

Tower Bridge Conservation area appraisal

Regeneration Department

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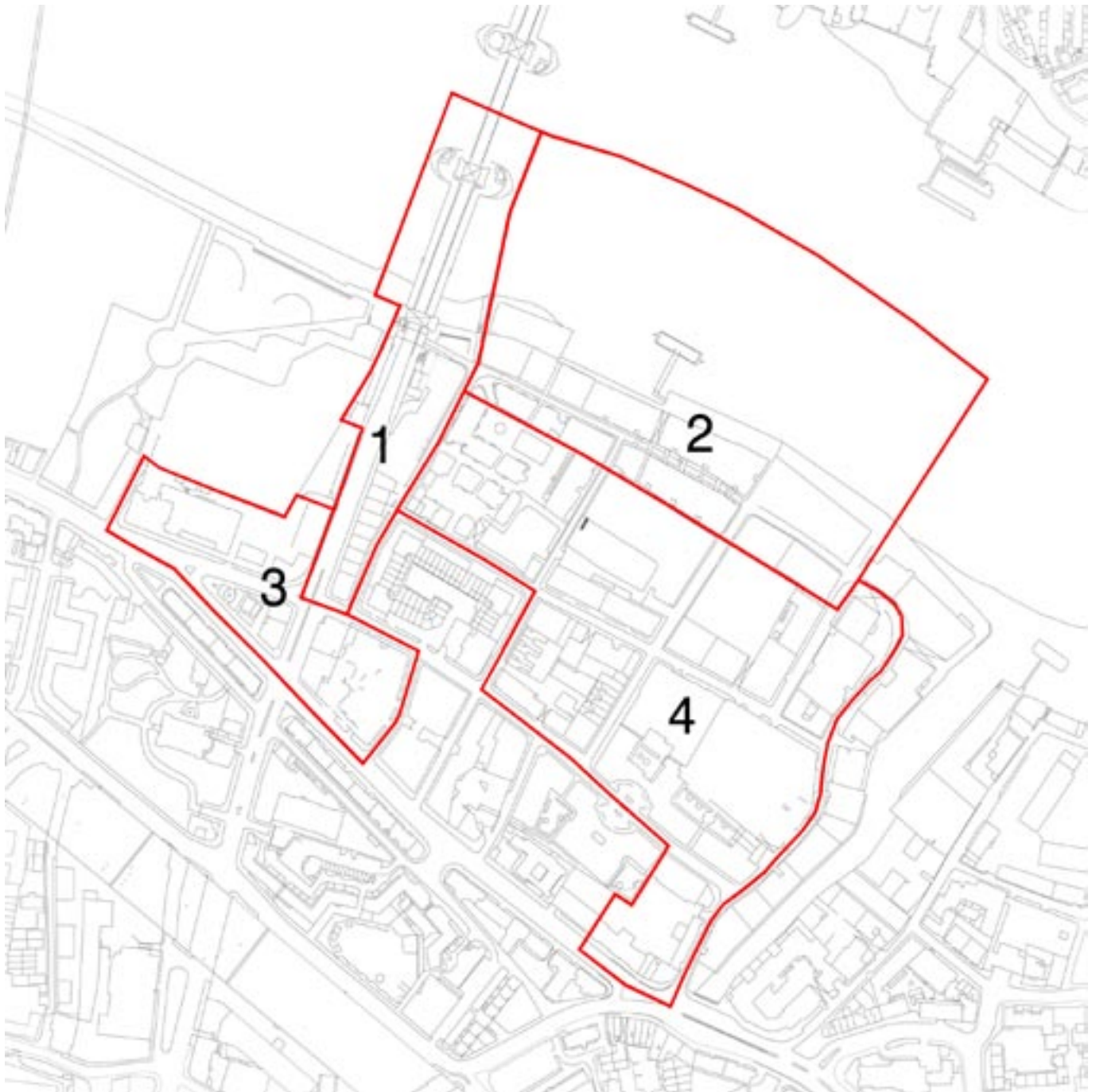


Figure 1 Tower Bridge Conservation Area and sub-areas.

- Sub Area 1: Tower Bridge and its approach
- Sub Area 2: Shad Thames from the Anchor Brewhouse to Spice Quay.
- Sub Area 3: The junction of Tooley Street, Tower Bridge Road and Queen Elizabeth Street.
- Sub Area 4: The substantially re-developed land-ward blocks between Horsleydown Lane and west side of Shad Thames.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of this statement is to provide an account of Tower Bridge Conservation Area and a clear indication of the Borough Council's approach to its preservation and enhancement. It is intended to assist and guide all those involved in development and change in the area, and will be used by the Council in assessing the design of development proposals.

1.1.2 The statutory definition of a Conservation Area is an "area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance." Conservation Areas are normally centred on listed buildings and pleasant groups of other buildings, open space, or an historic street pattern. A town space or features of archaeological interest may also contribute to the special interest of an area. It is, however, the character of areas, rather than individual buildings, that such a designation seeks to preserve or enhance. The most recent legislation dealing with Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 (Sections 69 to 78). Detailed guidance to the legislation is given in "Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment" (PPG15) published by the Departments of the Environment and National Heritage in September 1994.

1.1.3 Planning legislation requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. In doing this the emphasis will be on control rather than prevention, to allow the area to remain alive and prosperous but at the same time to ensure that any new development accords with its special architectural and visual qualities. This statement has been prepared following guidance given by English Heritage in their note "Conservation Area Appraisals". For the purpose of this statement, the Conservation Area is divided into four sub-areas shown on figure 1.

Arrangement of this document

1.1.4 Following the Introduction, Section 2 provides a brief history of the area and its development. Section 3 starts with a broad appraisal of its character and appearance, with reference to the range of materials, details and building types to be found in the area. Section 3 then goes on to describe each sub-area with specific reference to architectural and historic qualities, views and townscape, the character and relationship of public and green spaces, and any elements that detract from the Conservation Area. Section 4 provides an audit of the features of special interest of the area, including listed buildings, particular groups of unlisted buildings, and trees, planting and other streetscape elements. Section 5 provides guidelines for future development and change in the Conservation Area.

1.2 Tower Bridge Conservation Area

Location

1.2.1 The Tower Bridge Conservation Area lies immediately east of Tower Bridge, and the A100 Tower Bridge Road. It is bounded by the major city routes of Tooley Street and Tower Bridge Road on the south and west sides, and by the river and St. Saviours Dock on the north and east. Part of Tooley Street, to the west of the crossroads with Tower Bridge Road is also included.

