evaporated without causing damage. This is often described as a 'breathing' wall. If surfaces are sealed, the wall can no longer breathe. Water becomes trapped within the solid wall, causing damp problems, condensation and mould growth.

In the past, building surfaces were decorated with limewashes and distemper. These were based on natural products, which allowed vapour in and out of walls. Timber was treated with linseed oil-based paints. Linseed oil soaks in to timber actively repelling water. These days there are several natural paint ranges which use only natural products, and allow walls to breathe.

If a property is of traditional build (this includes most pre-war buildings) cement mortar for re-pointing or cement render should not be used as this can cause damage to traditional materials. A soft lime: sand mix should be used instead as this allows the walls to breathe (see above). Localised re-pointing is generally all that is required, but if extensive areas of wall surfaces are badly eroded, the use of modern paints, renders or coatings should be resisted as they are likely to trap damp in your walls; a lime plaster or render should be used instead.

'The Green Guide for Historic Buildings – How to improve the environmental performance of listed and historic buildings' by The Prince's Regeneration Trust (published March 2010) brings together advice from a number of sources on tackling climate change through the refurbishment and conversion of all types of historic buildings.

English Heritage, working with power company e-on, has also set up an interactive web portal: <http://www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk> which aims to help you understand more about the potential impacts of climate change and ways to save energy if you own or manage an older home. It includes links to documents such as 'Micro Wind Generation and Traditional Buildings', 'Small scale solar electric energy (photo-voltaics) and traditional buildings' and 'Small scale solar thermal energy and traditional buildings'.

## **6. ENHANCEMENT ACTIONS**

### **6.1 Design Guidance**

#### ***Demolition***

In line with national planning policy, all necessary applications will need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification for any demolition of heritage assets (including undesignated assets such as buildings of townscape value), and the applicant must prove the following:

- The building is incapable of beneficial use;
- The building is beyond the point of economic repair;
- The building does not make a 'positive' contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; and
- That the building has been marketed and an alternative use/owner has not been found.

Policy HE9 of PPS 5 sets out the Policy Principles guiding the consideration of applications for consent relating to Designated Heritage Assets. Further guidance is provided in paragraphs 91 to 97 of the Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide which provides specific guidance on marketing to demonstrate redundancy. Policy HE8 of PPS 5 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset or its setting is a material consideration in determining an application.

#### ***Alterations and Extensions to Existing Buildings***

The main threat to the traditional buildings in the Conservation Area is the desire for larger rooms and open plan living which can result in an erosion of the often modest character of the older village properties. Growing modern expectations over the level of comfort that a home should provide have also increased the desire for double-glazing and porches, etc. which can have a damaging effect on the appearance of a traditional property.

Appendix 2 of this Management Plan attempts to summarise what common householder alterations can be undertaken by property owners within Conservation Areas, but some of these may potentially be damaging to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Basildon Borough Council has designated the Little Burstead Conservation Area because it is seeking to preserve those features that are important to the character and appearance of the historic village. Property owners also have a responsibility to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Property owners are therefore encouraged to undertake regular and appropriate maintenance and should also take the opportunity to consult Essex County Council (Basildon Borough Council's historic environment advisors) over proposed alterations to their properties to ensure that they do not, however unintentionally, harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Some general guidelines are set out below:

- Extensions should always relate well to the proportions, form, massing and character of the existing buildings.
- In order to maintain the character of the original building, extensions should be subordinate and of high quality design, with good detailing and materials which harmonise with the existing building.
- Reference should be made to the local architectural tradition by way of materials and detailing, but this needs to be used in a logical context and be well executed to be successful.
- Where a house is of a symmetrical composition or part of a semi detached pair of buildings, extensions which harm the design and symmetry of buildings and lose the architectural integrity of the composition can devalue both buildings and so should be resisted.
- Where new and old join it is good practice to slightly recess or set back the walls of the extension so that the extent of the original building is still legible and to avoid any awkward junctions in the new and existing materials, particularly in brickwork.
- Porch extensions can be very disruptive because they are usually easily visible from the street. If not suitably designed they can harm the main elevation of the building and destroy important details of the principal elevation.
- Roof extensions can also significantly impact on the appearance of a building. The number and size of dormers should be kept to a minimum to avoid the roof from looking cluttered and should be properly proportioned and traditionally detailed. Conditions should therefore be applied to any consents granted requiring the submission of drawings of the new dormers at a 1:20 scale to ensure that the detailing is acceptable.
- There is not a strong tradition for the use of roof lights in Little Burstead. Where these are employed they should be of a traditional 'Conservation' type with a central mullion and of a flush format which follows the plane of the roof rather than having a significant upstand. They should generally be avoided on elevations fronting a road.

### ***New Development***

Little Burstead has, luckily, not suffered greatly with unsympathetic twentieth century development, but there is continuing pressure to replace existing properties and to infill the often generous grounds of the traditional properties. There is also a significant pressure for ancillary accommodation such as garages and a desire for increased privacy through the erection of tall fences and solid gates.

