

Shad Thames conservation areas management plan

1. Introduction

This management plan sets out a framework to protect, enhance and celebrate the features in and around Shad Thames which gave rise to its designation as a conservation area. The plan aims to strengthen the area's distinctive identity and make it attractive for a range of community, cultural and leisure activities.

Achieving these goals will require a partnership between the various stakeholders in the area, including Southwark Council as the local authority, local residents and community groups, and local businesses. To be effective the plan must be actively supported by all, with stakeholders working together to strengthen and promote the area's built and natural heritage.

The plan sets out practical initiatives which take into account the specific needs and available resources of the different stakeholders. At the same time, it seeks to be flexible enough to respond to circumstances as they unfold. The plan will be reviewed by representatives of all stakeholders no less than once every year. This review will be organised and facilitated by Shad Thames residents association, in consultation with the other stakeholders. The purpose of the review is to establish priorities, assess progress and make any changes needed to reflect changes in circumstances. It is intended that this plan will apply until April 2024.

In addition to the regular reviews, Southwark Council will, to the extent possible, ensure on-going consultation through public meetings, exhibitions, and printed and online communications. This on-going process will aim to raise awareness of issues and encourage input from all stakeholders. Southwark Council will also designate a single contact point to whom stakeholders can send queries relating to this management plan.

2. Area covered

A map of the area management area covered by this plan is set out in Appendix B. It comprises, in the main, the Tower Bridge conservation area. It also extends east to include a small portion of the separate St Saviour's Dock conservation area, and south to Tooley Street to include a small area which is not part of any conservation area.

3. How this Plan works

The starting point is to highlight key issues which affect the historic character and appearance of the management area, grouped into four sections. The first two sections consider the people who live, work and visit the area under the headings uses and users; and community. The final two sections focus on the physical environment (streets and public realm; and buildings and townscape).

Each key Issue is addressed in three ways: (i) identifying objectives; (ii) outlining the best general approach to support these objectives; and (iii) setting out practical initiatives to implement the objectives.

This approach translates into a practical focus on:

- Identifying priorities to undo negative impacts that have arisen over time - for example, through new development, deterioration or neglect.
- Being proactive in maintaining and enhancing the management area's historic character and appearance.
- Managing future change to conserve and/or enhance the management area's historic character and appearance.
- Ensuring that at least a portion of the S.106 contributions from any new development in the management area is used to support action under this plan.

4. Key Issues

4.1 Uses and users

The management area encompasses a wide range of uses, including residential, small and medium-sized businesses, eating and drinking venues, and cultural spaces. Users include people living and/or working locally and visitors specifically coming to the area as a riverside destination. Although the area has a rich history, there is currently little focus on this aspect.

i) Objectives

- To achieve a balance of uses that is sustainable and appropriate for the area's conservation status within an urban environment.
- To strengthen the area's identity to reflect its industrial heritage
- To facilitate local stakeholders and visitors in learning about and enjoying the area's natural and built heritage.

ii) General approach

- Recognising and responding to the different uses and users within the management area.
- Ensuring that no single use or user group dominates.
- Developing a programme to increase knowledge about, and enjoyment of, the area's history.

iii) Practical Initiatives

- Establishing a forum which includes representatives from the full range of users who meet regularly to discuss issues of shared importance, including:
 - Supporting local businesses
 - Creating jobs for local people
 - Lighting and safety
 - Environmental concerns such as smoking and disturbance (e.g. noise from delivery and waste disposal vehicles, waiting taxis, plant and air-conditioning units).
- Creating a heritage group to explore ways of sharing knowledge about the area (e.g. guided walks, leaflets for self-guided walks, updated information panels, oral history, filming, artworks).

- Working with the council and local cultural partners to find ways of supporting Southwark's cultural strategy (currently agreed for the period 2013-2018).