1.2.2 Apart from this section, it is a compact and discretely contained part of the city, accessible only from minor streets north of Tooley Street and, for pedestrians only, from the river embankment via an arch under Tower Bridge.

Topography

1.2.3 The natural topography of the area is now obscured by centuries of development. The area was originally marshy and liable to flood but was reclaimed for cultivation in the Middle Ages by the monks of Bermondsey Abbey. Just to the east of

the area the tidal inlet that is now St. Saviour's Dock was formerly the mouth of the River Neckinger. Near Horselydown Old Stairs, the shore provided access to ferry crossings, and subsequently was developed into a fixed jetty for landing.

1.3 Planning History

1.3.1 Tower Bridge Conservation Area was originally designated in September 1978 under the Civic Amenities Act 1967. In October 1978 the conservation area was designated "outstanding" by the Historic Buildings Council for England. It was extended again, in December 1985, by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC).

Unitary Development Plan Policies

1.3.2 The Unitary Development Plan for the London Borough of Southwark was adopted in 1995. There are three policies in the Plan that relate to the conservation, protection and enhancement of areas of character, buildings, ancient monuments, historic areas, parks and gardens of environmental quality, architectural interest and historical importance.

POLICY E.4.1: Conservation Areas

1.3.3 "Where appropriate, the Council will designate new Conservation Areas and extend existing Conservation Areas. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The Council will prepare guidelines to identify their special qualities. Identification of the special architectural and historic qualities of an area will be based on detailed analysis of the area. This will include the architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of the buildings and the contribution which they make to the special interest of the area."

POLICY E.4.2: Proposals Affecting Conservation Areas

1.3.4 'Conservation Area Consent for demolition in Conservation Areas will not normally be granted except where certain conditions are met. These conditions are as follows:

- i) Consent will not normally be given for the redevelopment of, or partial demolition of buildings, or part of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;
- ii) There are acceptable and detailed plans for the site of the building to be demolished or partially demolished. Demolition is not to be undertaken before a contract for the carrying out of the works of redevelopment has been made, and planning permission has been granted for the development.

POLICY E.4.3: Conditions for Planning Permission in Conservation Areas

1.3.5 'Planning permission for proposals affecting Conservation Areas will not normally be granted except where certain conditions are met. These conditions are as follows:

- i) The design of any new development or alteration demonstrates that a high priority has been given to the objective of positively preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;
- ii) Proposals should pay special regard to historic building lines, scale, height, and massing, traditional patterns of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, plot widths and detailed design e.g. the scale and spacing of window opening, and the nature and quality of materials;
- iii) Schemes should be drawn up in detail (outline applications will normally not be accepted);
- iv) Drawings of the proposals should show the proposed development in its setting and indicate any trees to be retained, lost or replaced,

- v) A proposal for a site adjacent to or outside a Conservation Area will be unacceptable if it would have a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- vi) The proposed use will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.'

1.3.6 The Unitary Development Plan is currently under review. A First Draft of the new plan has been placed on deposit. It is expected that the new plan will be adopted late in 2004. The new draft Unitary Development Plan, also known as "The Southwark Plan", is supported by a number of supplementary planning guidance documents relating to different themes – including design and heritage conservation – and for different areas.

Policy 4.3.1: Supplementary Planning Guidance Clean and Green

1.3.7 In exercising its powers under the Planning Acts 9 and Part 1 of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953, the council must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of its conservation areas. In Southwark this requirement is satisfied in a number of ways including the formation of conservation policy (UDP), production of supplementary planning guidance and character assessments, and in assessment of applications for planning permission and Conservation Area Consent.

Policy 4.3.2: Supplementary Planning Guidance Clean and Green

1.3.8 The Council is required from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas, and to undertake local public consultation on such proposals

Policy 6.2: Information Requirements

1.3.9 Outline proposals are not acceptable for any applications affecting listed buildings or conservation areas. Design statements will be required with all applications affecting listed buildings or conservation areas. The statement should describe how the proposal will preserve or enhance the conservation area or listed building. More information on Design Statements is available in Council's design and sustainability SPG's. Consent will not be granted for any demolition or alterations with detail proposals for:

- i) The protection of any retained fabric;
- ii) An acceptable replacement scheme;
- iii) Work requiring listed building consent without a detailed statement setting out the justification, design approach and methods for the work

1.3.10 Information on the review of the Unitary Development Plan, including electronic versions of the plan and supplementary planning guidance, can be found on the Council's website at www.southwark.gov.uk/udp

Further Information

This document is not exhaustive, and further advice and information can be obtained from the Planning Department, London Borough of Southwark.

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2. Historical Background

Origins

2.1.1 The Tower Bridge Conservation Area is a part of Bermondsey, which was listed in the Domesday Book (1086), deriving its name from 'Beormund's Ey, or island'. The name described the original settlement, which was on high land amid marshes and streams that almost surrounded it. This settlement was situated to the south of the Tower Bridge Conservation Area.

Mediaeval period

2.1.2 In 1086 Bermondsey was part of a royal manor belonging to King William and consisted of a settlement and farmland. There was also a new church – St Saviours, around which Bermondsey Abbey was founded in 1082 by Aylwin Child. Bermondsey Abbey became one of the principal religious houses in the country during the middle ages and owned most of the land around it until King Henry VIII dissolved the abbey in 1538. During the Middle Ages, a part of the area was also owned by the Knights of St John of Jerusalem. This area was called St. John at Thames a name which eventually became corrupted to Shad Thames.

2.1.3 In 1597 Bermondsey was described in Gerarde's Herbal as a country village. At this time the area that is now the Tower Bridge Conservation Area was mainly meadowland called Horselydown, which had been used as pasture for grazing animals during the Middle Ages (also known as Horsedowne or Horseydown). St Olaves Grammar School was founded in 1561. The school was originally situated at the west end of Tooley Street and its present buildings (now Lambeth College) were built in the 1890s.

Industrialisation

2.1.4 16th century maps show that by that date the riverside had been built up as far as where Tower Bridge now stands. During the 17th century riverside wharves extended eastwards along this bank and around the mouth of the River Neckinger. Industries began to grow up in Bermondsey because of the proximity of available resources, and the demand for goods by the City of London across the river. Beer, for example, had been brewed in Bermondsey since the Middle Ages, if not before. Courage's brewery was founded in 1787 and their Anchor Brewery was situated near to where Tower Bridge would be built. By the end of the 17th century both frontages of Shad Thames were developed.