Applications to demolish buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will need to be assessed by the Council on a case-by-case basis, but generally permission will be refused and there will be a presumption in favour of retention. See above for further guidance.

When considering the design of new buildings, the Council will take into account the impact of the proposal on the setting of all heritage assets. Section 4 of this document (and the Appraisal generally) sets out some of the key characteristics that need to be considered if a design is to fit comfortably with its neighbours or the Conservation Area generally. Any application for a new building is required to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement that explains how the proposal conforms to the key characteristics identified in the appraisal or, if it does not conform, why this particular approach is felt to be appropriate.

In particular regard will be had to the following matters:

- **Scale** – The tradition in Little Burstead is that buildings are generally no taller than 2 storeys in height (only the grandest properties have rooms in the attic) and new buildings should follow this pattern. Conditions to planning applications should be applied to secure slab levels of buildings to ensure the finished levels do not exceed the scale of the existing units. Where important vistas have been identified within the townscape, applicants will have to clearly demonstrate that the new development will not harm the existing views.
- **Form** – buildings should be designed with a roof form appropriate to the area. Simple gabled and hipped roofs are the most common form in the area and are encouraged. Other roof forms will be considered where it can be shown that the proposal will provide a successful contrast with other buildings.
- **Grain** – new development must have regard to how the existing buildings in the locality relate to the street including boundary treatments. All new developments should seek to reflect the size, pattern and form of the plots in the location, especially where infill development is considered.
- **Siting** – Throughout the Conservation Area, buildings are generally set well back from the road behind generous front gardens, although this set back varies and properties occasionally sit on the back of the road edge. The positioning of any development on a site should consider how the adjacent or nearby traditional properties relate to the street and respect the location of the adjacent buildings.
- **Materials** – The palette of materials to be used should reflect the historic materials of the area as set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal. Conditions should be used to secure sample panels for the materials to be used on new developments. Using locally sourced materials is often the most sustainable option as it reduces the need for transport.
- **Detailing**
  - *Windows* – generally they should have a vertical emphasis, be set within sufficient reveals and should be of timber construction. The type and form of window should relate to the status of the building. New buildings should avoid a mix of styles, particularly on the same elevation.
  - *Dormer Windows* - Any dormer windows should be appropriately detailed with a vertical rather than horizontal emphasis. The windows need to be in scale with the dormer and the rest of the building. All new dwellings should include an appropriately designed chimney/ventilation stack as part of the roofscape.
  - *Roof lights* should be kept to a minimum and avoided on front elevations. Conservation style roof lights which sit as flush as possible within the roof plane should be employed.

- *Doors* – The traditional styles are solid vertical plank or panelled doors. New timber doors of similar styles should be used and must not have integral fan lights. Fan lights above doors are themselves not a notable feature of the area.
- *Doorcases* – On higher status buildings door cases are a feature in the street scene. The replication of these on modern buildings is not considered to be appropriate as this alters the hierarchy of buildings. Simple porches of an appropriate design will be more appropriate.
- *Eaves and verges* – Traditional eaves and verges are simply detailed without soffits, fascias or barge boards. Modern boxed eaves and deep fascias or barge boards should be avoided on new developments.
- *Colours* – Conditions will be applied to new developments to ensure that the colour finishes to rendered surfaces are in traditional subdued earthy tones not modern strident colours.
- *Vistas*- Full regard must be given to the potential impact of developments on the vistas in and around the Conservation Area including important views out to the open countryside from within the Conservation Area. Where a proposal would adversely affect a key view or vista, consent will be refused. Where necessary information must be provided to adequately demonstrate the potential impact on such important views.

### ***Outbuildings***

Garages and other outbuildings such as sheds and summer houses should, as far as possible, be located to the rear of properties to preserve the appearance of the main house in the street scene. Exceptions may have to be made where this would result in the loss of important trees or landscape features on the site.

Existing outbuildings should be reused unless evidence can be provided to demonstrate that they are structurally unsound or physically incapable of economic reuse. New outbuildings need to be subordinate in form and the choice of materials to the main property.

Double garages pose particular design problems because of their size and non-traditional plan form which results in them having either shallow or steeply pitched roofs. The provision of long tandem garages can overcome this problem. Side hung, vertically boarded timber doors should be used in preference to up and over doors.

### ***Boundary Treatments and Driveways***

Hedges or some open types of fencing are the most appropriate type of boundary treatment in most areas of the Conservation Area and will be encouraged. Conditions will be applied to secure full details of appropriate boundary treatments.

The loss of important walls, verges and grass banks which are positive features identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal, to create new driveways and vehicular access points will not be acceptable.

Trees are also important boundary treatments which contribute to the rural setting of the village and their loss will be resisted unless evidence can be provided to demonstrate they are dead or dying or diseased or their loss can be successfully mitigated as part of the new development.

