

Rochester Conservation Area Draft Appraisal and Manage- ment Statement 2015



John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester (1647-1680): courtier and poet in the restoration period of Charles II

Preface

The London Borough of Camden (LBC) recommends regular review of conservation area statements. In 2013 LBC invited conservation areas across the borough, including Rochester and Jeffreys, to participate in updating their conservation area statements.

Camden provides guidance on the structure and content for the conservation area statement. Digital format offers a wider range of information to be recorded. This document is therefore kept relatively short, but provided with accompanying appendices, and potentially electronic links.

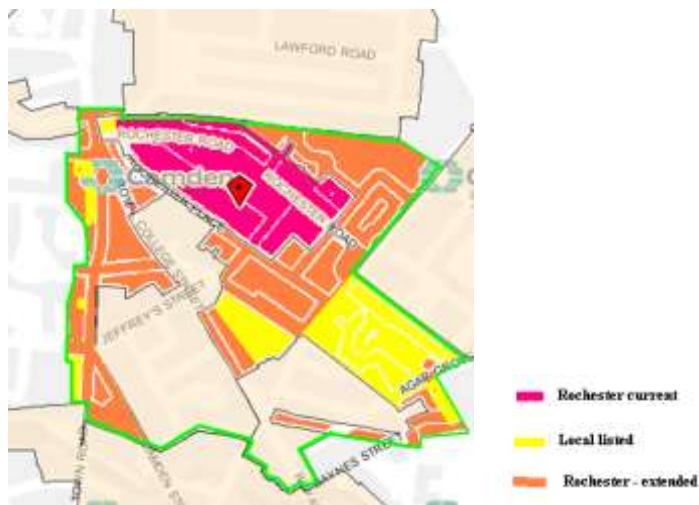
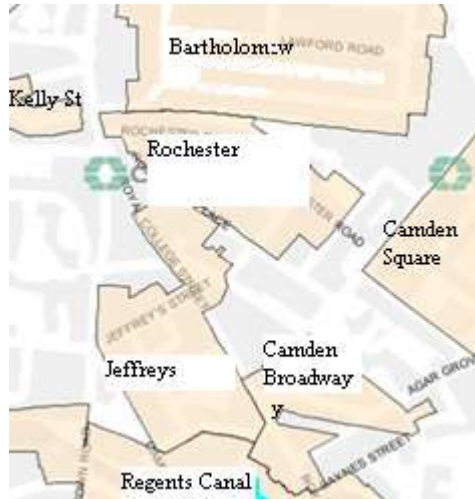
1. *Boundaries*

Rochester Conservation Area was created, with a second sub-area of Jeffreys Conservation Area, in 2001, and the Conservation Area Statement was adopted in 2002. Camden Broadway created in 2007. Local listing was introduced in 2012.

There are longer-established conservation areas to the north – Kelly Street, Bartholomew and Camden Square – and Regents Canal forms a southern boundary.

For the present Rochester statement, the boundaries are extended to include areas adjacent to Camden Road, St Pancras Way and Kentish Town Road (including Grade II listed properties).

This seeks to create a more coherent planning area for north Camden Town including Rochester, Jeffreys and Camden Broadway together,



2. ***Economy***

Camden's local development is driven by private funds. The character of Rochester area, however, is balanced between residential (owner-occupied, private rented and social housing) and commercial (retail, office and light industrial) uses. While Camden Town and Kentish Town are both identified as 'town centres' in Camden's Local Plan, the economy and Neighbourhood Centre around Camden Road has received insufficient recognition. Use – and change of use – has important effects, relevant for the conservation area, on both local character and the local economy.

3. ***Community engagement***

Camden has a developing policy for community engagement, including revising planning consultation. The present statement is built on experience of planning issues in Rochester since 2002. The three conservation areas cover parts of three wards (Cantelowes, Camden Town/Primrose Hill, and SommersTown/St Pancras) – but not the ‘political’ centre for any of these: it is necessary for Councillors to work together where neighbourhoods across boundaries.

Moreover, in using this conservation area statement, Camden’s planning officers will need to ensure full dialogue on both applications and enforcement, and Councillors must be able to discuss all local planning proposals and represent conservation area interests, even at the same time as being members of the Development Control committee.

**Rochester Conservation Area
Draft Appraisal and Management Strategy November
2015**

APPRAISAL Section

Introduction



Rochester Conservation Area lies in North Camden Town, bordering Kentish Town, with York Way to the east and Chalk Farm to the west. The spine of the conservation area is St Pancras Way, which since mediaeval times has run from the City of London on the east side of the Fleet River and joins the road from Westminster up to Kentish Town and onwards to Highgate. The land was laid out for housing during the first half of the nineteenth century, and has since developed commercial as well as residential use.

The London Borough of Camden introduced conservation areas in the 1970s, and now has 40 areas covering more than two-thirds of the urban land of the borough. Rochester conservation area was created in December 2001, at the same time as the neighbouring sub-area of Jeffreys conservation area. LB Camden encouraged

creation of a 'South Kentish Town' conservation area advisory committee jointly between Rochester and Jeffreys conservation areas. A further conservation area for Camden Broadway was created in 2007.

The three conservation areas have common interest in North Camden, which lies east-west between Camden Town and Kentish Town. With the development of fully-electronic planning records it is possible to be regularly informed on planning applications for the area. This revision of Rochester conservation area statement includes areas of North Camden contiguous with the Jeffreys and Camden Broadway conservation areas.

The statement is both an appraisal of the current condition of the area and guide on key issues and opportunities for enhancement. It is provided as a short overview document with greater, significant detail in appendices. It is for use by residents and, community groups to record their area; for businesses, developers and their professional advisers in preparing planning applications for proposed developments within conservation areas; and for LB Camden in the assessment of planning applications and scheduling highway maintenance and public realm improvement works.

Location





Proposed Rochester 2016

Rochester Conservation Area lies along the axis of St Pancras Way between Camden Town and Kentish Town, adjacent to Jeffreys and Camden Broadway conservation areas. Rochester has three sub- areas – Camden Road, St Pancras Way and Kentish Town Road.