2.1.5 During the 18th century the wharves and warehouses downstream of London Bridge flourished, when the intense congestion of the City's Legal Quays forced a relaxation of their Elizabethan monopoly over imported goods. Despite the opening of the enclosed docks in the early 19th century, the further expansion of these wharves was assured by the rapidly increasing national prosperity and the growth of free trade. In this area, the dominant force for over 100 years was Butler's Wharf Ltd., whose massive riverside range of warehouses was rebuilt from the 1870s. In the 1880s and 1890s the landward blocks were also rebuilt, generally to a height of 6 storeys, creating the densest warehousing in London, extending inland as far as Gainsford Street. The warehouses were linked at high level by iron gangways over the narrow streets, giving the area the distinctive, canyon-like character that still, to a notable extend prevails.

Figure 2 Porter's 1655 map: whilst the frontages of Shad Thames were developed by this stage the area was still predominantly meadowland and market gardens.



Figure 3 Catwalks along Shad Thames between warehouses continue to be a distinguishing feature of the area.



Figure 4 Stanford Map of London and its Suburbs 1862: By the mid 19th century warehouse development had created the tight rectilinear street pattern seen today. In just a couple of decades Tower Bridge would be built and Freemans Lane would be upgraded as Tower Bridge Road – severing the area from wharf development that extended westward to London Bridge.

Transport developments

2.1.6 As well as the ancient crossing point at London Bridge, connections to the City relied on numerous ferry crossings. Access to the ferries was via river stairs. One remaining example is Horselydown Old Stairs below the southern abutment of Tower Bridge, and there were many others. Most of these public rights of way have now been closed for public safety.

2.1.7 Tower Bridge, at the location of the Horselydown ferry crossing, became the first bridge downstream of London Bridge when it opened in June 1894. Its mediaeval style was intended to reflect its importance as a new approach to the Tower of London on the north side of the river. Hydraulic power was used to raise the bridge: today electricity is used.



Figure 5 Unloading goods near Tower Bridge early 1900's

2.1.8 Together with the introduction in the 19th century of the railway into London Bridge Station the construction of Tower Bridge and its approach road created some significant realignment of streets in the Conservation Area. Although some links were retained below the viaducts of these two structures, they are perceived strongly as a barrier that cuts off the old dock area from its surroundings. The development of the Tooley Street/Jamaica Road route as a busy inner city motor route in the late 20th century added to the feeling that the Conservation Area had become a forgotten backwater.

20th century

2.1.9 By the 1920s, much of the housing abutting the Conservation Area was in poor condition and in many places was reduced to slums. There was a strong movement of social reform in Bermondsey, which led to the demolition and rebuilding of housing. Most of this occurred south of Tooley Street, and the Conservation Area remained primarily in industrial use.

2.1.10 In the 1940s the Second World War left the scars of significant bombing in and around the docks, with the need for major rebuilding after the war. Many gaps remained, however, until the resurgent fortunes of docklands in the 1980s.



Figure 6 Ordnance Survey Plan 1914: Housing areas adjoining the Conservation Area would be cleared over the course of the first part of the 20th century and bombing during the Second World War would leave significant gaps in the Conservation Area not to be filled until the 1980's.

Industrial decline and regeneration

2.1.11 By the 1970s the docks' original industrial purpose had more or less ceased, and many of the buildings began to fall into dereliction. Government regeneration programmes, through agencies such as the London Docklands Development Corporation, sought new uses and life for the area. Gradually the desirability of waterside locations as places to work and live was promoted: with its proximity to the City, spectacular riverside views, and characterful and spacious buildings, the riverside has become fashionable. Although many buildings have been lost to reconstruction through the 1980s and 90s, refurbishment and conversion of many of the warehouses for residential use has saved many, and the street character of the area has by and large been preserved. The surviving street names of the area give good indications as to the history of this part of Southwark.

3. The Character and Appearance of the Area



Figure 7 Different architectural aesthetics are seen within the area. The core of historic warehouses and new development follow a similar architectural vocabulary, while Tooley Street and Tower Bridge Road contain several municipal style buildings with a more metropolitan urban character. On the left, "Tamarind Court", Gainsford Street, on the right, Tower Bridge Magistrates Court, Tooley Street.

3.1 Broad Context

3.1.1 The Tower Bridge Conservation Area is characterised by an extraordinarily tight sense of enclosure, which dramatically cuts it off from its surroundings. However, its location right on the southern bank of the Thames in the centre of the city gives it a very particular and unique situation. Tower Bridge itself provides a remarkable approach to the Conservation Area, even though most of the links into it are glimpsed through the narrowest of streets.

3.1.2 Tower Bridge Road separates the Conservation Area from the Tooley Street Conservation Area, and marks the boundary of an intensification of the 19th century dockland that is typical of the Tower Bridge area. This character is more or less continued into the St. Saviour's Dock Conservation Area to the west. Tooley Street marks the southern boundary, and a change of character to inner city residential areas in late Victorian mansion blocks and post-war housing schemes.

Local Materials and Details

3.1.3 Although the dominant historic architectural character of the Conservation Area is derived from its warehouse heritage, comprehensive redevelopment of significant parts of the central area in recent decades has resulted in greater diversity in both the materials and architectural details found. The street pattern and scale exhibited nevertheless remains true to the 19th century arrangement.

3.1.4 A different aesthetic to that of the warehouse areas also prevails along the main city routes of Tooley Street and Tower Bridge Road, which have a more metropolitan character of broader tree-lined streets and more highly detailed architectural facades.

Warehouse Buildings

3.1.5 Historic warehouse buildings generate a consistent townscape character through their scale and street pattern, which is reinforced by a relatively constrained range of building materials and detail. Common elements found in the former warehouse areas contained by Tooley Street and Shad Thames are:

- Yellow London stock brick as the basic construction material with examples of blue or other contrasting engineering brick, often to bull-nose or other special patterns, used in window arches and reveals, plinths, and so on;
- In the more basic designs, structural openings are formed with deep segmental brick arches and plain stone or concrete sills, and windows are typically paned metal casements. More elaborate designs may incorporate brick quoins, cornices, and finer arch details;
- Roofs are pitched and slated, sometimes forming gable ends and sometimes hipped behind simple brick parapets to give a horizontal cornice line;
- The detail of gantries, winches, loading platforms and catwalks associated with the loading bays provide distinctive and characterful texture, particularly across the narrow street of Shad Thames.

3.1.6 A prime distinguishing element of the warehouse aesthetic is the very regular disposition of openings, reflecting a very regular internal structural layout. Windows are not large, typically squarish, 1.2 - 1.5 metres in size and representing about one sixth of the external wall area. Smaller sizes than this could create a forbidding appearance; significantly larger would tend to lose the warehouse character.

