

Moss Hall Crescent

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Proposals

26th August 2015



This Character Appraisal document has been subject to a thorough process of public consultation, in line with the council's approved Statement of Community Involvement.

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(add 'character appraisals' in the subject line)

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Part 1 Character Appraisal

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Conservation areas

The Civic Amenities Act of 1967 provided the original legislation allowing the designation of ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest’, as conservation areas, whose character should be preserved or enhanced. It is the quality and interest of an area, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a potential conservation area.

This concept has developed and is now enshrined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69 of the Act provides a local planning authority with powers to designate conservation areas, and to periodically review existing and proposed conservation areas. Section 71 requires local authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation or enhancement of their conservation areas. Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

1.2 Purpose of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities after careful local assessment. This assessment forms the basis for a Character Appraisal. The format and scope of such statements are guided by Historic England.

Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area was designated by the council in July 1974. This Character Appraisal Statement seeks to identify the special characteristics of the conservation area so that they may be better preserved and enhanced in the future.

Government legislation on conservation areas and historic buildings generally, is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which states in section 71:

“It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.”

The aim of this Character Appraisal is to:

- improve the understanding of the history and historical context of this area of the borough of Barnet
- generate awareness of exactly what it is about the Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area that makes it of ‘special interest’
- provide residents and owners with a clear idea of what should be cared for and preserved
- provide residents, owners, businesses and other interested parties with a clear idea of what enhancements could be made to the conservation area

- provide Barnet Council with a valuable tool with which to inform its planning practices and policies for the area
- provide initiatives within the Management Proposals which will assist in preserving and enhancing the character of the conservation area.

1.3 The Barnet Planning Policy Framework

The current local policy document for the borough is the Barnet Local Plan (Adopted 2012), within which lie the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.

Policy CS5 of the Local Plan Core Strategy protects and enhances the borough's suburbs and historic areas. Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area has some open space fronting Ballards Lane and policy CS7 enhances and protects Barnet's open spaces, and aims to protect and enhance biodiversity across the borough, whilst policy CS13 aims to ensure the efficient use of natural resources including the adaptation of heritage assets to reduce carbon emissions, without causing harm to their significance.

Within the Local Plan Development Management Policies, policy DM01 protects Barnet's character and amenities; policy DM06 preserves and enhances Barnet's heritage assets; and policy DM15 protects all types and sizes of public open spaces.

In April 2013, Barnet Council adopted a Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (RDG SPD), which sets out design guidelines for creating imaginative, safe, attractive and functional homes that respond appropriately with their surroundings. Guidelines in the Residential Design Guidance SPD address the general amenity and character considerations associated with housing development. Where there is conflict between these guidelines and conservation area or listed building considerations, the Conservation Area Character Appraisal considerations will prevail.

Barnet's suite of Design Guidance Notes provides Development Management guidance on development issues within the borough and includes Design Guidance Note No.6: 'The Replacement of Windows and Doors.'

Although the Design Guidance Notes and Conservation Area Character Appraisals sit outside the Local Plan, they provide important supporting guidance for Development Management.

The Character Appraisal will help deliver the objectives of the Three Strands Approach (PEG) – Protection, Enhancement and Consolidated Growth – seeking to deliver successful high quality suburbs now and for the future.

Conservation areas fall under both the first and second strands as they require preservation or enhancement of their character or appearance. The PEG approach highlights Barnet as an attractive, desirable place to live, rich in heritage and therefore, there is a need to provide appropriate planning protection for conservation areas and where appropriate to investigate the desirability of designating additional conservation areas or extending existing conservation areas.

1.4 London-wide and national policies

The London Plan (July 2011) contains a number of policies considered relevant to the Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area. Policy 7.4 requires new development to provide a high quality design response that is informed by the surrounding historic environment. Policy 7.5 seeks to ensure that treatment of the public realm is informed by the heritage values of the place. Policy 7.6 requires buildings to provide high quality indoor and outdoor spaces and integrate well with surrounding streets and spaces. Policy 7.8 requires new development to conserve the significance of heritage assets and their settings by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail. Policy 7.21 specifies that existing trees of value should be retained.

In March 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF includes specific policies for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. These policies should be read alongside other relevant statements of national planning policy.

The NPPF defines a heritage asset as follows: *"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)."*

Paragraphs 132, 133 and 134 of the NPPF refer specifically to heritage assets.

Historic England provides supporting information on good practice, particularly looking at the principles of how national policy and guidance can be put into practice. It follows the main themes of the planning system - planning-making and decision-taking - and other issues significant for good decision-making affecting heritage assets. Good Practice Advice notes 1, 2 and 3 supersede the PPS 5 Practice Guide which has now been withdrawn by Government.

In March 2014, the Government published the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), a web based resource that combined information previously published within several planning guidance documents into a single online version. Paragraph 25 of the section on conserving and enhancing the historic environment states:

"A conservation area appraisal can be used to help local planning authorities develop a management plan and appropriate policies for the Local Plan. A good appraisal will consider what features make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the conservation area, thereby identifying opportunities for beneficial change or the need for planning protection."

1.5 Article 4 Direction

The General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) 2015 allows certain types of development to be carried out without the need for planning permission. Such 'permitted development' is restricted by the terms and conditions of the Order, which also sets out stricter criteria for Article 1 (5) land, including conservation areas.