Where appropriate, conditions will be applied to planning consents requiring a landscaping scheme using suitable native tree and hedge species. Hard landscaping will also be controlled by condition to ensure the use of appropriate materials which are not too regular and urban in character. Materials such as pressed or resin bonded gravel will be encouraged in preference to tarmac or block pavements. From 1 October 2008 the permitted development rights that allow householders to pave their front garden with hardstanding without planning permission changed and stricter limits imposed. Guidance is provided in the following document:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/pavingfrontgardens.pdf>.

## 6.2 Areas of Improvement Opportunity



***The Village Hall***



***The Old School Building***

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies a handful of opportunities to improve the visual appearance of the Conservation Area. These are:

- a. The Village Hall
- b. The Old School Building
- c. Coopers Cottages
- d. Jackson's Farm

### ***a. The Village Hall, Laindon Common Road***

The village hall was refurbished in 2007 and is a well-used and popular facility in Little Burstead. However, its popularity does cause some associated car parking issues as the hall itself has a very limited number of parking spaces. An alternative or convenient 'overflow' parking area should be identified. Consideration could also be given to using the Old School building as alternative/additional community space, particularly if the popularity of the hall as a venue continues to increase (see below).

### ***b. The Old School Building***

The Old School is in occasional use by the Church, but otherwise lies vacant. Given the apparent lack of community facilities, its more frequent use for community purposes could be investigated with the Church which is presumably the owner. It is, however, recognised that the Old School is believed to be the subject of restrictive covenants preventing its use by any organisation except the church and this would need to be taken into consideration in any future proposals and potentially

challenged. Otherwise, given the high property values in the area, it is feasible that the building could be converted to residential use.

The area behind the Old School is currently rather untidy and discussions with the Church could be instigated to encourage the improvement of this area. Its enhancement could form part of any proposals for a new / intensified use of the building.

**c. *Coopers Cottages, Laindon Common Road***

This pair of cottages was formerly one Wealden House, a very rare building type in Essex. It is unfortunate that its outward appearance is not more reflective of this importance; the owners will be encouraged in any listed building applications to reinstate the property's traditional features, in particular the windows.



***Coopers Cottages***



***Jackson's Farm building***

The cottages' boundary to Laindon Common Road is also unsympathetic to the setting of the listed building and to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The openness of the boundary and the use of yellow/buff brick gate piers combined with wire fencing are most unfortunate and contrast sharply with the softer landscaped boundary treatments and good traditional brick walls found elsewhere in the village. The replacement of the existing fence and gate piers will be encouraged.

**d. *Jackson's Farm, Laindon Common Road***

Behind The Reddings on Laindon Common Road, is a group of buildings which form Jackson's Farm. They are currently in poor condition and three of them detract from the Conservation Area. A recently upheld planning appeal has granted permission for the former medieval hall structure and the 19<sup>th</sup> century stables to be converted for residential and storage use respectively. If implemented, this should tidy up the site and allow these historic buildings to be more fully appreciated.

The site will be monitored to ensure that the planning consent and any conditions are adhered to, ensuring that the implementation of the scheme achieves the desired result. If the scheme is not implemented and permission lapses, appropriate action such as serving a Section 215 Notice could be considered.

### 6.3 Improving the Public Realm

The Green is an attractive space which is slightly marred by an overabundance of signs and other street furniture. An audit of street furniture is needed to help reduce clutter, to repair or replace signs and to identify items which contribute to the street scene (e.g. the red telephone kiosk).



*The Green*



*Laindon Common Road*

Overhead cables are also rather prominent in views along the roads of the Conservation Area, but particularly so along Laindon Common Road. Consideration could be given to exploring the viability of burying the cables to reduce their visual impact, although this is expensive and would cause short-term disruption during the works.

## 7. FUTURE ACTIONS

### 7.1 Monitoring Change

English Heritage recommends that Conservation Area Management Plans be reviewed regularly and progress in implementing recommendations should be monitored. Thus, it is recommended that this document is reviewed every four years from the date of its formal adoption by Basildon Borough Council. It will need to be assessed in the light of any changes to government policy generally. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the Conservation Area including a full photographic survey to note positive and negative changes and aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;
- The identification of any new issues that need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action; and
- Publicity and advertising of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and associated guidance leaflets, etc.

It is possible that reviews could be carried out by an amenity or community group or the Parish Council. A Little Burstead Forum could include representatives of community groups, young people, parish, borough and county council (officers and members) as necessary. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the opportunities for promotion of good work and the problems associated with enforcement.

### 7.2 Local Generic Guidance

Essex County Council has produced a number of public information booklets and leaflets that provide generic technical advice about conserving and altering traditional properties. These include:

**Information booklets:** Looking after your old building  
Pointing with lime mortars  
The conservation and renewal of timber window frames

**Conservation in practice booklets:** Weatherboarding  
Plastering and limewash  
Wattle and daub  
Repointing

**Conservation in Essex series:** No. 4 – Historic Buildings  
No. 5 – Shopfronts  
No. 6 – Signs and lettering

No. 7 – Conservatories and historic buildings

No. 8 – Infill in historic areas

It would, however, be useful to have some more specific local guidance on the use of appropriate materials for development and design guidance for property owners in Little Burstead. It is suggested that leaflets on topics such as ‘What does living in a Conservation Area mean?’ and ‘Why use timber windows?’ which should be based on the advice and guidance provided in section 6 particularly of this Management Plan, should be produced.