3.1.7 Door openings are frequently provided at every floor level in a single structural bay up the face of a building, for hoisting in goods at each level. These bays may be little wider than the windows, or they may take up the whole bay – the key is their strong verticality. In residential use they provide the opportunity for an occasional wider window opening or careful adaptation to a balcony, and they provide important modulation of the regular pattern of the elevation, which might otherwise risk monotony.



Figure 8 Shad Thames has a canyon-like feel with the overhead projections further emphasising the shadowing effect.



Figure 9 The regular disposition of openings is a distinguishing feature of the warehouse aesthetic. The "Coriander" Building,, No. 20 Gainsford Street.

3.1.8 Structural openings are almost invariably made in segmental brick arches, and the loading that the buildings are designed to take are reflected in the robustness of the detail, which is often one-and-a-half brick lengths deep (37 cm) or more. The windows will be set back a half-brick depth (11 cm), the deep reveals again expressing the strength of the brick construction. Sills are simple, concrete or stone.

3.1.9 Windows themselves are usually multi-paned: wooden sashes and glazing bars were often replaced later in galvanised steel. Doors are almost invariably of plain-boarded wooden patterns, which give the opportunity to introduce areas of paint colour.

3.1.10 Much of the character of the warehouses comes from the requirement to support very heavy loadings. Load bearing brickwork is therefore very thick, laid to variations on English bond, with alternating courses of stretchers (long side facing out) and headers (end facing out). This creates a sturdy appearance, which contrasts with the blandness of the stretcher bond of modern cladding and cavity brickwork.

3.1.11 At roof level, walls are both finished as simple gables and eaves and extended as horizontal parapets. In general buildings are so high, and angles of view so steep from the narrow streets, that the roofs themselves are often not apparent. This does mean, however, that the cornice level of elevations is particularly important, and while over-elaboration is not appropriate, some simple expression of the top course, such as a coping, a dentil course or corbelling is.

3.1.12 Nevertheless, roofs are important as part of the skyline when viewed from other buildings and in long views (e.g. from across the river). In these cases great care should be taken to retain the integrity of relatively horizontal rooflines. The shallow pitched hipped roofs, which are typical of the warehouse building type, are not prominent above parapets, but penthouse floors may intrude (see figure 23) and could significantly and detrimentally change the character of the skyline of the Conservation Area.

Architectural Detail

3.1.13 Most of the warehouse buildings retain a plain simplicity, but that in some of the later buildings a little more decoration is apparent. Even so, the devices used tend to express structural strength rather than mere decoration.

3.1.14 In other buildings structural strengthening is subtly apparent in the brick patterns of large relieving arches spanning whole elevations, and everywhere iron wall-anchors express the internal structure, tying massive walls to heavy load-bearing floors.

3.1.14 A quite different level of detail derives from the specialist external fixtures and fittings that come from the old working mechanisms of the warehouses. Where possible and practical these should be retained, although care should be taken not to over-elaborate the theme with borrowed pieces of dockside bric-a-brac. The temptation to put in salvaged or reproduction items should be avoided (as an incidental point, demand for architectural salvage has led to a rise in the theft and illicit trade of material from other buildings).

3.1.15 In some instances features can be translated from their original use to residential conversions – loading platforms and catwalks make distinctive balconies for example. But again, deliberately reproducing these chance opportunities may not work, and runs the risk of over-elaborating what should be very simple building forms.

3.1.16 Colour was probably not a strong component of the character of the warehouse areas originally, except that the soot-blackened brick and grey stone street surfaces would have provided a drab uniformity against which anything bright would have stood out. Examples still retained in Shad Thames might include the painted company signs, like St. George's Wharf, and there may be scope for reinstating others.

New Development

3.1.17 With significant redevelopment in the warehouse area a modern aesthetic has evolved based, often very loosely, on devices used in former wharf buildings to express the tight pattern and high density of development. The unusual urban character of the area has however encouraged some slightly unconventional building details and materials (glazed bricks, render, projecting balconies etc), although a break from stock treatments, they have generally been successful in respecting and complementing the townscape qualities of the area.



Figure 10 Many new developments are based on devices used in former wharf buildings. Queen Elizabeth Street looking west from Shad Thames.



Figure 11 Buildings on Tooley Street have an elaborate civic style characteristic of the late 19th century. The former London & Counties Bank, 185 Tooley Street.

Municipal and Commercial Buildings

3.1.19 The most significant buildings along the city streets of Tooley Street and Tower Bridge Road are very elaborately expressed in the classical civic style of the 1890s-1900s. Underlying the wealth of detail, however, is a very strong and ordered form, that maintains a strict balance between the horizontal and vertical elements of the façade.

3.1.20 Classical cornices and friezes express the horizontal levels of floors, lintels and parapets, while columns and pilasters imply the structural support. Openings are grouped orthogonally within this grid, and decoration is used to emphasise the important elements, such as entrances or significant rooms.

3.1.21 The proportions of the main elevational elements and groups of elements tend to be taller than they are wide. The proportion of window to wall area is controlled visually by the detail of surrounds and pediments, helping to exaggerate the apparent area of windows without losing the visual strength of masonry. Thus the impressive weight of these buildings is balanced by the lightness of detail.

Street surfaces and furniture

3.1.22 Early photographs show the streets paved in stone cobbles, often with substantial granite upstand kerbs and narrow flagstone footways. Fragments are still visible, but through the late 20th century many of these surfaces were overlaid with tarmac and broken up by underground utility providers. In many locations, however, the line of the narrow carriageway remains with its kerbs, strongly emphasising the linearity of the street spaces that is so typical a part of 19th century dockland character.

3.1.23 In the western section of Shad Thames, street enhancement schemes have restored some of the original character with new cobbles, kerbs and flagstones but, to provide for its predominantly pedestrian use, the surfaces are laid flush without upstand kerbs. It is important that the original kerb line is expressed in the surfacing treatment in this way, to preserve the linear quality of the street space.

3.1.24 The original townscape included many yards within the lower warehouse blocks behind Shad Thames. The expression of these internal pedestrian squares as amenity space has become a pleasing feature of many new developments. Again, stone cobble setts were the functional surfacing material of choice. There is no evidence that anything other than simple "stretcher-bonded" laying patterns were used, broken up by contrasting smooth stone running strips at cart accesses (the purpose was to reduce the noise of wheels clattering on the cobbles). Modern work has introduced granite setts laid to fan patterns, and clay and other regularly shaped unit materials laid in a variety of patterns. Such devices may be helpful to break up the large areas created in some developments, but the simple designs of the original townscape should not be overlooked.