Even so, small scale changes can erode the character of an area and the council can bring such developments under control by issuing an Article 4 Direction, which removes some or all permitted development rights from properties, often within conservation areas.

The council introduced an Article 4 Direction for the Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area in July 1987. It was updated in May 1991. This removed a number of classes of permitted development and allows the council to control the following:

- the enlargement or alteration of a dwellinghouse
- the erection of a porch
- the construction of a hardstanding for vehicles
- the erection of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure
- the formation, laying out and construction of a means of access to a highway
- the painting or other similar treatment of the exterior of any building.

The current Article 4 Direction requires updating to reflect the current classes within the General Permitted Development order, and also the fact that many of the former dwellinghouses have been converted into flats, which consequently no longer benefit from permitted development rights.

Section 2 Location, uses and activities

2.1 Location

The Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area lies within the West Finchley ward, close to the centre of the borough. It is located south of Tally Ho Corner in North Finchley, on the western side of Ballards Lane and approximately 1.5 km to the north of Finchley Central. The crescent is situated behind a small green open space with mature trees which fronts Ballards Lane, between Alexandra Grove to the north and Moss Hall Grove to the south.

Moss Hall Crescent consists of twelve Victorian villas, set back from Ballards Lane by a strip of green open space, with a strong tree line that helps soften the impact of the heavy traffic running along Ballards Lane. The surrounding area is primarily residential, although it is located nearby the shopping area of North Finchley, which lies approximately 0.5 km north-east of the conservation area.

West Finchley is the second smallest of Barnet's wards, covering an area of 8.2 square kilometres. It is also one of the borough's least populated wards, with 15,849 residents in 2012. The surrounding area has become popular with London's Japanese community and Ballards Lane has several suppliers of goods and services serving this market.



2.2 Former uses and activities

Ballards Lane was an important medieval thoroughfare, named after a family who were living there in 1263. It was originally called Overstreet, contrasting it with Nether Street, which ran in parallel to the west. The estate of Ballards Reding, later Wimbush Farm, stretched across to Fallow Corner.

By the 15th century large houses set in spacious grounds were appearing along the lane. Many of these properties were rebuilt in the 17th century.

With the construction of Regent's Park Road the lane became a turnpike in 1826 and was extended to a new junction with the Great North Road, bringing an increase in development. By 1851 the lane had 56 houses and seven under construction, which was positively heaving for such a rural outpost of London at this time, and made it the most populous part of Finchley.

In 1867, Moss Hall, a Georgian manor house and its attendant estate, which had been unsuccessfully offered for sale in 1830, was laid out for residential dwellings. The properties on Moss Hall Crescent were originally built as middle class housing, and until the 1970's remained so.

Around this time, many of the 12 properties along the crescent applied for a change of use from single family houses to flatted development or office use. Consequently, few residential dwelling houses now exist on the crescent, with nos. 10 and 11 in use as a nursery school having formerly been the Moss Hall Hotel.

Most of Ballards Lane was redeveloped from the early years of the 20th century onwards, much of it with parades of shops and flats. Moss Hall itself was demolished in 1927 after much of the estate had been built on after the 1860s. The name survives in the names of streets including Moss Hall Grove and Moss Hall Crescent and, until the 1990s, a pub called the Moss Hall Tavern (the pub still exists but has been renamed the Elephant Inn) on the corner of Ballards Lane and Hutton Grove.

Moss Hall School, built in Moss Hall Grove to serve the area between Church End and North Finchley, opened in 1952. It is currently a four form entry school with 360 children across three year groups.

Section 3 The historical development of Moss Hall Crescent

3.1 Historical development

At the time of the Domesday book (1086), the first complete survey of the country, Finchley was part of the Bishop of London's lands. Finchley Common stretched from the edge of the Bishops Park northwards to the county boundary. In about 1350 the Bishop of London permitted travellers to pass through his park via a gate at the top of the hill, which became known as the Highgate.



Moss Hall Estate 1894

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Since the middle ages Finchley has been attracting Londoners to invest in land and to build country residences thereon. A member of the 15th century Mosse family was granted land in 1463 on condition that he built a mansion house on it. In the Court Rolls of the Bishop of London for 1484 we find 'John Mosse', a tenant living on the Bishop's Manor of Finchley. An alternative explanation of the origin of the name was offered by a coachman to an 18th Century owner of the Estate, Thomas Harrison Andrew, who said that the name derived from the moss planted, on Andrew's orders, on walls of the house to deaden the noise from coaches in Ballards Lane.

The original 15th Century Moss Hall is believed to have been located in the centre of Dale Grove between two ponds, about one hundred yards west of the present Trinity Church in Nether Street. A "new" Moss Hall was built by 1754, a red brick building, situated between Moss Hall Grove

and Alexandra Grove. The building is last shown on an 1894 map of the area and it was demolished in 1927.



Moss Hall Crescent – present day

Until the mid-19th Century development centred upon established settlements along existing roads. After this date, and especially under the stimulus of the railway, which came to Finchley in 1867, whole estates were sold for speculative building. The Moss Hall Estate, which had been unsuccessfully offered for sale in 1830, was laid out and subdivided into plots for development from 1867. Good quality, above average size residences were typical of the Estate and Moss Hall Crescent is perhaps the most complete group of those surviving. This fine example of carefully laid-out and well designed Victorian villas consist of five pairs of semi-detached houses with a single detached property at each end. The buildings were built in handsome cream coloured stock brick with shallow slate roofs, decorated in several cases with cast iron finials along the ridge. Window openings are trimmed with classical mouldings in stucco and a number of door openings are flanked with plain doric columns. Houses are set well back from the road, with the front boundary defined by low walls with hedges and shrubs. Trees in some front gardens, together with a number of fine mature specimens on the green open space between Moss Hall Crescent and Ballards Lane, act as an attractive screen from the busy main road.