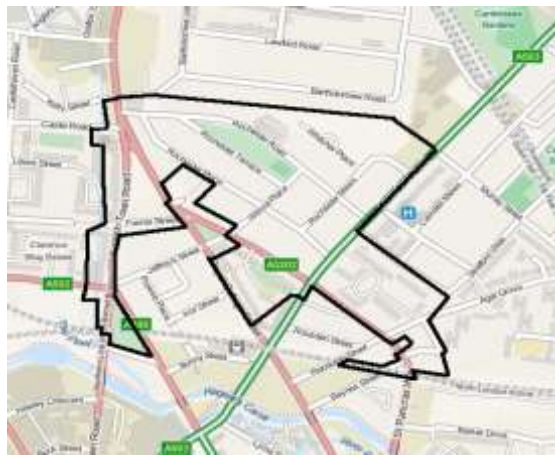
Explanation / Assessment of special interest

Rochester lies between St Pancras and Kentish Town. St Pancras Way follows the north east bank of the River Fleet around the site of former Cantelowes Manor, while Kentish Town Road runs from Camden Town, crossing the Fleet at (now) College Gardens to meet St Pancras Way at the entrance to Kentish Town. The streets and housing were set out in the first half of the nineteenth century. Transport access – the Regents Canal and the North London Railway – increased land use for light industry, with significant developments including Hilger's optical instruments and Idris soft drinks company. Small firms, including coach-builders and garages, were built on the mew sites. Redevelopment of housing started with the award-winning St Pancras Way estate in the 1950s. Having escaped demolition for the Inner Ring motorway (a major interchange was projected at Kentish Town Road), the last 60 years has seen both preservation of

Regency and Victorian houses and also new terrace and mansion blocks and architect-led mews conversions.

Substantial pressure for development continues. With several adjacent conservation areas, the new Rochester Conservation Area Statement provides an improved basis for planning decisions in their historical and architectural context.

Topography



The area slopes downwards from north east to south west, towards the River Fleet (now in a culvert). The Fleet crosses beneath Kentish Town Road at College Gardens and runs southeast to St Pancras (all culverted). Gravel from the banks of the Fleet have archaeological interest, as they reveal remains from Palaeolithic times.

The Fleet also impacts on Camden's Flooding map, with particular concern for basements.



St Pancras Way runs from St Pancras uphill on the right bank of the Fleet, entering the Conservation Area to the south east and passing on the level northwest to Kentish Town. Kentish Town Road runs south to Camden Town, while the 'new' (1826) turnpike, Camden Road, runs north east from Camden Town across Royal College

Street and St Pancras Way up to the hill crest at York Way.

Morphology

The conservation area is demarcated on four sides:

The northern boundary was originally a hedgerow from enclosure, and a boundary between land held by the Marquis of Camden to the south (developed from the 1820s) and the land held by St Bartholomew's Hospital (developed from the 1860s). Because the land owners could not agree with each other during the later period of development, there is no linking road: Bartholomew Road is entered either from Kentish Town Road or from Sandall Road higher up Camden Road.

The separation of North Camden Town from Kentish Town is perpetuated in the post district (NW1), and Camden Parking Zone (CA-G).



NW1



Parking zones

The entry of St Pancras Way to the Conservation Area at the southeast side is at the North London Railway bridge. At this point, St Pancras Way flattens and makes a leftward turn, where a farm and possibly Cantelowes Manor once stood. The North London Railway passes on a series of viaduct and bridges from St Pancras Way, across Royal College Street, Camden Road and College Street to Kentish Town Road. The western boundary at Kentish Town Road is formed by the Fleet running behind the terraces on the west side.

Geology.

The British Geology Survey identifies the bedrock as London Clay formation (“Clay, silt and sand: sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 34 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period”). There is a lack of geological substrata information for the Conservation Area.

The Survey records one borehole, probably pre-war, at Witcher Place, to a depth of 120 feet. It shows clay at superficial level. However, of six boreholes were made in 1965 at 25-27 Camden Road, on the corner with Camden Street, and also the point where the culverted Fleet sewer crosses beneath. Three of six of these boreholes show gravel for a metre below made ground, the other three record silty clay. The gravel deposits indicate the banks of the Fleet.

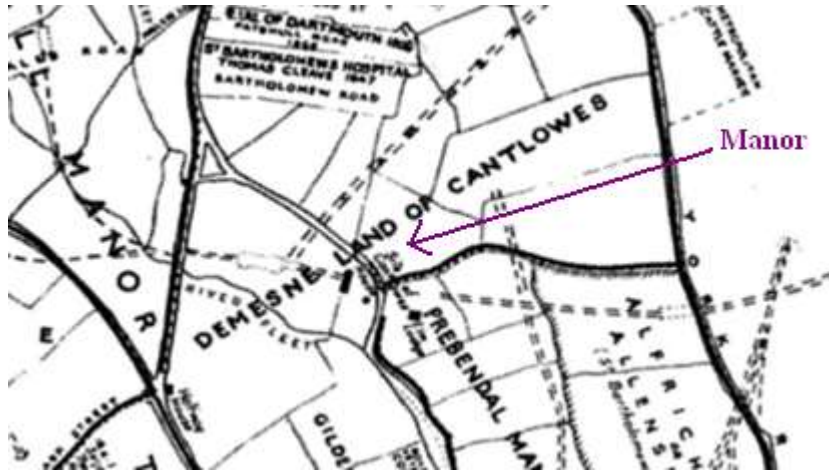
Archaeology

The Thames valley has had human habitation for 40 000 years. An 1891 find of fossils (now in the Natural History Museum) at Brecknock Crescent shows that the land around the Fleet River was a grazing ground for large animals in the last inter-glacial period. Palaeolithic human artefacts (stone instruments) have been found in similar gravels in Holborn and at Trafalgar Square, indicating the possibility of early human hunting at north Camden – of concern for developments undertaking basement excavation.

The settlement near Old St Pancras Church at Brill Place dates possibly from Roman times. In the middle ages the population at St Pancras decreased, and moved to the higher land up the River Fleet at Kentish Town, although continuing to use the church at St Pancras. The road between, called the Kings Road until renamed (in 1939) St Pancras Way, led from the City of London through St Pancras to Kentish Town, and then upwards to the limit of the St Pancras Ward at Highgate. The road north from Westminster through Tottenham Court led up to Hampstead, with a linking road to Kentish Town at the confluence of the two River Fleet tributaries.

History

Rochester, Jeffreys and Camden Broadway Conservation Areas (2001) cover northern parts of land, originally around the Manor of Canteloves, that was developed by the Earls of Camden.



During the eighteenth century, parishes took over powers previously held by Lords of the Manor. St Pancras parish stretched from St Giles in London to the hills of Highgate. The map of the parish of St Pancras (while incorporating some anachronistic aspects, such as Camden Road and railway lines up to 1870, but not the 1820 Regents Canal) shows

- the Demesne Land of Canteloves, with the possible site of the Manor at the corner junction with a road across to York Way to the east
- to the west, the River Fleet and property of Tottenhall Manor / Earls of Southampton
- to the north, the field boundary separating the St Bartholomew's Hospital land from Canteloves

William Camden was an Elizabethan historian and antiquary, who moved from London to Chislehurst in Kent in 1609, and his house was called Camden Place.¹ Later Charles Pratt (1713-1794), a lawyer and Whig politician during the reign of King George III, lived there, and employed Charles Dance (architect of the Guildhall) in extending the building.