Figure 12 Narrow carriageways emphasises the linearity of the street space On the left, Lafone Street looking north; on the right, Shad Thames looking south.



Figure 13 The dray-horse statue in The Circle provides interest within the space.

3.1.25 Fountains and other objects provide incident within spaces. The dray-horse statue in The Circle is the most distinctive of these. The plethora of restored dockside machinery and chandlery related to individual buildings contributes to the townscape in a similar way.

3.2 Sub Area 1 – Tower Bridge and Approach

Tower Bridge Road

3.2.1 Tower Bridge is one of the nation's most important landmarks. As a symbol for London, it is probably used more than any other feature of the capital. Clearly it has the highest possible conservation significance, not just for the building itself, but for views to it from many parts of the city, and for its immediate setting and surroundings. In this respect, the approach to the bridge from the Southwark side is disappointing because of the quality of development in the northern section of Tower Bridge Road.

3.2.2 Nevertheless, Tower Bridge forms the archetypal urban gateway, not just to those crossing the river, but also to ships arriving from overseas in the Pool of London. It must be borne in mind that its construction was contemporary with the most expansive period of the British Empire, and that such symbolism was no accident. Today its relationship to major buildings on the north side of the river remains of enormous importance, particularly to the most enduring of all, the Tower of London, to which the bridge's architectural styling makes deliberate reference.

3.2.3 The bridge was designed by Sir J. Wolfe-Barry and built between 1886 and 1894. An accumulator house and chimney to run the steam engines for the lifting hydraulics occupies the level change between the bridge abutments and Shad Thames, where it forms an important feature on Portland Wharf at the head of Horselydown Stairs on the riverfront. This space is a most important viewing position for the bridge particularly because of its 19th century setting between the Anchor Brewhouse and the accumulator house (and despite the modern character of Tower Bridge Court behind, which the accumulator house adjoins). The only building on the western side is the listed Bridge Master's House (1906). This again occupies the important level change between the bridge and the riverside but stands in isolation.

3.2.4 The character of Tower Bridge Road differs in many ways from other parts of the Conservation Area in that it has a "metropolitan" scale that reflects its importance as a route in the wider London context. As a relatively new street, built in the 1890s to extend the approach to Tower Bridge, it does not have the same grain of development frontages that are typical elsewhere in the Conservation Area. It was intentionally planned as a tree-lined boulevard: this character exists in parts of the street south of the Conservation Area



Figure 14 The southern approach to Tower Bridge is disappointing with views across a coach park, although the recently opened London Assembly Building is a new addition to the view.



Figure 15 two storey shops run along the eastern side of Tower Bridge Road on the approach to Tower Bridge itself.

but does not extend north of Tooley Street, where loss of development has had a negative effect.

3.2.5 From a grand enough cross-roads at Tooley Street, Tower Bridge Road lacks presence, with views into the Pottersfield coach park on much of the west side and no development to front it, and two storey shops on the east side. Part of the problem is that Tower Bridge Road has to rise significantly above its surroundings to reach the bridge, and the change of level is difficult to overcome. Buildings on the eastern side have greater presence in Horselydown Lane, onto which they have a secondary three-storey elevation that provided warehousing serving the commercial frontage on Tower Bridge Road. Pottersfield is the subject of an adopted planning brief and, although it is outside the Conservation Area, it is important that any change respects the prevailing scale of the area and does not compete with the bulk and scale of the bridge or harm its setting.

Views and Townscape

3.2.6 Tower Bridge has a visual relationship with a very wide area of central London. At the time of its construction it would have made a remarkable impression as one of the largest structures on the river. It is now outstripped by very many modern buildings in terms of sheer size, but its unique position out in the river maintains a magnificent visual impact. Direct views to it are relatively limited within the Tower Bridge Conservation Area. The key ones are:

- At close range from Portland Wharf;
- Glimpsed views from within Tower Bridge Piazza;
- A broad middle-distance lateral view from Spice Quay;
- The axial approach along Tower Bridge Road;
- Numerous views from buildings along the river frontage, and upper floors within the core area.

3.2.7 Such views must be considered in any proposal for development or alteration of buildings in the Conservation Area. From outside the Conservation Area, there are innumerable views and vistas of the bridge, which must be assessed within each local area.



Figure 16 Views of Tower Bridge from the riverside walk are impressive.



Figure 17 Glimpsed views out of the Tower Bridge Piazza to Tower Bridge are important.



Figure 18 Views westwards out of the Conservation Area now include the new London Assembly Building. The riverside walk continues under Tower Bridge to connect with Shad Thames.

Key spaces

3.2.8 The riverside offers potential for new public amenity that would not have been a feature of the original working environment. Portland Wharf and Horselydown Old Stairs are a particularly important space in the setting of Tower Bridge. The space is dealt with simply, with the view of the bridge as its focus and primary function. Its plainest feature is the concrete flood defence wall, which is utilitarian in its appearance and high enough to inhibit views to the water. West of Tower Bridge the river wall has been developed into an attractive piece of design in its own right, as part of the riverside walk. The opportunity might also exist at Portland Wharf to raise surface levels to afford better views onto the river.



Figure 19 The street pattern of Shad Thames has largely been retained: looking east from the north end of Horselydown Lane.

Negative features

Traffic dominates Tower Bridge Road, to its inevitable detriment. The approach is not, however, the most spectacular view of the bridge, offering a rather foreshortened prospect of the Tower's lower southern arch. The experience of approaching the bridge is more significant than any static view from this angle, and the quality of the townscape is an issue that should be addressed. Any redevelopment that affects the approach to the bridge should be of the highest architectural quality and affect the scale and setting of the bridge.

3.3 Sub Area 2 – Butler’s Wharf

Shad Thames

3.3.1 The Shad Thames riverside area immediately east of Tower Bridge and Portland Wharf has assumed the general title of Butler’s Wharf from the main original warehouse buildings in it, and it was one of the earliest Docklands regeneration areas in Southwark. In historic terms, Shad Thames is the most important townscape element representing the most complete relationship of buildings and street.

3.3.2 Shad Thames is in parts one of the best remaining examples of a 19th century riverside warehouse environment in London. More listed buildings remain in its eastern section alongside St Saviours Dock, and arguably the unimproved streets give a more faithful impression of the original working environment; but in the western section from Tower Bridge to Curlew Street enhancements have brought out the best features of restored buildings and street surfaces.