The original 1860's designs and layout survive in much their original form, mainly due to precisely drawn leasehold agreements which laid down, for the next hundred years, strict conditions prohibiting any additional building or alterations to the "tenements, fences, walls and premises" as well as the maintenance of the public garden fronting the villas "unbuilt upon, fenced in and planted.....and used only as a shrubbery or pleasure grounds in common by the occupiers of the villas..."

Moss Hall Crescent was designated a conservation area in July 1974, when this attractive group of 19th Century villas came under direct threat of large-scale redevelopment. Conservation area designation was therefore clearly justified and removed the possibility of demolition. It would be wrong, however, to see such designation as an action preventing all change in the area; indeed several planning permissions for the conversion of houses into self-contained flats have been granted since the designation of the conservation area. The Moss Hall Crescent properties are much larger than average present day family dwellings, but within the remit to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area, it has been possible to convert and refurbish them to provide satisfactory self-contained flats, without resulting in a loss of character.

3.2 Archaeological significance

Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area lies within the historic parish of Finchley which is a Barnet Council designated Local Area of Special Archaeological Significance. The name Finchley originates from the Anglo-Saxon and is defined as Finch's clearing. However, Finchley is first mentioned in the 13th century. Whilst its location may potentially have made the area favourable for settlement, prehistoric, Roman and Saxon evidence is slight. Nether Street is medieval in origin and was first mentioned in 1365, located near to Finchley Common, where a hoard of medieval gold coins was discovered in 1755. Peacock's mansion was assessed for 14 hearths in 1664 and was probably a farm-house at the north end of Nether Street. Another old house was assessed for 6 hearths in 1664 and 1674, but has since been demolished.

Section 4 Spatial analysis

4.1 Topography

The conservation area is relatively flat in both its breadth and depth. The land is made up of clay soil, which was considered unsuitable for cultivation, and was therefore given over to woodland. The trees were gradually cut down and by the end of the 13th century settlements had been established on the edge of Finchley Common.

4.2 Views and vistas

The principal views of the buildings in their setting are from just outside of the conservation area, looking inwards, particularly when travelling along Ballards Lane. Views can also be achieved looking north and south, up and down the Crescent ([Photograph 1](#)), and from the adjoining area of open space. There are also glimpsed views, through the trees, towards the houses ([Photograph 2 – see overleaf](#)).



4.3 Landmarks

Whilst there are no landmark buildings within the conservation area, the 17 storey Arts Depot building can be clearly seen by looking north-east towards Tally Ho Corner.



4.4 Streets and open spaces

Moss Hall Crescent is the only road that runs through the conservation area (Photograph 3). It has parking restrictions in force but is largely taken up on the eastern side with residents parking. Cars that park here are somewhat screened by the leafy green space which runs the length of the conservation area, along Ballards Lane.



4.5 Trees and hedges

Within the conservation area's open space on Ballards Lane, there are a variety of tree species including Hawthorns, Limes, Horse Chestnuts, Yews, False Acacias, Cockspur Thorn, Western Red Cedar and Sycamore. Other low level bushes contribute to the leafy character of this space (Photograph 4).

Other notable trees and hedges can be found in the front and rear gardens of many of the properties, and also along the street, where a series of trees would originally have been planted, although many of the mature specimens have now been removed and replaced with smaller varieties. The street trees, of which six remain (two are mature specimens), and those in front gardens help to soften the impact of the buildings in their setting.



6. 4.6 Public realm

Due to the compact nature of the conservation area, there is little in the way of public realm (Photograph 5). Street furniture consists of tall standard green street lights, not particularly in keeping with the character of the area, and a shabby looking utilities box (Photograph 6), along with parking control signs positioned along the pavement edge.



At either end of the street, two historic low-level iron street name signs are in place. These features are important to the area's identity ([Photograph 7](#)).

Section 5 Buildings and architecture

5.1 Introduction

Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area includes nos. 1–12 Moss Hall Crescent which were built in a single phase as Victorian Villas. The conservation area boundary is tightly drawn around this group of former houses, and includes a linear strip of green space that separates the crescent from Ballards Lane. Whilst the properties were all built around the same time, there have been some alterations and additions which detract from the original designs, with few houses retaining a completely original appearance. The majority of the properties have been converted into flats with only nos. 7 and 12 surviving as single dwelling houses and no. 3 partly used as offices. Nos. 10 and 11 are presently in use as a nursery school.

Whilst most of the properties retain many original features on their front elevations, some have been subject to minor alterations, which have subtly changed their character in a variety of ways. A number of properties have had single storey or double storey side extensions, some of which are linked together, closing the gaps that originally existed between each semi-detached property. There has also been some development within the long back gardens, which, in most cases still retain large amounts of garden, although in some cases the gardens have been subdivided and, in one case, virtually subsumed by development.