Production of such guidance leaflets would ensure that the information and advice contained within this Management Plan is widely disseminated and would, in the longer term, help to minimize the number of queries directed at the local planning authority. Together with wider promotion of the existing Essex County Council booklets, local guidance leaflets would help to provide property owners with sufficient information to undertake sympathetic extensions/alterations that respect the character of original buildings, the wider Conservation Area. They would also help to realize the economic benefits to residents that improved Conservation Areas can bring.

Without careful consideration, many seemingly minor and insignificant alterations, particularly those undertaken under permitted development rights, can result in the loss of architectural features which are important to the special interest of Little Burstead, e.g. traditional doors and windows, chimneystacks and traditional roof coverings such as plain tiles and natural slates.

### **7.3 Buildings of Local Interest (or Local Heritage Assets)**

Listed Buildings are buildings of special architectural or historic interest, defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. They are selected by English Heritage, satisfying a set of national criteria.

However, there are buildings, structures and sites which are of undoubted local interest, but do not satisfy the national criteria to qualify for listed status. These ‘local heritage assets’ need to be recognised and protected as they are positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in addition to being of special interest in themselves. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal has made a start by suggesting three properties be included in a local list of Buildings of Local Interest (BLI).

Whilst BLI status does not provide statutory protection, in the manner of nationally listed buildings, it indicates that these buildings are of special local interest and should be given protection from unsympathetic alterations and extensions. Their position within the Conservation Area affords them protection from demolition without authorisation, but the aim of the local list is to help safeguard the buildings and to ensure that repairs, alterations and extensions are sympathetic to their character.

The national planning policy guidance on the historic environment is contained in Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) and this highlights the contribution of local listing to the development of the evidence base used to support local plan making/ the LDF. Policy HE8 of PPS 5 states that the effect of an application on the significance of non-designated heritage assets or their setting is a material consideration in determining the application. The use of local lists would strengthen the role of local heritage assets as a ‘material consideration’ in deciding the outcome of planning decisions.

BLIs make a contribution to the borough because of their architectural merit and, in some cases, their historical associations. They contribute to and help to define the character of Little Burstead Conservation Area and are significant in the historical and architectural development of the town.

English Heritage are in the process of developing non-statutory best practice guidance for local authorities, community representatives and other interested parties for the identification and management of significant local heritage assets using a local list. This guidance will encourage a more consistent approach to the identification and management of local heritage assets across England. It will also signal a move away from the buildings-led approach to local listing to encompass the full range of assets that make up the historic environment and ensure the proper validation and recording of local heritage assets.

When this guidance becomes available, local listing will be a good opportunity for local people to become involved in drafting the selection criteria used to judge the suitability of an asset for inclusion on the local list, along with the responsibility for nominating assets for addition to the list. In section (7.1) above, the establishment of a Little Burstead Forum is mooted. The development of a local list could become one of its responsibilities.

#### **7.4 Funding**

The availability of grant aid to encourage the appropriate repair and reinstatement of original architectural features is a strong incentive to property owners. Unfortunately, in the current economic climate, funding opportunities are restricted and grant partnership schemes will probably require local input. This would include contributions from local councils and possibly amenity groups such as the Essex Heritage Trust (see below).

However, there are some local and national funding schemes that can be approached and may be able to offer some help, although many have stringent criteria and often require some form of public access/ownership within the project. The main schemes are set out below. Further information on available sources of funding can be found on the 'Funds for Historic Buildings' website: <http://www.ffhb.org.uk>, and the Heritage Funding Directory, part of Heritage Link, see: <http://www.heritagelink.org.uk/fundingdirectory/main/fundinghome.php>. Depending on the revised Community Infrastructure Levy, and how it impacts on Section 106 agreements, there may be funding avenues that could be development through the LDF.

##### ***The Essex Heritage Trust***

The Trust is established "to help safeguard and preserve, for the benefit of the public, such land, buildings, objects and records that may be illustrative of, or significant to, the history of the County or which enhance an understanding of the characteristics and traditions of the County". It is a Registered Charity (No. 802317) and does not give grants involving private property or persons and public access must be available to all funded projects.

<http://www.essexheritagetrust.co.uk>

### ***War Memorials Trust***

War Memorials Trust has two grant schemes that operate in England. Freestanding war memorials are eligible for support from the [Grants for War Memorials](#) scheme funded by English Heritage and The Wolfson Foundation or the [Small Grants Scheme](#) depending on the work to be undertaken and the costs involved. Non-freestanding war memorials are only eligible for support from the [Small Grants Scheme](#). Although, clearly, a directly targeted funding programme, the War Memorial at the confluence of the roads in the Conservation Area may benefit from this grant scheme.  
<http://www.warmemorials.org/>

### ***English Heritage Funded Grants***

English Heritage offer a variety of grants, some of which are intended to help local authorities that have historic sites in their care, and some of which are intended to help people who own or manage individual historic sites and need to repair them or understand them better.