¹ <http://camden-place.co.uk/index.php?p=172&pp=165&title=History>



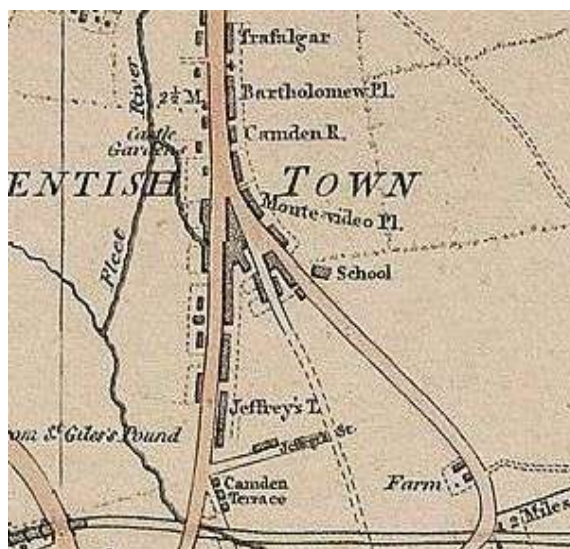
Camden Place, Chislehurst



Charles Pratt

Charles Pratt, a lawyer and politician, was created the first Earl of Camden in 1765. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Nicholas Jeffreys (of Brecknockshire in Wales),² whose family owned the Cantelowes land. From 1788 Lord Camden started development of the fields to the east of what is now Camden High Street.

The earliest Camden Town streets were to the south, on the west side of the River Fleet. From 1800s there were terraces built south of Kentish Town Road, on the east side of the Fleet, including Jeffreys Terrace and Camden Terrace (both now Grade II listed).



South Kentish Town map, 1809 (Crace Collection)
(The double line at the bottom is the tentative Regent's Canal extension)

² <http://www.cracroftspeerage.co.uk/online/content/camden1812.htm>

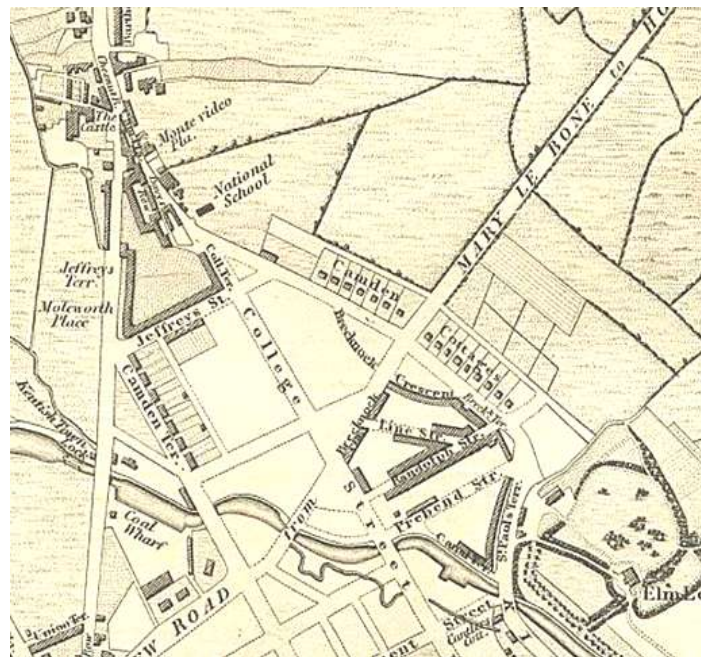
The farm at the corner of St Pancras Road, with Mr Agar's estate opposite, while at the northern end was the Nags Head and entrance to Kentish Town.



Kings Road southwest, Elm Lodge in distance



Kings Road northwest – Nags Head near Kentish Town.



Greenwood map 1828 (Crace Collection)

Great College Street, built in stages from the Veterinary College by old St Pancras Church, joined Kentish Town along a former pathway (see map, 1809). Following construction of the Regent's Canal, a 'new road from Marylebone to Holloway' (now Camden Road) was built to the north-east. From 1820s, Camden Cottages were set out spaciouly either side of Camden Road along St Pancras Way.



Cruikshank's famous 'March of Bricks and Mortar'³ (1829) looks north from St Pancras Village. It shows bricks from Camden Town clay being hurtled over the River Fleet, with higher ground of North Camden behind, a signpost (pointing up Camden Road) and the hills of Hampstead in the distance.



The third Earl of Camden, George Pratt, was a Tory politician, and in the year he entered the House of Lords

³ <http://www.museumoflondonprints.com/image/68302/george-cruikshank-london-going-out-of-town-or-the-march-of-bricks-and-mortar-1829>

(1835) married Harriet Murray (1813–1854), daughter of the Bishop of Rochester. Camden Villas were built along Camden Road.



The first road developed on the east side St Pancras Way parallel to Camden Road was Wilmot Place. John Wilmot, the second Earl of Rochester, was a famous courtier, poet and libertine in the restoration period. However, he had little contact with the town of Rochester itself⁴, and died heirless in 1689 – so it is not clear why this road was named after him 150 years later. However, perhaps the Murray family sought to indicate royal connection.

Rochester Road was set out along the boundary of the Jeffreys land. Land to the north was owned by St Bartholomew's Hospital, which was set out as an estate from 1860s, but without any through-link to Rochester Road. Three small open areas were set out – in sequence, Camden Gardens, College Gardens and finally Rochester Terrace Gardens – linked across St Pancras Way by Jeffreys Street and Wilmot Place. Rochester Terrace Gardens complemented Rochester Square on the east side of Camden Road.

In the 1840s, the North London Line was built through north Camden Town, connecting the docks with Paddington basin, as Regents Canal had similarly been built in the 1810s. Some houses within the terraces were demolished. By 1870, the railway was widened to four

⁴ Alexander Larman. Blazing star: the life and times of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. Head of Zeus, 2014.

tracks for passenger travel, and with a set of wrought iron bridges and brick viaducts.

Public houses were built at the ends of terraces along Kentish Town Road in the 1850s, and houses on main roads were converted to shops at the ground level to serve the growing population. In the later nineteenth century St Pancras Vestry, which was responsible for St Pancras Workhouse, was one of the slowest London boroughs in acting to improve housing⁵. The 'old' buildings around the Black Horse pub were rebuilt privately with 'model' tenements in the 1880s. A terrace at the junction to Kentish Town was to build St Barnabas Church (now St Andrews, Grade II listed).

In the early 1900s, the extension of the Underground Railway from Camden Town to Kentish Town included a station at South Kentish Town, but this closed in 1924 for lack of passenger use. Trams and the Northern line underground at South Kentish Town station increased public transport locally. However gas, electricity and plumbing had to be installed into the older housing: for many Victorian houses, the small back extension had been the only toilet.



Bombsight map – (not fully accurate siting)

North Camden suffered nine bomb hits in the early WW2 blitz⁶, although no V2 bombs fell in Camden⁷. After the

⁵ Stephen W Job, *Cat's Meat Square*. Housing and Public Health in South St Pancras 1810-1910. Camden History Society, 2012.