3.3.3 Approaching Shad Thames below Tower Bridge, the former Anchor Brewhouse is a very prominent building on the river, overlooking the historic location of Horsleydown Old Stairs. The bulky 1970/80s concrete framed building of Tower Bridge Court on the opposite corner of Horselydown Lane frames the entrance into Shad Thames. It matches the volume and five-storey height of the Anchor Brewhouse, emphasising the narrowness of Shad Thames, which at this point is barely seven metres wide. The Malt Mill section of the Brewhouse then steps up to eight storeys from an arcaded brick ground level, through double height arched windows, to be surmounted by a high octagonal cupola, visible along the river.

3.3.4 At this gateway into the heart of the area, the two rounded ends of Tower Bridge Piazza are a striking modern addition to the Conservation Area, which retain strong enclosure of the street space and provide a tantalising glimpse into the piazza itself.

3.3.5 East of the Brewhouse lies the main Butler’s Wharf (west) building on the riverside, and opposite the Cardamom Building (31 Shad Thames). These and 35-37 Shad Thames, on the corner of Lafone Street, are listed buildings, characterised by catwalk connections between them at high level. These now provide balconies for the residential flats that have occupied the building: other flats have new balconies projecting from loading bays, which create a regular rhythm, breaking up the flat plane of the elevation.



Figure 20 The former Anchor Brewhouse is a very prominent building on the river



Figure 21 The gateway into Conran Roche’s Tower Bridge Piazza and the heart of the Conservation Area is an important feature of the area.



Figure 22 Spice Quay Heights: The new building uses many of the design devices employed in the neighbouring Butlers Wharf Building and in doing so has become an integral part of the sub areas townscape.

3.3.6 Shad Thames is for most of its length no more than 7 metres in width, and with buildings of 6 or more storeys built right to the edge on both sides the effect is canyon-like. Overhead projections further emphasise the overshadowing effect.



Figure 23 The view across the River Thames to the Butlers Wharf area is extremely important.

The Riverside

3.3.7 The riverside between Tower Bridge and St Saviours Dock has become a thriving new restaurant quarter. Although access to it is from narrow streets and through alleys under the buildings, these connections emerge onto a broad and well-detailed concourse with a superb view of Tower Bridge and the City skyline. Buildings of six or more storeys create significant sun shadows, but the open aspect and shelter given by the buildings still makes it a pleasant outdoor space. Restaurant seating areas on the concourse and dock-related sculpture are important to the lively character of the riverside here. At the eastern end of the concourse, the Building Centre has temporary outdoor displays.

Views and Townscape

3.3.8 Because the sub area is based on a tight street pattern views tend to be contained vistas rather than broad prospects. Nevertheless, there are some key visual links down streets that intersect Shad Thames and through yards to buildings and landmarks outside of the area including Tower Bridge. From the waterfront, the manner in which the warehouse buildings line the river, in terms of their scale and massing, are important characteristics which make a strong contribution to the impressive views across and down the River Thames.

3.3.9 Glimpsed vistas along streets and into enclosed spaces are part of the areas special character. The most notable are into Tower Bridge Piazza from Shad Thames, framed by the rounded ends of the development and down Shad Thames itself.

Key spaces

3.3.10 At the eastern end of the riverside section, where the Tower Bridge and St. Saviours Dock Conservation Areas meet at the Design Museum, the river walk is very broad and, in association with the new building developments, is of the highest quality.

3.3.11 Shad Thames is an important street space in its own right defined by the warehouse buildings that front directly onto it. The street role of a public space has been heightened further with the introduction of a new streetscape along its extent.

3.3.12 An important feature of the street character is the avoidance of clutter: i.e. unnecessary bollards, poles and posts. The functional requirements of the original working street environment precluded such intrusions, and features such as lamps were, and should be, wall-mounted. In such narrow spaces this remains a functional imperative.



Figure 24 Shad Thames is a key street space with recent streetscape improvements helping to reinforce its importance within the local public realm.



Figure 25 The river walk is particularly broad in front of the Design Museum and functions as an important public space.



Figure 26 South London College typifies the classical civic style found in the sub area.

3.4 Sub Area 3 – Tooley Street

3.4.1 Tooley Street defines the southern edge of the block of streets that substantially form the Tower Bridge Conservation Area. From South London College (formerly Lambeth College/St. Olave's and St. Saviour's Grammar School) east to St Saviours Dock it is a broad city street, of a fine metropolitan character, with four to six storey buildings and mature London Planes each side. The small stretch of Tooley Street taken in by the Conservation Area (adjoining areas are covered by the Tooley Street Conservation Area) includes the major public buildings around the crossroads with Tower Bridge Road from South London College to the Magistrates Court. It is included within the Tower Bridge Conservation Area designation because of the importance of the location in the approach to the bridge: the area also has a relationship to the Tooley Street Conservation Area and other large-scale buildings on both sides of the street, notably Boss House and Devon Mansions.



Figure 27 The Pommeler's Rest is an important marker building defining the gateway to the approach to Tower Bridge.

Views and Townscape

3.4.2 As a major city street, Tooley Street is marked by notable buildings at frequent intervals along its length. Within the Conservation Area examples are the South London College building and The Pommeler's Rest pub (marked by its elaborate corner turret), at the junction of Tooley Street and Tower Bridge Road. Views to these buildings from both directions along Tooley Street are significant in the street scene.

4.3.3 Tooley Street and Queen Elizabeth Street make a key city space in the triangle formed with Tower Bridge Road. It is a significant location at an important node on the street network defined by strong buildings at Lambeth College and Devon Mansions. Its importance is further emphasised by street trees on the approaches to the space and public statues in the centre (including the listed bronze figure of Col. Samuel Bourne, first Mayor of Bermondsey).



Figure 28 A key city space sits in the triangle formed with Tooley Street, Queen Elizabeth Street and Tower Bridge Road.

3.5 Sub Area 4 – Gainsford and Queen Elizabeth Street

3.5.1 The streets behind Shad Thames are characterised by new development however some older buildings are retained, such as the corner pubs at 10 Gainsford Street (the Dean Swift) and 18 Horselydown Lane (the Anchor Tap). Their prominent positions and social function make these buildings local points of focus in the Conservation Area.

3.5.2 Other remnants of older development include the three-storey group on the corner of Gainsford Street (Nos.1-5) and Horselydown Lane (Nos.14-16), which once formed part of a traditional city block comprising buildings set out around the perimeter hard on the street edge, with more 'defensible' amenity space within. This example illustrates the model well, in this case enclosing Brewery Square. A similar arrangement exists at Jubilee Yard between Lafone Street and Curlew Street on Queen Elizabeth Street. Again, the existing buildings (Nos. 21-29 Queen Elizabeth Street) are only three storeys, and they maintain most of their warehouse features, without the addition of projecting balconies etc.