4.2 Community

The management area has a distinctive identity which could be more effectively used to engender a sense of community among everyone who lives and works locally, whether they are based in the Area for a long or short period.

i) Objectives

- To achieve active engagement by local residents and businesses in the management area, and encourage them to learn more about and take pride in their surroundings.
- To build links between local residents and businesses.

ii) General approach

- Implementing this management plan in ways which are welcoming and open to all stakeholders.
- Working collaboratively and finding ways to overcome potential divergence between private and public, residential and commercial interests and priorities.

iii) Practical Initiatives

- Strengthening and creating ties between existing residential and community groups, and linking these with local businesses.
- Organising regular community activities, for example social events supported or hosted by local businesses; history walks and talks led by the heritage group mentioned above under uses and users.
- Organising regular sessions for people living or working locally to monitor and, where appropriate, take action to clean up the local environment (e.g. by removing redundant planning notices). This could be followed by an informal social event.
- Using local residents (including nearby schools and youth clubs) to develop and deliver a heritage programme for the general public.
- Liaising with organisations in neighbouring areas (e.g. local BIDs Team London Bridge and Better Bankside; Architecture Foundation) to learn from their experience and to explore possible ways of working together on joint community initiatives.
- Encouraging local residents and businesses to enhance their premises through sustainable "green" initiatives.

4.3 Streets and Public Realm

This section covers the streets, spaces, riverside walks and other pedestrianised routes which act as the setting for the historic buildings.

i) Objectives

- To preserve and enhance the industrial heritage of the management area, including through the choice of street furniture, lighting and landscaping.

- To manage transport movements and pedestrian flows carefully so as to protect and highlight the area's historic character.
- ii) General approach
- Following the guidance set out in the Southwark streetscape design manual. Full details of this can be found at: http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200456/southwark_streetscape_design_manual/ssdm
 - To the extent possible, following the guidance of English Heritage in their manual Streets for All: A guide to the Management of London's Streets. Details can be downloaded at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/streets-for-all-guide-to-management-of-londons-streets/>
 - Ensuring any alterations to the streets and public realm reflect the historic and cultural significance of the management area.
 - Maintaining, protecting and reinforcing the historic street patterns, materials and geometry through appropriate design.
 - Developing efficient procedures so that stakeholders can reach consensus on what is appropriate (e.g. best materials to be used for repaving).
 - Enabling visitors to find their way around and through the management area with ease.
- iii) Practical Initiatives
- A group comprising representatives from all stakeholders will meet as needed to recommend appropriate choices for the area's streets and public realm.
 - Surfaces
 - Instituting a coordinated programme of maintenance and repair of paving and street surfaces.
 - Requiring a consistent approach to finishes and choice of materials to reflect the management area's historic character. Good examples include the 2012 repaving of Shad Thames outside the entrance to Tower Bridge engine rooms, and the paving on Shad Thames between Curlew Street and Maguire Street.
 - Monitoring works done by utilities companies in an effort to ensure appropriate materials are used and the requisite standard is maintained or reinstated.
 - Street Furniture
 - Reducing clutter which negatively impacts on the historic character of the management area.
 - Requiring a consistent approach to types and standards of street furniture and fittings to reflect the management area's historic character. Bollards are a good example of how street furniture can add to or detract from this character. At present there are a large number of different bollards, made of varying materials (including inappropriate materials such as concrete), painted in different colours, comprising different shapes and in varied states of repair.