⁶ <http://bombsight.org/explore/greater-london/camden/>

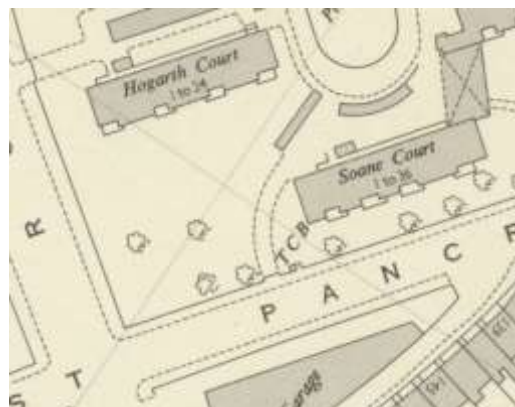
⁷ <http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/509301/Interactive-map-reveals-where-Hitler-s-feared-V2-bombs-landed-in-London-and-the-south-east>

war, St Pancras was a leading borough in new building through compulsory purchase of land, particularly the Victorian terraces. St Pancras Way estate was its vanguard scheme (started 1948), followed by other large rebuilding nearby including Castlehaven Estate (LCC, 1950s), Agar Grove Estate (1960s, now being again demolished), and Maiden Lane Estate (1980s).

The row of Camden Cottages on the south side suffered bomb damage, and became the site for the first post-war housing building for St Pancras Council. The St Pancras Way Estate flats, on the north east and southwest sides of the Camden Road / St Pancras Road junction were locally listed in 2015



Building Hogarth Court, 1950



Ordnance Survey map 1952

The Camden Cottages on the north side of St Pancras Way, seen in the view below, were demolished between the wars for industrial use. Equally, the curved block of Brecknock Crescent on the south side was demolished for Bernard Shaw Court, an extension of the St Pancras Way estate.



Postcard of 'Kings Road and Camden Road' to northwest-
Brecknock Crescent left and Camden Cottages right



Ordnance Survey map 1893

From 1963, the successor Borough of Camden, sometimes through housing associations, continued both to demolish and rebuild terraces (eg in Royal College Street, Rochester Road) and villas (eg 81-83 Camden Road (1975), 91-95 Camden Road (1980s)), and to buy and convert Victorian properties.

With the defeat of the 1960s proposals for the inner ring road junction at Camden Town, and recognition of historic character through national listing of some Georgian

properties, planning blight slowly changed into conservation and renovation.

Properties were originally built leasehold, and ownership reverted to the landlord at the end of that time. The law giving lessees the right to buy leases outright changed the property market: slowly, the Victorian terraces changed from 'slums' back into higher-quality housing, both privately as owner-occupier and by housing associations for tenants (eg 1-5 Wrotham Road and in Rochester Road). Architects themselves also built and lived in smaller private premises. North Camden shows all these different phases.

Industrial

Camden Town, with its connection of roads, canal and railways, became a major area for warehouse storage, small manufacturing and light industry. Camden Town was the piano-making centre of the Empire: the circular former panorama painting studio in Rochester Place was, for a time, an organ factory before being demolished.



Hilger & Watts optical instruments works 1900-1974⁸

The largest single employer was Hilger & Watts, makers of scientific instruments, with several sites locally: in 1955, the company requested planning permission to build a canteen at 81 Camden Road to serve their 450

⁸ Camden Local History Library: 21.821

workforce. (It was refused by the LCC, on grounds that the site was zoned for residential use.) Starting at 24 Rochester Place in 1900, their main site was developed adjacent at 98-100 St Pancras Way. Of monumental character, with red brick and white stucco frontage and parapet, it was started in 1930s and extended in 1950s and 1960s. However, Hilger & Watts was bought by Rank Organisation in 1968, and its several component businesses were dispersed out of London. The 79 Camden Road site, with a six-storey office block, was used by ASTMS union in the 1980s, and by Camden Council from 1995.

In the mews behind the main roads, initially open plots, there has been piecemeal building since the turn of the twentieth century. These were usually small buildings of brick, often with metal-beamed roofs and skylights. Following the horse stables of the nineteenth century, the twentieth century saw vehicle repair garages, a petrol station (89 Camden Road), and light industrial works (eg electroplating). Larger factories included Idris (mineral water bottling) in Whitcher Place and St Pancras Way. In the 1930s, Rochester Mews led to a bus garage; in the 1950s, the same site was for 'returned bags' of the Post Office.



Women's coop, Falkland Road NW5, 1982

The Greek Cypriot community in Camden Town from the 1950s brought a new economy including, dress-making and tailoring in small – for example, in houses such as

Royal College Street and 3 Castle Road, and continued use in the former Cosprop building 26-28 Rochester Place. From the 1970s, commercial premises have included garages, warehouses, design studios, a recording studio, and a pole-dancing school.

Character

The conservation area has three sub-areas.

- Rochester - Camden Road;
- St Pancras Way; and
- Kentish Town Road.

These are presented in greater detail in the Appendices, which include details on character, specific features and an audit of decisions.

The descriptions below follow the roads in the direction of numbering.

Camden Road.



Rochester Road, Rochester Terrace and Wilmot Place are set around Rochester Terrace Gardens. A feeling of elegance is captured through the architecture, the open expanse of the Gardens with mature trees, the relatively low height of buildings and the gaps between buildings giving glimpses to the rear back gardens. Rochester Place and Rochester Mews are cobbled, narrow streets, originally service roads to the houses St Pancras Way and Camden Road and now with buildings of varied character mainly from the twentieth century. Camden Road, with two pairs of the original Camden Villas, has buildings set back behind boundary walls and railings, and shrubs overhanging the pavement.

1a Rochester Terrace Gardens

1 – 59 (all) Rochester Road, 1- 23 (all) Rochester Terrace and 1-15 (all) Wilmot Place.

Houses of three and four-storeys were set out first along Rochester Road from Camden Road, and then along Rochester Terrace, with smaller houses later at the Kentish Town end between 1840 and 1860. Buildings are in pairs, three and fours, and vary as plots were developed by different builders. The Regency style has London stock with stucco facades. The houses are set back from the road and have small front gardens, usually enclosed by low brick walls with black iron railings and brick piers. Some railings have been replaced with hedges, and some with raised stuccoed or brick walls in a low V-shape between piers. Pavements are mainly of York stone, and tall lamp columns, in Victorian style, with modern luminaries make a significant contribution.



Rochester Road

There is also some in-fill housing. Three small blocks of flats in characteristic 1950s style, were built on bomb sites. A longer 1960s row of maisonettes, with only front gardens and rear access through a service road to garages, was built centrally along Rochester Road. Most recently, Nos 1-2 and 3a Wilmot Place have been developed as new flats.