Local authorities can apply to English Heritage for funding under its 'Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas' (PSiCA) scheme. These schemes are designed to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. They are based on a partnership between English Heritage, the Local Authority and other funding bodies and are designed to ensure the long term sustainable future of Conservation Areas, in particular through supporting heritage based regeneration initiatives.

The majority of the grants are, however, targeted at statutorily designated heritage assets at risk, of which there are none in Little Burstead. English Heritage strongly advises potential applicants to contact the Regional Office to discuss any potential application for funding. The website provides full details of all available grants and the funding priorities and criteria.  
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/funding/grants>

## 8. REFERENCES

Basildon Council/ Beacon Planning	Little Burstead Conservation Area: Character Appraisal	September 2011
English Heritage	Guidance on the management of Conservation Areas	February 2006
Department for Communities and Local Government	Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment	March 2010

## 9. USEFUL CONTACTS

### **English Heritage**

East of England Regional Office  
Brooklands  
24 Brooklands Avenue  
Cambridge  
CB2 8BU  
Tel: 01223 582700  
Fax: 01223 582701  
Email: [eastofengland@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:eastofengland@english-heritage.org.uk)  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

### **Essex County Council**

Environment – including: Historic Buildings, Conservation and Archaeology  
County Hall  
Market Road  
Chelmsford  
CM1 1QH  
Tel: 0845 603 7624  
[www.essexcc.gov.uk](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk)

Heritage Conservation  
Seax Archaeology  
Tel: 0845 743 0430  
Email: [heritage.conservation@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:heritage.conservation@essexcc.gov.uk)  
<http://unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk>

### **Little Burstead Parish Council**

Kim Barford  
Parish Clerk  
16 Scrub Rise  
Billericay  
Essex  
CM12 9PG  
Tel: 01277 652057  
Email: [kimbarford@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:kimbarford@tiscali.co.uk)

**RIBA East**

The Studio

High Green

Great Shelford

Cambridge

CB22 5EG

Tel: 01223 566285

Fax: 01223 505142

Email: [riba.east@inst.riba.org](mailto:riba.east@inst.riba.org)

<http://www.architecture.com/RegionsAndInternational/UKNationsAndRegions/England/RIBAEast/RIBAEast.aspx>

## **10. GLOSSARY**

### **Adoption**

The final confirmation of a plan as a statutory document by the Local Planning Authority.

### **Amenity**

The pleasant or normally satisfactory aspects of a location which contribute to its overall character and the enjoyment of residents or visitors.

### **Ancillary Use**

A subsidiary use connected to the main use of a building or piece of land.

### **Appeal**

The process whereby an applicant can challenge the refusal to grant planning permission, by means of written representations, an informal hearing or formal inquiry proceedings. Appeals can also be made against the failure of the planning authority to issue a decision, against conditions attached to a permission and against the issue of an enforcement notice.

### **Article 4 direction**

The local authority can remove permitted development rights through the use of an Article 4 direction. This is most common in conservation areas and means a planning application should be submitted for works which do not normally require one.

### **Back-land**

Land which is behind existing development with no, or very limited, road frontage.

### **Bio-diversity**

A measure of the number and range of species and their relative abundance in a community.

### **Change of Use**

More correctly referred to as a 'material change of use'. A change in the use of land or buildings that is of significance for planning purposes, often requiring planning permission.

### **Conservation area**

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

### **Conditions**

Stipulations attached to a planning permission to limit or direct the manner in which a development is carried out.

### **Conservation area consent**

The consent required to carry out demolition in a conservation area of any building over 115 cubic metres. This is only one of a number of permissions which may be required for any works.

**Consultation**

Procedures for assessing public opinion about a plan or major development proposal, or in the case of a planning application, the means of obtaining the views of affected neighbours or others with an interest in the proposal.

**Density**

In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms per hectare or the number of dwellings per hectare.

**Detailed/Full Application**

The most common type of planning application is one that seeks full or detailed planning permission. It should contain all the information needed for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to reach its decision, but the LPA may seek further information.

**Development Brief**

A document providing detailed information to guide developers on the type of development, design and layout constraints and other requirements for a particular, usually substantial, site.

**Development Control**

The process whereby a planning authority considers planning applications, including whether they comply with planning policy, both national and as set out in development plans.

**Development Plan**

Document(s) that set out in writing and/or in maps and diagrams a Local Planning Authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area.

**Enclosure**

The separation of land, often by means of a fence or a wall. Is also used to describe the framing of a space by buildings and/or trees, i.e. the edge between the space and buildings/trees.

**Enforcement**

Procedures by a Local Planning Authority to ensure that the terms and conditions of a planning decision are carried out, or that development carried out without planning permission is brought under control.

**General Permitted Development Order (GPDO)**

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 grants rights (known as permitted development rights) to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need to make an application for planning permission.