3.5.3 The main additions in both cases are steel fire escapes, which can be handled to fit with the industrial aesthetic but can also over-dominate. These are key groups of buildings retaining the lower scale of 19th century warehousing behind the main river frontage.

3.5.4 Queen Elizabeth Street has become spectacularly redeveloped with new apartment buildings, the focus of which is CZGW's "The Circle". Its blue tiled façade and dray-horse statue make a new and distinctive local landmark, and it contains many quirky details (such as its bulky timber balconies and "wing-collar" cornice line). East of it, Queen Elizabeth Street is composed of modest 19th century three storey buildings: the new development is seven storeys high, and highly mannered.



Figure 29 The Dean Swift, Gainsford Street, is a key older building and important for its corner location



Figure 30 21-29 Queen Elizabeth Street: buildings at Jubilee Yard maintain most of their warehouse features.



Figure 31 Curlew Street: much new development has followed the precedent of the tallest buildings in the area rather than the typical three storey height of the historic buildings.



Figure 32 (above) Recent development employs many of the design devices of the old wharf buildings including very regular openings. The rear elevation of the “Vani Ila Sesame” Building, Curlew Street.



Figure 33 (middle and bottom) Tower Bridge Piazza is a successful civic spaces enlivened by a fountain and container planting – redevelopment enclosing the space follows the precedent of tall buildings.

Views and Townscape

3.5.5 As in Shad Thames, the tight street pattern of the area limits extensive views, which tend to be contained vistas rather than broad prospects. Nevertheless, there are some key visual links down streets that link Shad Thames and Queen Elizabeth Street and into enclosed spaces formed by perimeter blocks such as Jubilee Yard and Millenium Square. The dray-horse statue in Queen Elizabeth Street is an important marker element in the sub area with the view to it and The Circle along Queen Elizabeth Street from Shad Thames being particularly important. Views to the Dean Swift pub, on the corner of Gainsford and Lafone Streets are important as are those along Horselydown Lane to the turret of the Anchor Brewery in Shad Thames.

3.5.6 The Circle is a new urban space created on Queen Elizabeth Street. It is well defined by strong building lines and the powerful focus of the dray-horse statue at its centre. It lacks the benefit of a nodal location however, and its reality as a widened section of the street rather than a true city space is unnecessarily emphasised by the traffic warning bollards placed in front of the statue. Several successful public spaces have been created behind new building frontages: Tower Bridge Piazza and Jubilee Yard being notable examples.

3.5.7 Trees and planting are not strong features in the core of the Conservation Area. There are some large containerised trees in Tower Bridge Piazza and fountains and sculptures are a notable feature that create distinctive visual interest within the space.

4. Audit

4.1 Listed Buildings

4.1.1 The list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest for Southwark was updated in September 1998. Detailed list descriptions are available from the Council. They are grouped in five main areas:

4.1.2 The pre-eminent listed building in the Conservation Area is Tower Bridge itself, which is Grade I. The others occur in two main groups:

- Along the length of Shad Thames
- In Tooley Street around the Tower Bridge Road junction.

4.1.3 In addition, Horselydown Old Stairs and Hard, between Tower Bridge and the Anchor Brewery, is listed.

Key Unlisted Buildings and Building Groups

4.1.4 The main defining elements of the Conservation Area are groups of buildings that combine into frontages that define streets, spaces and views. Often this group value of buildings is as important as the individual characteristics of listed buildings, and the scale, containment and background character that they provide is essential to the character of the Conservation Area.



Listed Buildings



Buildings that make a positive contribution

Figure 34 Listed buildings and buildings that make a positive contribution to the area.

4.2 Archaeology.

4.2.1 The Conservation Area lies within the Archaeological Priority Zone of Borough/Bermondsey/Riverside as defined in the UDP adopted in July 1995.

4.2.2 Archaeological investigations in the area have produced invaluable information about the natural topography of this area of north Southwark and about the early prehistoric communities which lived here. The Conservation Area is located on Horselydown, one of the ancient sand and gravel eyots, surrounded by water courses, marsh and mudflats, Archaeological investigations in the Conservation Area have revealed evidence of prehistoric and some limited Roman activity, curtailed by episodic flooding until the post-medieval period when the low-lying land was reclaimed and utilised by shipping and food storage industries.

4.2.3 The Council's existing and draft archaeological policies focus on the preservation of scheduled ancient monuments and important archaeological remains in situ. Where this cannot be achieved, archaeological investigation may be acceptable in some cases. Full consideration of archaeological matters is imperative where proposals for development and environmental improvements are initiated. The Council's Archaeology Officer should be consulted at the earliest stages of project development.

4.3 Environmental improvements

4.3.1 The Conservation Area is seeing continued improvement of both buildings and street environment. Possible improvement schemes in the Conservation Area include work to be undertaken by private owners, by the local authority, and possibly in partnership. Property redevelopments should include the improvement to the adjacent public realm wherever possible.

4.3.2 Fuller development briefs may be appropriate in some instances: the following notes summarise their potential.

Shad Thames

4.3.3 Shad Thames has been very effectively improved at its west end, with a shared pedestrian/vehicular surface scheme that retains the visual alignment of kerbs and pavements. The scheme should be extended to the eastern end of the Street.

Tower Bridge Road east side

4.3.4 The quality of the townscape approaching the bridge is a key issue. In particular, the pedestrian environment is unpleasant because of narrow footways and the threat of heavy traffic. An environmental enhancement scheme should be considered for the whole southern approach to Tower Bridge in conjunction with the established Pottersfield planning brief.

Portland Wharf

4.3.5 This successful Portland Wharf could be further enhanced by dealing with the concrete flood defence wall, which is utilitarian in its appearance and high enough to inhibit views to the water. West of Tower Bridge the river wall has been developed into an attractive piece of design in its own right, as part of the riverside walk. The opportunity might also exist at Portland Wharf to raise surface levels to afford better views onto the river.

4.4 Improvements to buildings

4.4.1 Shop-front improvements on Tower Bridge Road (Nos.206-224) could be undertaken so that they better reflect the status of the road itself.

4.5 Potential development sites

4.5.1 The scope for redevelopment in the Conservation Area is now limited, although more significant opportunities exist in adjacent areas.

Tower Bridge Coach and Car Park

4.5.2 The Coach Park is detrimental because of the visual impact of the parking area and the vehicles themselves and because of the gap in the containment of the western side of Tower Bridge Road caused by the elevated open aspect onto the coach park.