5.2 Architectural features and materials

The buildings in the conservation area are semi-detached villas, the only exceptions being the detached building types at nos. 1 and 12 Moss Hall Crescent, which bookend the road. Variety was introduced by detailing the elevations slightly differently, such as some properties having double height canted bay windows, to distinguish each house from its neighbour.

5.3 Architectural features

Roofs

The roofs are one of the most distinctive features of the former houses. They have a shallow-pitch, hipped at either end, with oversailing eaves ([Photograph 8](#)). Whilst some retain their original slate roof

8. tiles, other properties have been retiled with artificial slate tiles, with the exception being no.12, where the original roof has been replaced with concrete tiles. Such changes are harmful to the appearance of the buildings and appear incongruous within the conservation area. There are a variety of types and colour of ridge tiles. Tall chimneys protrude from the majority of the roofs, most having one or two central chimney stacks and some with an additional chimney to the side.



Windows

The predominant window type in the conservation area are traditional timber vertically sliding sash windows, often found within stucco-detailed surrounds. They are painted white or cream. On the



ground floors they are set in canted bays and have similar detailing to the entrance porticos, with decorative features such as keystones and brackets (Photograph 9). Unsuitable modern windows can be found where the traditional timber sashes have been replaced with Upvc or aluminium top hung windows and these replacement windows appear incongruous within the conservation area.



Front doors

Many of the doors in the conservation area are traditionally constructed, of painted softwood, with a mixture of panel styles, often including horizontal panels, with some having glazed lights in the upper half, and transom lights above. These doors are generally painted but some are simply varnished (Photograph 10).

Portico

The architectural detailing of the portico is mirrored in the window surrounds and on the original canted bays. The architraves and the entablature embellish the portico, which have pilaster Doric columns supporting the entablature above the door (Photograph 11).

On no. 12, the portico is grander, being embellished by a porch supported by two Doric columns.



Chimneys

Where original chimneys survive, they generally survive intact, with minor embellishments and changes to the pots. They are prominent features and have decorative brick banding on the upper part and usually have terracotta clay pots (Photograph 12 – see overleaf).

The chimneys are an integral design feature of the houses and part of the historic streetscape. They are

an important visual feature because of their prominence when seen against the shallow pitch hipped roofs and skyline, making a positive contribution to the conservation area.



Boundary walls

Boundary walls are predominately made of gault brick ([Photograph 13](#)), with entrances to the properties established by piers with stone caps. Some of the original caps have been replaced with modern concrete versions. Due to the addition of hardstandings within front gardens, several of the walls have been altered to allow access for vehicles. Some properties have retained the original wall and gates on the front boundaries to the dwellings along Moss Hall Crescent, although in places walls have had repairs undertaken using unsuitable materials, and poor quality re-pointing.



Front Gardens

Where original front gardens have been retained, they consist of lawns with a central footpath leading to the front door ([Photograph 14 – see previous page](#)). However, in the majority of cases, the garden has been compromised, either being partially removed, or removed completely to create hardstandings for vehicle parking.

5.4 Materials

The list below contains the principal examples of materials and details that contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area, but the omission of any others does not suggest that they are not of importance.

Welsh slate

Natural Welsh slate is characteristically used as the main roofing material of the buildings as a result of its appearance and hard-wearing qualities. Slate is incredibly durable and can last several hundred years, often with little or no maintenance. Its low water absorption makes it very resistant to frost damage and breakage due to freezing. Natural slate is also fire resistant and energy efficient. With the exception of no.12 Moss Hall Crescent, which has a concrete tiled roof, all the roofs on the buildings have a slated appearance. However, some roofs have been re-laid with artificial slate, which varies in quality and can be out of keeping with the character of the area.



Lead

Lead, a traditional material used on roofs for centuries, has been commonly used for thousands of years because it is widespread, easy to extract and easy to work with. It is highly malleable as well as easy to smelt. In Moss Hall Crescent, lead is used around the chimney stacks and as flashing on the roofs to provide a water-tight seal ([Photograph 15](#)).



Gault brick

Historically, handmade bricks and tiles were made locally. After brick-making methods improved in the 18th century, brick became cheaper and more fashionable resulting in a variety of colours being produced. The host brick used on the Victorian Villas is known as gault brick ([Photograph 16](#)). Gault brick is a creamy-whitish brick made from Gault and the adjacent Jurassic and Pleistocene clays in the south-east of England, coloured with chalk. It is the

predominate brick used on the buildings within the conservation area where it is not only used on the buildings but is the primary material found in boundary walls and gate piers.



Stucco

From the 18th century onwards renders were used for external decoration, often covering a material such as brick, as can be seen in the stucco found on the window surrounds and bays, in bands running around the properties and in the architectural detailing found below the eaves and door surrounds. As a building material, stucco is a durable, attractive, and weather-resistant wall covering. It was traditionally used as both an interior and exterior finish applied in one or two thin layers directly over a solid masonry brick or stone surface. The finish coat usually contained an integral colour and was typically textured for appearance. It is used to good effect to create decorative architectural features on the houses in Moss Hall Crescent ([Photograph 17](#)).

Terracotta

Terracotta is a ceramic material that has been used for building construction and decorative arts since ancient times in cultures around the world. The name literally means “baked earth”. It is made from natural clay, which gives it a characteristic reddish-brown colour. Terracotta may be glazed for extra durability or to provide colour. It is a very waterproof and robust material. Within the conservation area, its principle use is for chimney pots and ridge tiles.