**Grade**

The way in which listed buildings are categorised. Grade II are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them. Grade II\* are particularly important buildings of more than special interest. Grade I buildings are those of exceptional interest.

**Green Belt**

A specially designated area of countryside protected from most forms of development in order to stop urban sprawl and the coalescence of settlements, preserve the character of existing settlements and encourage development to locate within existing built-up areas.

**Listed building**

A Listed Building is one included in a statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest compiled by the Secretary of State in England.

**Material Consideration**

A matter which should be taken into account in deciding on a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision.

**Listed building consent**

The consent needed to do works to a listed building. This is applied for through the local authority and is only one of a number of permissions which may be required for any works.

**Outline application**

A general application for planning permission to establish that a development is acceptable in principle, subject to subsequent approval of detailed matters.

**Permitted development**

Minor changes which can be made to houses without planning permission. They derive from general planning permission granted by Parliament. Permitted development rights are more restrictive if you live in a listed building or conservation area.

**Planning (Listed buildings and conservation areas) Act 1990**

The act governing works to listed buildings and development within conservation areas.

**Public realm**

The publicly accessible external space between private buildings including pavements, streets, squares, parks and lanes.

**Quality of Life**

The overall enjoyment of life, i.e. your personal satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with the cultural or intellectual conditions under which you live (as distinct from material comfort).

**Sense of place**

A response to an environment and consciousness of one's physical surroundings. It is a component of 'cultural identity' formed by the essential character and spirit of an area.

**Statutory**

Required by law (statute), usually through an Act of Parliament.

**Sustainable Development**

Environmentally responsible development, commonly defined as "development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

**Townscape**

The appearance and character of buildings and all other features of an urban area taken together as a whole.

**Tree Preservation Order (TPO)**

A direction made by a Local Planning Authority that makes it an offence to cut, top, lop, uproot or wilfully damage or destroy a tree without that authority's permission.

**Vernacular**

Buildings in a local style, using local materials, following traditional building practice and patterns and not architect designed.

**Well-being**

A contented state of being happy and healthy and prosperous. The well-being of a community could involve social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies – September 2007**

#### ***Policy BAS GB3 – Replacement Dwellings in the Green Belt***

Dwellings will be allowed to enlarge on replacement to 90 square metres or a maximum of 35 square metres over and above the floor area of the original dwelling (or the area as at 1 July 1948), whichever is the greater.

Dwellings which have already been extended, by virtue of planning permission granted by the General Permitted Development Order (permitted development), by the Secretary of State or by the Local Planning Authority, may be replaced by a dwelling of the same size.

The appropriateness of any proposal for a replacement dwelling will also be assessed in terms of its scale, form, design, height and materials, nearby buildings and the character of the area.

All replacement dwellings will be subject to the following criteria:-

- i. in the Plotland areas replacement of dwellings by bungalows, subject to a maximum height of 5.5 metres, or chalets, subject to a maximum height of 7.5 metres;
- ii. new dwellings should be located centrally within the plot and between 6 metres and 10 metres from the highway boundary;
- iii. no part of the dwelling, including attached or detached garages and out buildings should be less than 2.5 metres from any boundary;
- iv. detached garages should be set back in the plot to minimise massing on the frontage and to avoid the creation of an urban form of development;
- v. relevant permitted development rights, as set out in schedule two of the general permitted development order 1995 may be removed by condition on the planning permission, where it is considered that implementation of these permitted development rights could cause material harm to the green belt.
- vi. all dimensions are taken to include external walls, except for accommodation in the roof where internal dimensions will be used;
- vii. attached garages, conservatories, porches and living accommodation in the roof will be included in the calculation of existing and proposed floorspace; and
- viii. the criteria set out in policies BAS GB5 and BAS BE12.

Enlargement of a dwelling on replacement under this policy is a once and for all increase in floor area. Successive replacements will not attract successive enlargements.

Living accommodation in the roofspace is defined as rooms which have been purposely converted to and are used as living accommodation, have access by stairs and have, or are capable of having, approval under the Building Regulations.

#### ***Policy BAS GB4 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt***

In the Green Belt dwellings will be allowed to extend to 90 square metres or by 35 square metres over and above the original floor area of the dwelling (or the area as at 1 July 1948), whichever is the greater, subject to the following:-

- i. the extension should not be within 2.5 metres from any boundary;
- ii. all dimensions are taken to include external walls, except in the case of accommodation in the roofspace, where internal dimensions will apply;
- iii. attached garages, conservatories, porches and living accommodation in the roof will be included in the calculation of existing and proposed floorspace;
- iv. relevant permitted development rights, as set out in schedule two of the general permitted development order 1995 may be removed by condition on the planning permission, where it is considered that the implementation of permitted development rights could cause material harm to the Green Belt; and
- v. the criteria set out in Policy BAS GB5 and BAS BE12.

For the purposes of this policy, extensions include porches, garages, conservatories and rooms in the roof.