- Ensuring sufficient rubbish bins and facilities for cigarette disposal to discourage people from throwing rubbish and cigarettes on the pavements.
- Removing non-essential obstructions (e.g. advertising boards, planters, displays of goods) which impede pedestrian and traffic flows. Being proactive in applying relevant legal enforcement procedures if necessary.
- Providing parking racks for cyclists so they are not forced to lock their cycles to streetlamps, railings, etc in an ad hoc manner, which negatively impacts on both pedestrian movement and the visual character of the management area.
- Lighting
 - Requiring a consistent approach to lighting to reflect the management area's historic character. Good examples are the form of street lamps attached to the Butlers Wharf buildings (although these currently are fitted with bulbs which give out insufficient light and often do not work properly).
 - Taking action promptly to have lighting removed which is not consistent with the area's historic character, for example bright floodlighting affixed to an individual business. Being proactive in applying relevant legal enforcement procedures if necessary.
 - Implementing a coordinated programme of maintenance, repair and replacement of lighting on all streets and pedestrian routes.
 - Lighting levels which achieve an appropriate balance between ensuring safety and amenity of local residents and visitors, and the needs of commercial occupiers.
- Signage and wayfinding
 - Where needed, installing additional signage to enable people easily to find their way to buildings and the river.
 - Monitoring signage regularly, and responding to issues raised by stakeholders.
 - Repairing or replacing damaged signage.
 - Removing redundant signs and notices (including planning notices).
- Advertising
 - Ensuring that any advertising (whether stand-alone or attached to a structure) is consistent with management area's heritage and does not negatively impact on its character.
 - Taking action promptly to have advertising removed which is not consistent with the area's historic character, for example back-lit advertising boxes or flashing neon signs. Being proactive in applying relevant legal enforcement procedures if necessary.

4.4 Buildings and Townscape

The traditional townscape of the management area should be celebrated. This requires preserving, enhancing and where necessary reinstating or replicating buildings which contribute to the area's character.

New developments must, on the one hand, respect the scale and form of existing structures, and on the other hand, produce contemporary architecture of the highest quality. The Tower Bridge conservation area appraisal dated July 2003 and the St Saviours Dock conservation area appraisal dated July 2003 set out the requisite design standards and objectives.

i) Objectives

- To repair, conserve and enhance existing buildings to maintain the traditional townscape character (including structures added to buildings, for example rooftop terraces).
- To create new structures of high architectural and urban design quality which make a positive and sustainable contribution to that townscape.
- To ensure all structures respond to the social, environmental and economic needs of existing and future stakeholders.

ii) General Approach

- Reflecting and interpreting the character of the management area through locally distinctive patterns of structures, landscaping, scale, materials and quality.
- Strengthening the conservation context of the management area as reflected in its conservation area appraisal, including the area's topography, physical features, views and vistas.
- Considering the links between groups of buildings and public spaces, and with the riverfront.

iii) Practical Initiatives

- New developments:
 - On completion, checking to ensure that the area in and around any new development meets the requisite standard. This might require reinstatement of features or structures that have been damaged during development, or installing new features or structures in keeping with the townscape character.
 - Regular monitoring (with the help of local residents and community groups, and local businesses) the state of a new development and its environs.
 - Liaising with Southwark Council's planning department regarding allocation of S.106 contributions from a new development, and ensuring a portion of this goes towards environmental improvements and implementing this management plan.
- Exploring public funding initiatives that can be used to maintain and enhance the management area townscape, for example applying for funds from the Council's Cleaner, Greener, Safer programme and from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