5.5 Locally listed buildings

The importance of nos. 1–12 Moss Hall Crescent has been recognised by their inclusion on the council's Schedule of Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest on the 30th April 1986. Locally listed buildings make a valuable contribution to the heritage of the borough and are considered to be heritage assets ([Photograph 18](#)). The houses also make a positive contribution to the conservation area and are its most important element. In accordance with adopted Local Plan policy, there will be a strong presumption in favour of retaining all of the locally listed buildings. Development proposals, including minor alterations and changes to house features, which fail to preserve or enhance their special character or their setting, will not be permitted.

Section 6 Character areas

6.1 Moss Hall Crescent

Due to its relatively small scale and the purpose built design of Moss Hall Crescent, there is no reason to sub-divide the conservation area into different sub-areas.

The crescent is made up of twelve houses, five of which are semi-detached, with a single detached building at either end of the crescent. No. 1 Moss Hall Crescent is the northern-most house, with the other properties running southwards down the crescent. The buildings were designed with two storey wings to the rear, although further extensions have been added to some of the properties. Originally there were gaps between each of the pairs of villas, which was a key characteristic of the street scene, but in some cases the buildings have been extended to the side, effectively linking the villas with infill development.



19.

The front door to no.1 Moss Hall Crescent is located on Alexandra Grove. This side façade is three bays wide and as is the case for most of the properties in the conservation area, has a three panel timber door topped with a rectangular transom light and capped with an elaborate entablature supported by decorative pilasters. There are no bay windows on this elevation (Photograph 19), which is comprised of two sets of sash windows, a mixture of four and two pane sash windows, and a central sash window above the front door, with stucco banding separating the ground and first floor.

As with all the buildings, this property has a hipped roof with tall chimneys. There is also a two storey flat roofed infill extension to the rear. The elevation fronting Moss Hall Crescent has two, double-height, plain brick, canted bay windows.

No. 2 Moss Hall Crescent ([Photograph 20](#)) is the first property whose principal elevation is within the crescent. Unlike no.1, this is a semi-detached property with no. 3 ([Photograph 21](#)). It is three bays wide with a central partially glazed three panel door with transom light above, capped with elaborate entablature with decorative pilasters. Either side of the front door are two single height stuccoed canted bays with two-pane sash windows and three two-pane sash windows above these. The roof is hipped and there are two tall central chimneys shared between this property and no. 3. There is a large two storey hipped roof wing to the rear.



20.



21.

No. 3 is virtually identical in its external features. However, the canted bay windows are double height and there is a tall chimney to the side of the property. Originally this property would have been separate from its neighbour at no.4, but there is now a single storey, recessed link extension which joins the two properties together. There is also a two storey hipped wing to the rear.



22.

No. 4 Moss Hall Crescent ([Photograph 22](#)) is almost identical to no. 3 apart from the first floor canted bay windows, which rise either side of the front door, and tile hung gable end roofs over them, rather than the flat roof found at no. 3. This property still has half of its front garden, the other half given over to gravel for parking. As with no. 3, there is also a two storey hipped wing to the rear.

No. 5 is the semi-detached neighbour of no. 4, again featuring many similar features, such as canted, double height stuccoed bay windows, with two-pane sash windows rising either side

of a central panelled door with transom light above and the associated entablature and pilasters. Unlike no. 4, however, the roofs of the double height bays have a hipped slate roof with rounded ridge tiles. Like no. 4, with whom it shares two central chimneys, it also has a chimney to its side and is connected to no. 6 by a two storey recessed extension in addition to which there is a rear two storey hipped wing with two subsequent single storey accretions added.



23.



24.

No. 6 (Photograph 23), along with its neighbour at no. 7 (Photograph 24), reverts back to single storey canted bay windows either side of the traditional styled central door. With its two storey recessed link extension to no. 5, it too has a tall side chimney, hipped slate roof and two-pane sash windows. Unlike many of the other properties, where the gardens have been converted to use for hard standings, the front garden is laid as lawn, as it would have originally been, with a footpath leading up to the front door. In common with its neighbours, it too has a hipped slate roof, with overhanging eaves and both side and central chimney stacks. In common with all properties, there is a two storey rear wing with hipped roof.

The partner building of no. 6, no. 7 replicates many of the same features. It has single storey canted bay windows, central panelled door with transom light and entablature and pilasters. As with its neighbour, it still has a lawned front garden, with a modern iron railing running up the pathway to the front door. However, the traditional timber sash windows have been replaced with Upvc top hung windows. Whilst there is a two storey hipped roof rear extension with a single storey lean-to to the rear of the property, there is no link extension between no. 7 and no. 8, and instead there is an alleyway between the buildings leading to the rear of the properties.

No. 8 (Photograph 25 – overleaf) has single storey canted bay windows, with traditional timber sash windows. Although the door and entrance features are similar to most other properties, the front door has two glazed panels in its upper half. There is one single chimney to the side and a central chimney shared with no. 9. There is a small two storey hipped roof wing to the rear of the property.

No. 9 replicates the design of its neighbour, again with single storey canted bay windows either side of a central panelled door, two glazed panels in the upper half, with transom light and entablature and pilasters. There are three sash windows at first floor, but it is without a side chimney on the

hipped roof. There is a two storey set back side extension and a further large two storey extension to the rear with an additional single storey lean-to (Photograph 26).



25.



26.