1b *34-74 (even) and 55-63 (odd) Rochester Place and 2-14 (even) and 20-28 (even) Rochester Mews.*

The two streets were originally set out behind villas on St Pancras Way and Camden Road respectively. They have

retained cobbles and have narrow pavements. Building started on individual plots in the later nineteenth century, and continues to the present time. One- and two-storey buildings were erected for stables and garages for the houses behind, while some plots were small independent industrial buildings. In the second half of the twentieth century there was changing use for commercial purposes (light industry, offices), and some new building. A few buildings or refurbishments have been commended for architectural merit. However, continued change of use from industrial to residential use, changing facades and extension of heights in the last decade has also had a negative conservation impact.



Rochester Place

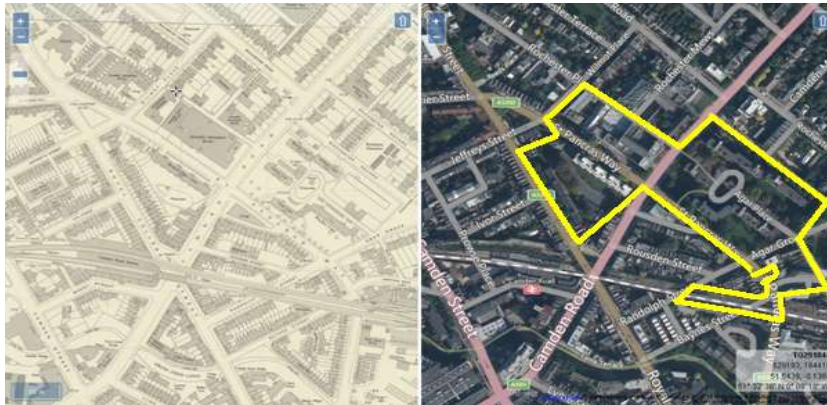
1c 79-109 (odd)

When Camden Cottages were set out east-west on St Pancras Way with a service road behind (originally Camden Cottages Mews, later Rochester Place). Camden Road itself was then developed with villas running northwards. Two paired Victorian villas, with some original features, remain at Nos 95-101. Otherwise, running north from Rochester Place there is a group of 1980s maisonette houses built by Camden Council Housing, followed by 1960s flats with ground level shops by Richard Siefert, a 1980s housing association residential development and (after the villas) the London University campus of university residences by from the 1970s and 1980s.



Flats above former garage: Richard Seifert architect, 1965

2. St Pancras Way.



The sub-area is around the intersection of St Pancras Way and Camden Road. The North London railway, with bridges and viaduct forms a visually striking entrance, as St Pancras Way turns northwest. It crosses Camden Road and continues towards College Gardens. The slim St Pancras Way estate blocks are set back from the road behind railings and hedges, giving light and spaciousness, and tall plane trees mark the route on either side.

2a. *Railway line, 8-12 (even) Wrotham Road, 1-5a (even) Agar Place, 1-2b (all) Agar Grove.* The railway bridges and viaduct of the North London Railway cross the road here, and form an important view. This is also the presumed site of Cantelowes Manor: a Mediaeval hearth was found in restoration of a former forge. Five Victorian terraced houses on Wrotham Road, and three in Agar Place (the cobbled mews is locally listed), remain while the rest of the terraces were demolished for Agar

Grove Estate. Two corner blocks at 54 St Pancras Way / 2-6 Wrotham Road (Thomas Court) and Linton Court at Agar Grove are modern.



Long-span railway bridge at Baynes Street, probable site of Cantelowes Manor

2b. *St Pancras Way north side: St Pancras Way estate (six blocks on the east side of Camden Road), and 142 Camden Road; 79 Camden Road, 102-106 (even) St Pancras Way.*

The nineteenth century Camden Cottages along St Pancras Way (built at the same time as locally listed Brecknock Crescent opposite) were demolished in the twentieth century. The St Pancras Way estate, locally listed for its historically innovative design, has six-storey blocks of flats with open grass and a central children's play area. The northern blocks face onto Rochester Square (formerly plant nurseries). Inset on the eastern boundary, Pooja Court is a small row of modern maisonettes.

No 142 Camden Road is a remaining Victorian half-villa. On the northwest side, 79 Camden Road is currently a building site for 164 flats. Adjacent, two early-twentieth century industrial blocks have been renovated – a former bottling factory for an international film company, and a former telephone exchange as flats.



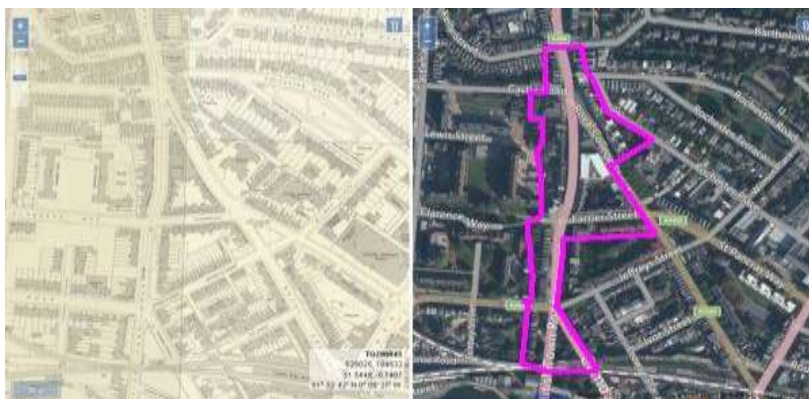
Bernard Shaw House, 1951⁹

2c. *St Pancras Way estate (George Bernard Shaw Court), 189-191 (odd) St Pancras Way, 1-34 Foster Court (formerly 192-224 Royal College Street).*

On the south west side of Camden Road, Bernard Shaw Court completes the St Pancras Way estate development, although built in a different design. It has a courtyard in front and grass, a playground and garages behind. Further west, a paired Victorian villa remains on St Pancras Way. (Palaeolithic fossils were found a century ago in excavation here at Brecknock Crescent.) Foster Court, on Royal College Street, is set back with high railings and a closed service road: the houses are well-maintained and view the grass area and playground of Bernard Shaw house to their rear.

⁹ Camden Local History Library, 89.3, St Pancras Way

3. Kentish Town Road.



The area starts at Camden Gardens, set out in the early nineteenth century, with the Fleet River culverted below and the North London Railway bridges and viaduct above. The villa houses from 51 to 63 are Grade II listed. To the west there is currently major redevelopment of Hawley Wharf, and similarly running north there was 1950s and 1980s redevelopment, but not of Kentish Town Road itself. The terraces are mainly intact, on the west side running with a gentle convex curve up to Kentish Town. The east side, from Farrier Street, forms junctions with Royal College Street, Rochester Road (closed for vehicles) and Bartholomew Road. There is a characterful view southwards from this junction, although marred by the current pedestrian ‘safety’ scheme.