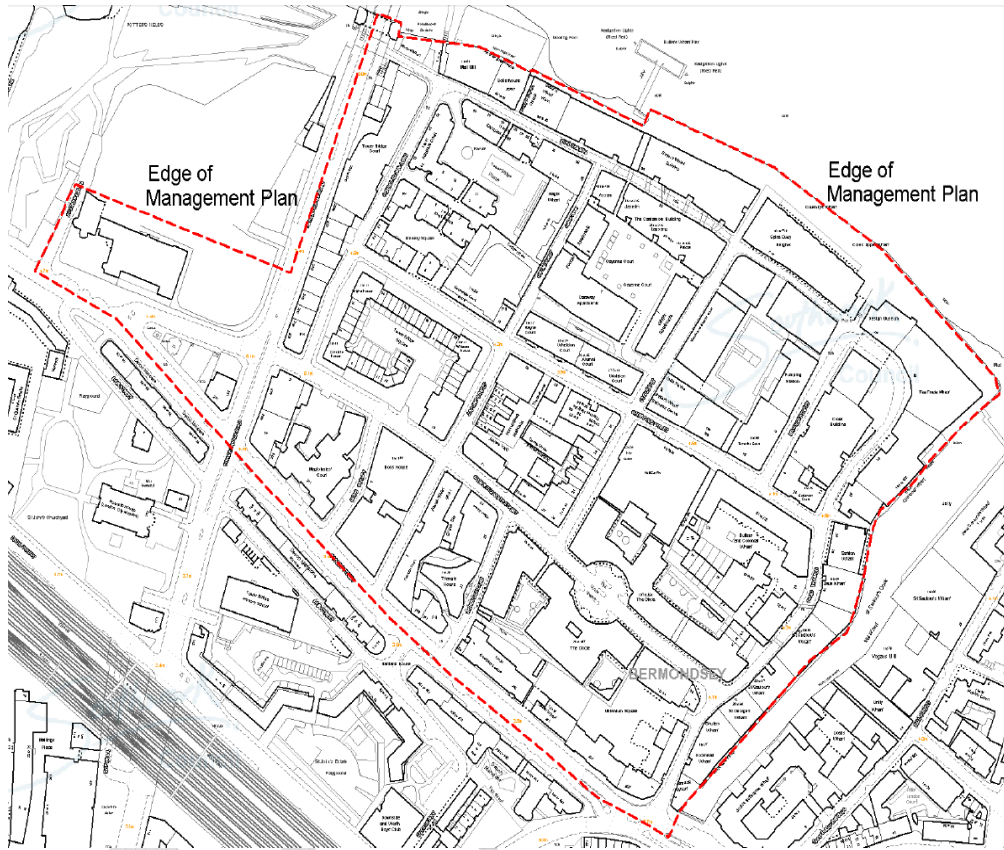
5. Other applicable policies

Overarching national and local planning policies may apply to the management area. Current policies are listed in Appendix B. In the case of other planning issues, this

management plan should inform special rules and initiatives which may apply to the area, including special controls and enforcement. (Examples include replacement of bollards and pavements, and signage.) Changes to applicable policies or rules will be notified by Southwark Council to the other stakeholders through its on-going consultation process and at the annual review.

DRAFT

APPENDIX A



Overarching Planning Policies at December 2013

- National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
- London Plan 2011 (July)
 - Policy 7.9 Heritage-led regeneration
 - Policy 7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology
- Core Strategy 2011 (April)
 - Strategic Policy 12 Design and Conservation.
- Southwark Plan 2007 (July)
 - Saved Policy 3.15 Conservation of the Historic Environment
 - Saved Policy 3.16 Conservation Areas
 - Saved Policy 3.18 Setting of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites
 - Saved Policy 3.19 Archaeology
- From time to time, Southwark Council adopts further guidance on a range of development issues; examples include area action plans (AAPs), supplementary planning documents (SPDs) and conservation area appraisals.
- Conservation area appraisals for the Tower Bridge conservation area and the St Saviour's Dock conservation area (2003)

A conservation area appraisal identifies the key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of the area, and opportunities for its preservation and enhancement. Primarily, it is a benchmark for assessing the impact of new development proposals on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The key elements of these Conservation Areas include:

- Their historical background
- Their character and appearance
- The Tower Bridge Conservation Area is divided into sub-areas comprising:
 - Sub Area 1 – Tower Bridge and Approach
 - Sub Area 2 – Butler's Wharf
 - Sub Area 3 – Tooley Street
 - Sub Area 4 – Gainsford Street and Queen Elizabeth Street
- An audit of heritage assets including listed buildings and buildings that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Areas and their archaeology.
- The Conservation Area Appraisals also identify environmental improvements, opportunities to seek improvements to existing buildings and the potential development sites.