Nos. 10 and 11 (Photograph 27) are currently part of an Active Learning School, a private nursery. The front garden space has been paved over with a hard surface and the door to no. 10 appears to have been fixed shut, leaving the door insitu and making no. 11 the main entrance to both buildings. These buildings retain the original entrance features and as with many others in the road, both buildings have single storey canted windows. However, both have lost their traditional timber sash windows having replaced them with Upvc top hung windows. No. 10 no longer has a side



27.

chimney, unlike no. 11 which has two small side chimneys with a single central chimney shared between both buildings. Both have rear two storey hipped extensions, but no.11 has a single storey setback side extension with a larger two storey hipped extension to the rear. There is a glass conservatory linking both rear extensions.

No. 12 mirrors the form of no. 1, with its main entrance accessed from Moss Hall Grove. Two single storey canted bay windows can be seen on Moss Hall Crescent, behind a green hedge boundary. Unusually, the boundary wall along this part of Moss Hall Crescent is much lower than elsewhere. The original slate roof has been replaced with modern concrete tiles, and the original chimneys have also been taken down and re-built, the replacements being rather unsympathetic and finished in a white render. The garden wall running along Moss Hall Grove reverts back to a more traditional brick. A number of traditionally designed lanterns have been added along this boundary wall. The main entrance is more decorative than most of the properties, with Doric columns rather than pilasters supporting the projecting porch. A single storey canted bay window sits immediately next to the entrance, but it is unfortunate that the original timber windows have been replaced with a variety of Upvc sash windows. A two storey extension with a single storey lean-to has been constructed at the rear, with the entire garden having been developed with a further large single storey extension, which is clearly visible along Moss Hall Grove, and provides a swimming pool for the property.

6.2 Summary of key characteristics

The following list identifies those elements which make a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of the Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area:

- the relationship of the Victorian villas with the green, open space fronting Ballards Lane, creating a spacious, leafy character
- the high quality of the architectural design
- the layout, spacing and symmetry of the buildings
- the use of traditional materials, including gault brick, stone, stucco, slate, cast iron and timber
- the presence of high quality details and features including timber, sash windows and surrounds, canted bays, doors and porticos, chimney stacks, stucco detailing and cast iron rainwater goods
- the contribution of greenery, including mature trees in both private gardens and within the public open space
- the low, brick boundary walls fronting the gardens, affording open views of the villas
- the absence of gates fronting the crescent, which creates a feeling of openness.

Section 7 Issues

7.1 Issues and threats

The list below contains a number of issues which have impacted on the character and appearance of the conservation area. By identifying the issues and potential threats, it is hoped that the raised awareness of local residents will help to address the problems and prevent any further erosion of the area's character.

The issues will be subject to review as part of the council's commitment to the proper management of the Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area. It should be noted, however, that some of the issues lie outside normal planning controls and cannot easily be remedied.

The principal issues and threats are:

- some inappropriate alterations and extensions, particularly within the rear gardens
- a few over-sized extensions to the sides of properties, which detract from the original rhythm and design of the semi-detached properties
- over-sized roof extensions including dormer windows
- the loss of timber sash windows and their replacement with inappropriate designs, particularly in Upvc and aluminium
- inappropriate replacement front doors
- prominently positioned satellite dishes on the front elevations or fixed to chimneys and roofs
- alarm boxes, CCTV cameras and security lights unsympathetically positioned on front elevations
- the loss of front garden walls
- the addition of railings and gates to front boundary walls
- large expanses of hard surfacing in front gardens
- replacement of original cast iron rainwater goods with Upvc versions
- siting of refuse and recycling bins in front gardens where they are prominent
- some houses would benefit from more regular re-decoration
- some hedges and plants in front gardens are overgrown and in need of pruning.

7.2 Inappropriate development

Most of the buildings in the conservation area have been converted to flats and, as a consequence, there are some unsympathetic rear and side extensions that compromise the original pattern of development, which featured gaps between each villa, creating a rhythmic pattern between each semi-detached pair. The paving over of original front lawns to provide hardstandings for vehicle parking detracts from the appearance of the conservation area. Some properties have installed unsuitable Upvc top-hung windows, which are out of keeping with the character of the original buildings.

Other harmful additions include the placing of satellite dishes, security lights and cctv cameras on the front elevations, often in highly visible locations. Original cast iron rain water pipes and soil waste pipes have been replaced with inferior plastic replacements. Some front boundary walls have been poorly rebuilt in non-matching materials, or have been partially removed to allow wider vehicular access to the hardstandings in front gardens. Some recent front boundary features have been added including railings and lighting, which are out of keeping with the original design.

Where alterations and extensions to buildings are proposed, the design and materials should be sympathetic to those of the host building, to ensure continuity and harmony with the appearance of the Victorian villas.

The council will seek to take planning enforcement action where it is deemed that unauthorised works have been undertaken and are causing demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.3 Refuse and recycling facilities

Due to the number of properties that have been converted to flats, there are a large number of refuse and recycling bins that are sited in the front gardens. Where they are not screened from public view, they can detract from the setting of the villas and be harmful to the character of the conservation area.

7.4 Public realm

The public realm is generally well maintained and is not considered to impact harmfully on the character or appearance of the conservation area. The road, pavements, street lighting and open space are maintained to an acceptable standard and the timber benches are in good condition. The grass on the open space is regularly mown throughout the growing period and the trees and shrubs are pruned as necessary.