3a. *On the west side, Nos 65 – 161 Kentish Town Road, with no. 1 Farrier Street, Castle Place and nos. 1-5 Castle Road.*

The southern end, starting with a public house, has a long Regency period terrace, with shops and housing above. The Georgian terrace Nos 65-97 is mainly complete, although in poor condition. No 1 Farrier Street is locally listed. In the middle section buildings are Georgian, Neo-classical, Gothic, Deco and contemporary; several are locally listed, including South Kentish Town Underground station, encircled by Castle Place. The northern section is a complete curved, Georgian terrace, to Kelly Street. The western boundary, at the back of the terraces and the small roads, marks the course of the Fleet River.



From Castle Road to Kelly Street

3b. *On the east side, nos. Durdan's House, 227-229, 313, and 335-349 Royal College Street, and 236-242 St Pancras Way.*

The junction between Kentish Town Road and St Pancras Way, where the road turns runs beside the Fleet river, has had at least three inns in the vicinity. The Castle was sited near the river banks from the seventeenth century; the Black Horse and Nags Head were between the two roads. The Black Horse was rebuilt in the 1880s along with surrounding buildings and improvement of the road.



Black Horse pub, rebuilt 1880s, converted to housing 2011

Farrier Street on the south side has low housing, with influence of the local Cypriot community in style. On the north side, Durdan's House is a large block of early

'model' working-man's housing. Adjacent is a large block built in the 1920s as a warehouse (now offices, and flats on top), while the apex of the junction is an art-nouveau building of housing over shops. On St Pancras Way there are further nineteenth century 'model' flats, which view towards Rochester Place, and a corner block at Rochester Road with two shops. At the corner with Bartholomew Road is St Andrews Church (Grade II listed).

Audit of planning decisions - Appendix

Features including Local Listed buildings – Appendix

Community involvement

Since 2002, residents from Rochester, Jeffreys and Camden Broadway residents have actively engaged with the Council in response to planning applications within and around the conservation area

Positive Contributors

The southeast-northwest axis of St Pancras Way has roads mostly parallel or perpendicular to it, and a gentle downhill aspect southwest towards the Fleet at Kentish Town Road provides good light. The open spaces – Rochester Terrace Gardens, Camden Gardens, College Gardens – wide roads, trees and front / back gardens provide a complex range of public realm views, while the smaller mews behind Camden Road have contrasting industrial character.

St Pancras Way, Kentish Town Road and Rochester Road are curved, reflecting pre-industrial routes and boundaries. Royal College Street and Camden Road, built in the nineteenth century, are straight. The western border of the conservation area follows the curve of the Fleet River north to the 'pleasure gardens' of the Castle pub. The junction at Kentish Town, though rebuilt in the 1880s and opened up as Farrier Street, retains its historic

form. Equally, the junction of Royal College Street with St Pancras Way is created with a triangle of land (College Gardens). Camden Road, originally a turnpike (with toll gate), marches upwards to the York Way. Rochester Place and Rochester Mews are narrower service streets behind the main roads, while Wilmot Place and Rochester Terrace are set around Rochester Terrace Gardens.

Houses, gardens and trees. There are Regency / Victorian houses in Rochester Terrace, Rochester Road, Wilmot Place, Wrotham Road, Agar Place, Agar Grove, Camden Road and St Pancras Way. The houses retain front and back gardens, often with trees. There are rows of mature plane trees along St Pancras Way and Royal College Street, and a long privet hedge behind railings around St Pancras Way estate.



18-23 Rochester Road

Housing blocks. The 1940s St Pancras Way estate won awards for its wide, grassed spaces and south-facing facades. Foster Court and 17-22 Rochester Road are consistent and well-preserved terraces, with front and back entry, from the 1960s/1970s. Housing blocks, of different periods, around Farrier Street also have internal courts. 85-89 Camden Road is a podium block by Seifert from the 1960s, set back from the main Camden Road. Other smaller blocks are Linton Court and at Wrotham road

Industrial / conversion. Close to Camden Town, the area has a strong commercial history. The biggest employer was Hilger & Watts, with both a main large site and several ancillary industrial buildings. Equally, Dunn's was the national distribution warehouse to more than 100 stores. Other lower buildings of Rochester Terrace and Rochester Mews, in narrower streets, were originally stores or stables, workshops or garages. While many of the buildings have been converted for housing, some have been protected for continued commercial uses.



36-38 Rochester Place - warehouse

Terraces and shops. The three long terraces of Nos 65-97, 99-147 and 149-161 Kentish Town Road have variation in period, and together strong character, despite poor upkeep of the shops. 349 Royal College Street is in late nineteenth century crafts style.

Other. 69 Kentish Town Road continues as a pub, and 147 Kentish Town Road is under Article 4 control. The former pub at 313 Royal College Street also retains some original external features. The ox-blood (former) South Kentish Town Underground station is also in need of restoration. There is a range of borders around Rochester

Terrace Gardens. Characteristic street features include wide granite kerbs, stone road gutters and some York stone paving.



Negative Contributors

Houses

The historic architectural aspect of some houses are marred:

- there are inappropriate roof extensions;
- the boundaries for some properties are of poor quality;
- basement additions;
- some side extensions have been built to full height;
- some back extensions have been built with wide plate-glass windows.

Rochester Road: No. 45 Rochester Road has been marred by inappropriate replacement windows and garden wall; Nos. 24, 38, 41 and 42 have dormer windows (No. 24 has a full width dormer and large party wall) which, although set back from the parapet, have an adverse affect on the roofscape. Nos.34-44 are painted, marring the original brickwork underneath; No. 31 has replacement Georgian-style box windows, with the detail above the window pediment out of character with the building. Nos. 48-49 and 56-59 have had part of their parapet removed, detracting from the appearance. Rochester Terrace: No 4 has lost its front boundary and has forecourt parking that detracts from the frontage.

Wilmot Place: Nos. 6 and 7 front boundary walls detract from the setting of the surrounding properties.

Rochester Place: The mansard roofed rear extension of No.4 Wilmot Place, and seen from Rochester Place, is out of character. Nos. 64 and 66 have a white painted finish, which mars the original brickwork.

Industrial /conversion.

- Mews buildings, in conversion for residential use have been raised higher than the “low mews type buildings” described in the 2001 Conservation Area Statement.
- Views from within the conservation area as well as the public realm, have been insufficiently considered in recent developments.

Housing blocks.

- Extra-storey penthouse roof extensions, with picture-frame plate glass, have been built on several blocks, diminishing the views of roof lines and creating excess heights;
- some electrical equipment (radio aerials, solar panels) is poorly sited.

Terraces with shops.

- Shops fronts in Kentish Town Road have been poorly controlled in relation to planning requirements and guidance;
- the in-fill at 75-77 Kentish Town Road and the plate-glass entrance at 161 Kentish Town Road are particularly unsatisfactory examples;
- railings and light-wells have been created at 343-347 Royal College Street;
- rear views of these terraces, sometimes with extraction chimneys are also poor.