Living accommodation in the roofspace is defined as rooms which have been purposely converted to and are used as living accommodation, have access by stairs and have, or are capable of having, approval under the Building Regulations.

#### ***Policy BAS GB5 – Definition of a Dwelling***

Policies BAS GB3 and BAS GB4 will only apply to dwellings which meet the following criteria:-

- i. The dwelling has the benefit of planning permission or existed prior to 1 July 1948. Unauthorised dwellings made lawful by virtue of the granting of a Lawful Development Certificate do not fulfil this criterion;
- ii. The dwelling is or was recently occupied as a dwelling and rated as such;
- iii. Is a permanent substantial structure with recognised constructional features including foundations, walls, slated or tiled roof and plastered internally. Sheds, vans, garages, caravans, mobile homes, games rooms, holiday/weekend shacks or similar will not qualify under these criteria;
- iv. The dwelling provides adequate shelter from wind, weather and damp penetration;
- v. The dwelling contains at least one living area with separate bedroom accommodation plus separate and conveniently located W.C.;
- vi. The dwelling contains basic facilities for heating and lighting;
- vii. Has drainage and mains water laid on or otherwise conveniently located; and
- viii. The property has a vehicular access.

#### ***Policy BAS GB7 – Re-Use of Dwellings in the Green Belt***

The re-use or adaptation of suitable buildings will be allowed in the Green Belt provided that:-

- i. the building is in keeping with its surroundings by reason of its form, bulk and general design, and the conversion works proposed would not be detrimental to the character of the building itself;

- ii. the creation of any residential curtilage does not harm the openness or visual amenities of the green belt;
- iii. the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction, other than limited extension;
- iv. the proposed use would not be significantly more harmful to residential and visual amenities than the previous use and conflict with the openness of the green belt;
- v. the proposed use would not result in inappropriate outside storage of any materials, machinery and/or vehicles; and
- vi. the surrounding roads should be adequate to accommodate the increase in vehicle traffic generated, having regard to the physical and environmental capacity of the roads and their function in the county road hierarchy.

***Policy BAS BE12 – Development Control***

Planning permission for new residential development, and for the alteration and extension of existing dwellings, will be refused if it causes material harm in any of the following ways:-

- i. Harm to the character of the surrounding area, including the street scene;
- ii. Overlooking;
- iii. Noise or disturbance to the occupants of neighbouring dwellings;
- iv. Overshadowing or over-dominance; and
- v. Traffic danger or congestion.

## APPENDIX 2

### Common Householder Alterations in Conservation Areas

The following paragraphs attempt to summarise when planning permission will be required for common householder alterations **within Conservation Areas**, although it should be noted that some of the restrictions listed also apply to alterations outside of Conservation Areas. It should be noted, however, that almost all applications for the works set out below to Listed Buildings will require an application for planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent. Interior works and those within the curtilage of a Listed Building may also require an application.

A number of properties within Little Burstead Conservation Area are also subject to an Article 4(2) Direction which withdraws many of these properties' permitted development rights. In such cases, a planning application will be required for alterations to your property that would not normally require the Council's permission. For more information on the additional types of work that will require permission in these areas, please see Section 5.4 of this Management Plan.

### **Residential Extensions**

In a Conservation Area not covered by an Article 4(2) Direction, an extension or addition to a dwelling house will be considered to be permitted development (i.e. not requiring an application for planning permission) subject to the following limits and conditions:

- No more than half the area of land around the 'original house' should be covered by additions or other buildings.
- No extension should be built forward of the main elevation or a side elevation fronting a highway.
- No extension to be higher than the highest part of the roof.
- No rear extensions of more than one storey are permitted.
- The maximum depth of a single-storey rear extension is 3m for an attached house and 4m for a detached house.
- The maximum height of a single-storey rear extension is 4m.
- The maximum eaves height should be 3m if the extension is within 2m of any boundary.
- The maximum eaves and ridge heights of the extension should be no higher than those of the existing house.
- No side extensions are permitted.
- Materials used in construction should be similar in appearance to those used for the existing house.
- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms are permitted.
- No cladding of the exterior is permitted.

'Highway' means any carriageway, footway or verge over which the public have a right to pass.

'Original house' means as it was originally built or as it stood on 1 July 1948.

***Loft Conversions and Roof Alterations*** (including the installation of rooflights and skylights, dormer windows, solar panels and satellite dishes, and the fitting, alteration or replacement of chimneys and flues)

A loft conversion in a dwelling house will be considered to be permitted development subject to the following limits and conditions:

- Side-facing windows must be obscure-glazed and any opening part to be 1.7m above the internal floor level.
- Roof extensions are not permitted development in Conservation Areas.
- Dormer windows are not permitted development in Conservation Areas.

Planning permission for a rooflight or skylight is required if:

- If it projects more than 150mm from the existing roof plane;
- If any part of the rooflight will protrude above the highest part of the roof;
- If you live in an area covered by an Article 4 Direction.