7.5 Cars and parking

When Moss Hall Crescent was laid out, provision for the motor car had not been envisaged, although access for carriages was created into the forecourts of the villas. Today there are a variety of hard-surfaced areas within the former front gardens. Some retain grassed areas whilst other are largely filled with parked vehicles. Where vegetation has been kept, these frontages contribute to the setting of the villas, whereas large amounts of hard-surfacing has a detrimental impact.

On street parking is provided by dedicated bays on the eastern side of the road, although this is controlled and for use of residents only. The road itself is narrow and therefore parking on the opposite side of the road is restricted.

7.6 Conservation area boundary

Whilst there are a number of Victorian villas in existence that were built on the former Moss Hall Estate, in a similar style to those in Moss Hall Crescent, they are interspersed in the surrounding streets and do not form a cohesive group. These properties have not been subject to the Article 4

Direction controls in force within the conservation area, and consequently the replacement of windows, doors, roofing materials etc has taken place without regulation. These factors make them unsuitable for inclusion within the conservation area.

Therefore it is considered that the existing conservation area boundary is appropriate and no changes to the existing boundary are proposed.

Part 2 Management proposals

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of Management Proposals

The designation of a conservation area is not an end in itself. The purpose of the Management Proposals is to identify a series of possible initiatives, which can be undertaken to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area, based on the assessment of the area's special character, which has been provided in the Character Appraisal.

This document satisfies the statutory requirement of section 71(1) of the Planning and (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 namely:

"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any part of their area which are conservation areas."

Section 69(2) states:

"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions ... and determine whether any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas."

This document also follows Government guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012, Historic England guidance entitled 'Guidance on the management of conservation areas', best practice guidelines, policies within the Barnet's Adopted Local Plan 2012 together with published planning guidance such as Barnet's suite of design guidance notes.

Section 2 Recommendations

2.1 Statutory controls

Designation of a conservation area brings a number of specific statutory provisions aimed at assisting the 'preservation and enhancement' of the area. These controls include requiring Planning Permission for the demolition of any listed or unlisted building with a volume of greater than 115 cubic meters, fewer permitted development rights for alterations and extensions, restrictions on advertisements and requiring notice for proposed works to trees.

Recommendation 1:

The council will seek to ensure that new development within the conservation area preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the area in accordance with national legislation and policies, Barnet's Adopted Local Plan (2012) policies together with other guidance.

2.2 Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest

In addition to the borough's statutorily listed buildings there are many individual buildings and groups of buildings which are of considerable local interest. These are included on a local list and the council will seek to retain these buildings and ensure that new development does not harm their character, appearance or setting. All twelve properties within the Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area were added to the local list in April 1986. Within the NPPF these buildings are considered as 'Heritage Assets'.

The council will determine applications which affect locally listed buildings in accordance with policy DM06 of Barnet's adopted Local Plan (2012).

Recommendation 2:

The council will seek to ensure that all locally listed buildings are protected from inappropriate forms of development or unjustified demolition.

2.3 Sustainable development

One of the key objectives of the Character Appraisal and Management Proposals is the sustainability of the physical and social environment of the conservation area. It is recognised that there is often a tension between sustainability and conservation, both of which are important priorities for Barnet Council.

Barnet Council has produced a supplementary planning document on Sustainable Design and Construction (2007) which sets out important guidance for delivering successful, high quality suburbs now and for the future. Although this document is concerned mainly with new development, it also discusses energy efficiency in existing buildings. When extensions are proposed, particular reference should be made to the advice on ways to use less energy, including building design

and orientation; high standards of insulation; ventilation, heating systems and efficient lighting and technologies for creating renewable energy such as micro-generation equipment.

However, although such innovation is encouraged, the impact of such technologies will have to be weighed up against any impacts on the special architectural interest of buildings within the conservation area. Therefore, carefully considered design solutions will be required to ensure that the impact of such installations is minimised so that it does not have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the building or character of the wider area. Historic England have produced a web resource that provides useful information on energy saving measures and the impact on the historic environment: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/saving-energy/>.

Recommendation 3:

Barnet Council recognises the importance of new technologies to improve energy efficiency and will encourage the use of such measures providing there is no detrimental impact on individual buildings or the character and appearance of the conservation area.

2.4 Article 4(1) direction

Moss Hall Crescent is covered by an Article 4(1) direction which was implemented in July 1987. It is recommended that the council update the Article 4(1) Direction to reflect the current wording of the relevant legislation and in order to control development that may be detrimental to the area's character and appearance. Some harmful alterations have taken place, such as the replacement of windows, doors, roofing materials and the removal of front boundary walls and fences. These works have diminished the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area. There are currently two Article 4 (1) directions, one of which relates to the dwelling-houses and the other to the flat conversions and other non-residential uses:

The following classes relate purely to the dwelling houses:

- the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house
- the erection of a porch
- the construction of a hard-standing.

The following classes relate to all properties:

- the erection, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure
- the construction of a means of access
- the painting of the external walls.

The classes covered in the 1987 Article 4 direction are considered to be inadequate and not in line with the current GPDO 2015. The properties within the conservation area are therefore currently vulnerable to incremental change as a result of the existing permitted development rights. In order to reduce the possibility of unsympathetic development within the conservation area, it is proposed

to revise the Article 4 Direction to provide more comprehensive and up-to-date controls, as listed below.