Other.

- lock-up garages in Rochester Road, with destruction of the original brick wall, are out of character;

- the street railings and pavement at the junction of Kentish Town Road with St Pancras Way are ungainly and restrain public use.

Streetscape audit

Within the public realm, features such as original pavement materials, boundary walls, railings and vegetation contribute greatly to the area's quality, character and appearance. Many historic features, original materials and details help sustain the areas distinctive appearance:

General: granite kerbs, granite channels and York stone pavements; small gardens with mature vegetation, including trees; views of rear gardens or trees between houses, low brick walls, cast-iron railings and gates.

Rows of mature planes on St Pancras Way and Royal College Street. There are pavement blossoming trees at the west end of Rochester Road and in Wilmot Place

Traditional and recent replacement lamp columns (with modern luminaires) around Rochester Terrace Gardens: columns are inscribed Borough of St Pancras and have over painted shields bearing the inscription "CONSTANS JUSTITLAN L'ONIT".

Shop fronts of merit

91 Kentish Town Road has an interesting wood/glass bay window design with side shop entrance.

149 Kentish Town Road, Leverton's, has a corner door and wooden fascia similar to three corner-shops around College Gardens.

In Kentish Town Road, there are corbel mouldings between several shops.

The shop row of 69-161 Kentish Town Road is without open lightwells or railings .

Street scape positive items.

- The main streets mostly retain original wide granite kerbstones

- There are two double pillar boxes.
- Castle Place remains with York stone, but has LED lighting and is closed off with railings.



- York stone in front areas of Nos 3 & 5 Castle Road
- Occasional coal-hole covers retained in York stone at Dunn's Warehouse
- The former public toilet at the junction of Royal College Street and St Pancras Way is a feature at its junction position

Condition

The conservation area reflects different levels of maintenance investment between self-owned and rented property.

Grade II Listed buildings: St Andrews Church has received regular maintenance. The private buildings by Hawley Road on Kentish Town Road have had moderate maintenance.

Most of the owner-occupied houses and gardens (front and rear) around Rochester Terrace Gardens, and the adjacent mews buildings, have good maintenance. However, there are no financial incentives for restoration of period features.

Housing association property is also moderately well kept. However, there was often loss of period detail in multi-occupancy conversions: a good example is 95 Camden Road.

The St Pancras Way Estate has receives rather low maintenance. Areas of poor quality have developed, such as the block entrances, the replaced balconies and PVC windows, the parking areas and play areas, and the crumbling brick walls at the periphery.

Dunn's warehouse is in poor state on Kentish Town Road side, and there has been loss of style. Similarly, the upper floors of No 349 Royal College Street and former South Kentish Town station opposite are in poor state.

Much of the rented property, along Kentish Town Road and 3-5 Castle Road, is in poor condition, both shops and houses above.

Boundary

In this 2015 Statement, the boundaries for Rochester Conservation Area have been widened. This

- provides continuity with five adjacent Conservation Areas
- supports an historico-architectural perspective across the full range of the last two centuries
- reflects Camden's Local List approach and includes relevant buildings and streets
- integrates the area between Camden Town and Kentish Town for planning

MANAGEMENT SECTION

Issues and Guidelines

Designation of a conservation area gives the Council greater power to control and manage change. It is not, however, intended to prevent all new development. While some developments under the Town and Country Planning 2015 do not formally require permission (“permitted development”), the majority of works within the conservation area will require planning permission, and/or conservation area consent.

Camden’s current Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is under review towards a new Local Plan, expected to be adopted in 2016. More specific guidance on topics continues. The Conservation Area Statement forms part of the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).

Opportunities for Enhancement

Until 2002 north Camden Town either side of St Pancras Way was outside the Conservation Area, allowing a range of developments reflecting architectural fashions of the times. Since 2002, outside the initial Conservation Area, there have been developments harmful to the character of the area – including the change of use of the Falcon and Black Horse pubs, demolition of the Hilger Scientific Works buildings, penthouses raising heights of buildings such as Dunn’s Warehouse, poor renewal of shopfronts in Kentish Town Road, and change of use from garages / industrial / offices to housing. There has also been insufficient attention to archaeological heritage. Smaller issues include loss of stone paving and roadway granite setts, persistent estate agent signs, skyline aerials and inappropriate window and balcony renewals.

The planning applications in 2002-2015 within the existing Conservation Area have been quite numerous (perhaps recognising the need for attention required by the regulation) and more modest (recognising the requirements of Camden’s design and planning policies). The majority of these planning applications and developments have been approved, and often after

modification as a result of consultation. It remains a national problem that applicants can take refusal of applications to appeal while the public (or conservation area committees) do not have this right.

The most pressing opportunity site within the Conservation Area is Kentish Town Road – to protect and enhance these buildings into their third century. The needs include improvement of the front areas (and perhaps planting small trees along the pavement, improvement of doors and windows, control of painting walls, maintenance of roof-lines including roofs and chimneys, and attention to rear views and extensions. A special project for the shops and terraces, of 69- such as those successfully supported by the Greater London Authority, would be beneficial.

Equally to the east, St Pancras Way at the former Elm Lodge corner has high historical importance and the grounds of the neighbouring buildings need maintenance. The North London Line would have been enhanced by the renewal of bridges and return to four tracks proposed for the High Speed 2 Link with Network Rail – unfortunately opposed by Camden Council. Work on the bridges is still needed, along with removal of advertising hoardings and maintenance of pillar brickwork.

The gardens around the St Pancras Way Estate and Bernard Shaw Court, as well as Rochester Terrace Gardens, each include a children's playground. A pedestrian phase was introduced at the St Pancras Way / Camden Road crossing after the death of a pedal cyclist in 2009, but only on the north side (another has been requested at the Camden Road / Royal College Street junction to link with the new cycle route). Continued attention to improve pedestrian safety at, and experience of, this road junction will contribute to increased social exchange between these otherwise rather isolated sections of the Conservation Area.

Control on roof extensions that applies around Rochester Terrace Gardens must be applied more fully across the new Conservation Area. (Similar control should be applied to basement excavation. National and local

policies for increased housing have been exceeded in the area, when taking account of the conversion of Richard of Chichester School, the Employment Exchange, 79 Camden Road and neighbouring Agar Grove Estate. There must be a concerted effort to retain and enhance the industrial-character parts of the Conservation Area and equally to strengthen the character and features of the nineteenth century housing.

The Conservation Area was originally set out with brick villas and terraces. A range of housing has been built in the twentieth and twenty-first century, from ‘model’ tenements to architect’s mews. Fashions change, and the Conservation Area includes buildings of many periods and styles - Georgian, Regency, mid-Victorian, late-Victorian, Gothic, Deco, modernist and internationalist. The evidence suggests that its ownership impacts substantially on maintenance and building investment.