The following limits apply to roof and wall mounted solar panels and satellite dishes:

- Panels should not be installed above the ridgeline and should project no more than 200mm from the roof or wall surface.
- Planning permission will be required if panels are to be fitted on the front or side elevation walls and they are visible from the highway.
- If panels are to be fitted to a building in your garden, they should not be visible from the highway.

You may install a satellite dish up to a specific size on your house without the need for planning permission subject to the following limits and conditions:

- there will be no more than two antennas on the property overall;
- if you are installing a single antenna, it is not to be more than 100 cm in any linear dimension;
- if you are installing two antennas, one is not more than 100 cm in any linear dimension, and the other is not more than 60 cm in any linear dimension;
- the cubic capacity of each individual antenna is not more than 35 litres;
- an antenna fitted onto a chimney stack is not more than 60 cm in any linear dimension;
- an antenna mounted on the roof only sticks out above the roof when there is a chimney-stack. In this case, the antenna should not stick out more than 60 cm above the highest part of the roof, or above the highest part of the chimney stack, whichever is lower; and
- an antenna is not installed on a chimney, wall, or a roof slope which faces onto, and is visible from, a road.

Fitting, altering or replacing an external flue, chimney, or soil and vent pipe will normally be permitted development providing the conditions outlined below are met:

- Flues are allowed if less than 1m above the highest part of the roof.
- The flue should not be fitted on the principal or side elevation that fronts a highway.

It is, however, advisable to check with Basildon Borough Council before a flue is fitted, particularly if the building is listed as it is likely an application would be required in this case.

### ***Porches***

The planning rules for porches are applicable to any external door to a house. Planning permission is required if:

- the ground floor area (measured externally) would exceed 3m<sup>2</sup>;
- any part would be more than 3m above ground level;
- any part of the porch would be within 2m of any boundary of the house and a road or footpath.

However, if you live in an Article 4 Direction Area, you will need consent for any type of porch.

### ***Sheds, garages and outbuildings***

Sheds, garages and other outbuildings will be considered to be permitted development subject to the following limits and conditions:

- No outbuilding will project forward of the principal elevation fronting a highway.
- Outbuildings and garages to be single storey with maximum eaves height of 2.5m and maximum overall height of 4m with a dual pitched roof or 3m for any other roof.
- Maximum height is 2.5m within 2m of a boundary.
- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms are permitted.
- No more than half the area of land around the 'original house' would be covered by additions or other buildings.
- Buildings, enclosures, containers and pools at the side of properties will require planning permission.
- Within the curtilage of listed buildings, any outbuilding will require planning permission.

Planning permission will not normally be required for garage conversions, providing the work is internal and does not involve enlarging the building. It is, however, advisable to check with Basildon Borough Council before carrying out a garage conversion, particularly if the building is listed as it is likely an application for Listed Building Consent would be required in this case.

### ***Fences, walls and gates***

Planning permission is required if you wish to erect or add to a fence, wall or gate and:

- it would be over 1m high and next to a highway or footpath of such a highway; or over 2m high elsewhere; or
- your right to put up or alter fences, walls and gates is removed by an article 4 direction or a planning condition; or
- your house is a listed building or in the curtilage of a listed building; or
- the fence, wall or gate, or any other boundary involved, forms a boundary with a neighbouring listed building or its curtilage.

You will not need to apply for planning permission to alter or improve an existing fence, wall or gate if you don't increase its height.

### ***Demolitions***

Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of the following structures in their entirety or a significant part of:

- a building of 115m<sup>3</sup> or more; or
- a fence, wall, gate or other means of enclosure that is taller than 1m if adjacent to a highway or 2m elsewhere.

Conservation Area Consent is not required if no substantial demolition of an unlisted structure is involved. Listed Building Consent is, however, required for the demolition of all structures within the curtilage of a Listed Building (if it pre-dates 1948) and any demolition (however small) of a Listed Building itself.

If you are in any doubt about the need for Listed Building Consent, Conservation Area Consent or Planning Permission, please contact Basildon Borough Council.

### ***Paving front gardens and decking***

If the surface of a front garden to be covered is more than 5m<sup>2</sup>, planning permission will be needed for laying impermeable driveways that do not control rainwater running off onto roads. Planning permission is not required, however, if a new driveway uses permeable (or porous) surfacing, which allows water to drain through.

Putting up decking, or other raised platforms, in your garden is permitted development, providing:

- the decking is no more than 30cm above the ground;
- together with other extensions, outbuildings etc, the decking or platforms cover no more than 50 per cent of the garden area.

For more information on permitted development rights, visit the Planning Portal at [www.planningportal.gov.uk/house](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/house) where you will find helpful interactive guides. For more information on micro-generation and other sustainability issues, see section 5.9 of this Plan.

Please note that many of the projects outlined above will also require Building Regulations approval and the Building Control section of the Council should be contacted to discuss any work. However, within the Conservation Area, a flexible approach can be taken to the requirements of the Building Regulations and Fire Precautions Act where they would conflict with the preservation or enhancement of the Little Burstead Conservation Area's character or appearance.



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