It is important to note that the majority of the former houses have been converted into self-contained flats which do not benefit from the full range of permitted development rights, and consequently planning permission is already required for a variety of minor works. An Article 4 Direction is therefore only necessary for specific works.

Therefore, the two existing Article 4 directions will be updated, one of which will relate to dwellinghouse (i.e. nos. 7 and 12) and the other will apply to the remaining properties with a narrower range of classes.

Please see the GPDO 2015 for the precise wording of the individual classes.

Classes covered in areas defined by properties 7 and 12 Moss Hall Crescent under Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

Part 1 Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse

Class A The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse

Class C Any other alteration to the roof of a dwellinghouse

Class D The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse

Class E The provision within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse of:

- (a) any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool
- (b) domestic heating storage containers

Class F Development consisting of:

- (a) any hard surface within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse
- (b) the replacement of such a surface

Class G The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe on a dwellinghouse

Class H The installation, alteration or replacement of microwave antenna on or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.

Class B of the GPDO relates to the enlargement of a dwellinghouse consisting of an addition or alteration to its roof. Please note that development is not permitted by Class B if the dwellinghouse is located within a conservation area, regardless of whether or not an Article 4 Direction is in force. As such, it is not necessary to include Class B in the above list.

Classes covered in areas defined by all properties in Moss Hall Crescent under Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

Part 2 Minor operations

- Class A The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure
- Class B The formation, layout and construction of a means of access to a highway
- Class C The painting of the exterior of any building
- Class F The installation, alteration or replacement on a building of a closed circuit television camera.

Part 14 Renewable Energy

- Class A The installation, alteration or replacement of solar PV or solar thermal equipment on:
- a) a dwellinghouse or a block of flats
 - b) on a curtilage building
- Class B The installation, alteration or replacement of stand alone solar within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse or a block of flats
- Class C The installation, alteration or replacement of a ground source heat pump within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse or a block of flats
- Class D The installation, alteration or replacement of a water source heat pump within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse or a block of flats
- Class E The installation, alteration or replacement of a flue, forming part of a biomass heating system on a dwellinghouse or a block of flats
- Class F The installation, alteration or replacement of a flue, forming part of a heat and power system on a dwellinghouse or a block of flats
- Class G The installation, alteration or replacement of an air source heat pump on or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, including on a curtilage building or a block of flats
- Class H The installation, alteration or replacement of a wind turbine on or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, including on a curtilage building or a block of flats
- Class I The installation, alteration or replacement of a stand alone wind turbine within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse or a block of flats.

In addition the following classes are also to be considered in regard to the character and appearance of the conservation area:

Part 16 Communications

- Class A Development by or on behalf of an electronic communications code operator for the purpose of the operator's electronic communications network
- (a) the installation, alteration or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus

(b) the use of land in an emergency for a period not exceeding 6 months to station and operate moveable electronic communications apparatus required for the replacement of unserviceable electronic communications apparatus, including the provision of moveable structures on the land for the purposes of that use

(c) development ancillary to radio equipment housing

Class D The installation, alteration or replacement of system apparatus by or on behalf of a driver information system operator

Class E Development required for the purposes of a universal service provider (within the meaning of Part 3 of the Postal Services Act 2011(b)) in connection with the provision of a universal postal service (within the meaning of that Part) consisting of:

(a) the installation of posting boxes or self-service machines,

(b) any other development carried out in, on, over or under the operational land of the undertaking.

Recommendation 4:

For the council to update the existing Article 4(1) Direction to reflect the latest GPDO and bring the above classes of development within its control.

2.5 Trees and planting

All hedges, trees and planting in general make a very important contribution to the character of Moss Hall Crescent Conservation Area. All trees within the conservation area are protected to some extent by existing legislation. Anyone intending treating a tree with a diameter greater than 75mm at 1.5 metres above ground level must give the council six weeks written notice before starting the works. This provides the council with an opportunity to consider whether it is appropriate to include the tree in a Tree Preservation Order. One tree is currently included in a Tree Preservation Order and formal council consent is required for its treatment.

Recommendation 5:

The council will seek to ensure trees within the conservation area are well managed and continue to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

2.6 Areas of Special Advertisement Control

The display of insensitively designed or sited adverts can harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. The erection of a new estate agent boards or adverts is very likely to be considered an alteration harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Recommendation 6:

That the council designate the entire conservation area as an area of special control for the purpose of display of advertisements, specifically estate agent boards.

Section 3 Document review

This document should be reviewed every five years in light of emerging government policy and Barnet Council's Adopted Local Plan. A review should include the following:

- a survey of the conservation area and its boundaries
- an assessment of whether the management proposals detailed in this document have been acted upon
- the production of a short report detailing the findings of a survey and proposed actions and amendments
- public consultation on the review findings, any proposed changes and input into the final review.

Section 4 Appendix 1

4.1 Locally listed buildings

This schedule is a listing of buildings of local interest, which are considered to significantly contribute to Moss Hall Crescent's heritage and character. It is produced by the Local Planning Authority and supplements the statutory list. The two lists therefore provide a comprehensive inventory of the borough's historic built fabric. Although the buildings on the local list do not benefit from statutory protection, current adopted local policy seeks to retain and protect these buildings wherever possible.

1–12 Moss Hall Crescent

locally listed 30/04/86

Section 5 Bibliography

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Section 6 Appendix 2

6.1 Townscape appraisal map