In management of the Conservation Area the Council is encouraged to engage with its Housing Department, housing associations, and private landlord organisations to generate positive attitudes to building maintenance and refurbishment, and transcend the opportunities for short-term profit.

Summary of conservation issues

<p>New Development.</p>	<p>There is no vacant land. New development must focus on restoration and refurbishment. No 102 St Pancras Way forms a good example of refurbishment, while overdevelopment (eg 26-28 Rochester Place) is negative. Renovation with picture-frame sliding windows, roof terraces and penthouses are not in character and should be resisted. The historic rows of Kentish Town Road need special attention, for renovation of the properties and improvement of the shops.</p>
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Design,	While the conservation area includes a wide range of styles, it the most significant concern is to retain character and balance in building heights, depths and mass. A second concern is to retain light and green space – both public and private – which also contributes to Camden’s biodiversity
Listed Buildings,	There are Grade II listed buildings on Kentish Town Road, and Camden’s Local List 2015 has more than a dozen sites – including a disused station and a cobbled mews – within the boundaries of the Conservation Area.
Materials and Maintenance,	Owner-occupiers have given generally good maintenance for properties. Attention should be given to quality of both private and public rented-sector housing, and shop facades on Kentish Town Road. Appropriate historic materials and methods should be used for renovation
Demolition,	Demolition of previous buildings has had some negative contribution to the conservation area. Complete demolition of 98-100 Hilger optical instruments factory buildings was against public wishes. Other demolition – the Presbyterian church hall (Royal College Street), Castlehaven garages (St Pancras Way) – has also replaced diverse building uses with blocks of flats. Further demolition has been approved for 6a Wilmot Place / Rochester Road, and 11 Rochester Mews.
Change of Use,	Inappropriate change of use was allowed for the Black Horse pub, Royal College Street, especially

	following similar change for the Falcon pub nearby. Change of use from office to residential will continue to be resisted, eg 68-74 Rochester Place. Change from single to multiple occupation will be resisted.
Roof Extensions,	Further roof extensions or penthouses should be resisted across the full conservation area to retain rooflines and reduce visual intrusion.
Rear and Side Extensions,	Massing from side and rear extensions should be resisted to retain views between villas / terraces and visual intrusion.
Conservatories,	There is little information on existing conservatories, but would normally be acceptable at ground floor level only.
Facadism,	Facades show a strong range of architectural design periods – Georgian, Regency, Victorian, Italianate, Gothic, Model, Deco, Zielenbau, Modernist, Post-modern. Renovation should respect original architectural intentions including decoration.
Windows,	Window renovation is preferable to replacement, keeping original materials (wood, metal) rather than PVC. Sash windows should be used when historically appropriate, rather than casement, and attention to appropriate glazing bars (not stuck-on).
Doors and decorative details,	The variety of doors, some original, should be retained. Mouldings on Victorian buildings should be retained, and decoration also restored on twentieth century buildings – eg Dunn’s warehouse, south Kentish Town underground

	station (Deco decoration).
Trees and Landscaping,	Pavement plane trees need attention, being historic but some over-large for their sites. Rochester Terrace Gardens needs continued attention. Private gardens importantly contribute trees, providing views from the pavement as well as for residents. Trees are lacking in Kentish Town Road and those in properties on Camden Road need reduction.
Gardens and Boundaries,	The three public gardens (Rochester Terrace, College, Camden) and the grass around St Pancras Way Estate and George Bernard Shaw House are important green areas. While there is welcome variation, attention is needed to appropriate boundaries and quality, and to reducing hard standing in former front gardens. The rear views of housing terraces also need consideration – particularly those on Camden Road from George Bernard Shaw House, those on Kentish Town Road from Clarence Way estate.
Satellite Dishes,	Unsightly aerials or dishes on some public sector blocks, eg St Pancras Way estate. and at sides of buildings, eg 17 Rochester Road, and on housing blocks, eg Durdan’s House, should be removed
Roof Gardens,	Roof gardens are not characteristic for the area and should be resisted. Ground level gardens and pitched roofs are the norm.
Basements,	Basements are not characteristic for this area, and should be resisted. Parts of the area are subject to flooding from hillside springs and the Fleet river.

<p>Archaeology,</p>	<p>There is important evidence from 1890 of the area having Palaeological importance in Camden. St Pancras Way, being a long-standing road, may have foundations of interest nearby, as the Mediaeval hearth found in 1990.</p>
<p>Traffic. Parking and the Public Realm,</p>	<p>Traffic reduction continues to be an objective (the 1960s closure of the west end of Rochester Road provides a major benefit). Main road parking is controlled by red routes as well as standard yellow markings. Camden's Parking Zone CA-G, with northern boundary at Rochester Road, covers most of the area. A two-way cycle path is now being built along Royal College Street</p>
<p>Shopfronts/Shopfront Security,</p>	<p>The shop fronts of Kentish Town Road are in poor condition. and need substantial attention, both for visual and commercial environment. Attention also for the shops on the Kentish Town, Royal College Street apex. Conversion to residential premises must be resisted</p>
<p>Signs,</p>	<p>Attention is needed to remove the large advertising hoardings under North London Line St Pancras Way bridge and outside 89 Camden Road, opposite the station. Advertising at shop windows also needs control. Advertising on 128a Camden Road, visible from the conservation area, must also be stopped.</p>
<p>Ventilation Ducts</p>	<p>Ducts can be seen at the rear of buildings which have restaurants on front main roads.</p>
<p>Estate Agents Boards,</p>	<p>Estate agents leaving boards illegally, particularly those erected on the first floor which cannot readily be removed, require Council</p>

	<p>action. Creation of the large conservation area boundaries will enable the limit of only one per building.</p> <p>Camden does not allow estate agent boards on its estates – perhaps this interdiction could be extended to the whole area.</p>
Conversion	<p>Along the shop fronts, there must be attention to retaining residential use above shops and commercial use at ground level.</p>

CURRENT ISSUES

Design

Where development detracts from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, it is often through lack of respect for historic context, and the following themes recur:

- use of inappropriate materials
- inappropriate bulk, massing and/or height

Character Erosion

There has been a gradual erosion of many elements that contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, especially to residential properties. This sometimes occurs through permitted development rights and permissions including:

- alteration and addition to roofs and parapet walls
- alteration to or replacement of windows, porches, doors, and other features
- loss of traditional railings or gateposts
- car parking within front gardens
- loss of garden walls
- loss of original features
- inappropriate extensions
- inappropriate painting of brickwork, walls or fences.

There are several streetscape features that detract from the Conservation Area, and these should be removed or replaced as the opportunities arise, including:

- use of concrete block paving (buff on street corners and red by Rochester Terrace Gardens)

- street boxes for telecommunications equipment.
- Streetscape enhancements should be made in accordance with the Council's Streetscape Design manual for Camden that identifies an overall image for the Borough.

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