4.5.3 At the same time the relationship of open space to Tower Bridge is important in allowing views to it: there is a link, for example, to the gardens of Potters Fields and the London Bridge City Park. Future development on the Pottersfield site should seek to reinstate the tight urban grain of the warehouse buildings on the river frontage, in terms of their scale and massing, which is still characteristic east of Tower Bridge. This will enhance the setting of Tower Bridge and the adjoining Tower Bridge conservation area. In the context of new development north of Tooley Street a planning brief has been adopted by the Council for the future of the open space and any development flanking Tower Bridge Road. This is a material consideration. A copy of the brief is available from the Planning Department.

Corner site, Shad Thames/Tooley Street

4.5.4 A small infill site in the Conservation Area in a very visible corner location, requiring sensitive handling, relating to the four storey neighbouring development in Shad Thames and Tooley Street. A scheme could also replace the two-storey shop/café units at Nos. 285-287 Tooley Street.³

5. Tower Bridge: Guidelines

5.1 Introduction

Purpose of this guidance section

5.1.1 This section of the report draws out from the appraisal those themes that are essential to the Conservation Area's historical character, to which new development and improvement should pay heed. It is not intended to provide a prescriptive methodology for new design in the area or to exclude innovation.

5.1.2 It should also be noted that architectural style, in terms of the design of elevations, selection of materials, detailing and so on, is only part of the concern. Equally important are townscape issues of mass, overall form, building placement relative to the public realm, creation and preservation of views and vistas, quality of boundary treatments, and visual impacts of utility areas such as parking, servicing and site access.

5.1.3 Relatively limited redevelopment opportunities remain in the Conservation Area; however where opportunities do arise there should be no objection in principle to good contemporary architecture. The following guidance seeks to promote modern design of high quality, and to preserve and reflect the historical character of the area.

Consulting the Council.

5.1.4 The Council's conservation officer should be consulted prior to undertaking any alterations to the exterior of buildings within the Conservation Area and it is likely that planning permission and / or Conservation Area consent to demolish will be required for most significant works. Where a building is listed, there are stricter controls on what the owner can and cannot do. Most works to a listed building, whether internal or external, will require listed building consent where they are considered to affect the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Replacement of listed structures will usually prove unacceptable, and replacement of unlisted structures will normally only be entertained where existing buildings do not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the proposal can be shown to positively

preserve or enhance that character and appearance. If unauthorised work is carried out the Council can enforce against it.

5.1.5 The following guidance provides some indication of the most appropriate approach to common problems and development pressures within the area. It is always wise to seek advice from the Council's planning and conservation officers before considering any building work.

5.2 Development form and urban morphology

5.2.1 There are very limited remaining opportunities within the Conservation Area for new development. Nevertheless, any changes to buildings require proper understanding of the townscape characteristics of dockland development. Two main morphologies have been identified:

- The tight 19th century warehouses that extend over most of the Conservation Area;
- A metropolitan townscape of city scale, related to Tooley Street, and Tower Bridge Road.

5.2.2 New development should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area.

Street and plot patterns

5.2.3 It is important that the overall form of development remains in keeping with the morphological characteristics of the area. The urban form of the Conservation Area is key to its character and any change must consider the basic principles that have determined it. As the appraisal discusses, the pattern originates from the time of industrial growth in along London's waterfront and is typified by a tight rectilinear street pattern, with the blocks they enclose fully developed with virtually no external space except the streets themselves.

5.2.4 Development therefore can respond by:

- Maintaining the established or historic building line on the street – in most of the Conservation Area this means building on the boundary between the plot and the street;
- Keeping utility areas, if necessary, behind the street frontages, accessed from the rear or through narrow passages under and between buildings – this includes car parking, garaging, service areas and private amenity space;

Building form

5.2.5 The common building forms in the Conservation Area also determine the way development and changes should take place. Through much of the area the dominant building type is 19th century warehousing of large scale, which adapts fairly readily to residential and other uses. However it does have particular characteristics which should be observed in conversion and new design:

- Tall elevations, minimum three storeys and, on the riverside and dock, from five to eight – in each situation buildings should remain within the range of heights of the block of buildings in which it is sited;
- Plain flat façades with little modulation on plan, except in some cases for superficial details such as brick pilasters or panels.
- Simple “blocky” building masses, with the possibility of a vertical element, such as a tower or chimney, to “mark” the building in townscape views.
- Hoists and other operational features that should be retained but not artificially introduced. Inappropriate adaptation of such features to “foreign” elements like balconies should be avoided.

5.2.6 There is no reason why new development along the major city routes of Tooley Street and Tower Bridge Road should not follow the basic discipline of the existing civic architectural style, observing their scale by reference to ordering elements such as string-courses and structural spacing. Overall heights of buildings and their position on the street need also to conform to the established street “envelope”, but the manner of expression can be entirely modern.

New design in the Conservation Area

5.2.7 Redevelopment of the central part of the Conservation Area has included the replacement of many of the original buildings with new buildings of modern design. This is true particularly of development around Conran Roche’s Tower Bridge Piazza and The Circle in Queen Elizabeth Street which, although an exciting piece of modern urban design, does not relate closely to the historic architectural character of its surroundings. It does, however, preserve something of the densely developed street pattern of the original townscape, and certainly is not detrimental to the Conservation Area.

5.2.8 The highest value areas have always been on the riverside, and this has been reflected in taller buildings – typically six or seven storeys, while the blocks behind tended to be lower. Modern pressures have led to redevelopment which has followed the precedent of the tallest buildings in the area, even in streets like Gainsford and Curlew Street where remaining older buildings are only three storeys or so. Consideration must be given the height of earlier buildings in any future building design.

5.2.8 The unusual urban character of the area has also encouraged some unconventional building details. By and large they have been executed with success, but such elements are exceptional and cannot be seen as a precedents for design elsewhere in the area.

5.2.10 There are some good examples of the sensitive restoration and adaptation of former commercial buildings for retail and residential use in the Conservation Area. Examples in Jubilee Yard retain the overall form and detail of the original warehouse frontages. By comparison, much new development has adopted a “warehouse style” but sometimes to the basic proportions of modern speculative housing rather than to the special characteristics dictated by original warehouse uses.

5.2.11 The success of modern design in the Conservation Area comes not from aping the style of 19th century warehouses, but in building on the unique townscape opportunities of density and height that the historic development pattern affords. The most effective modern designs are those which employ a crisp simplicity of form and materials, echoing the functionality of the earlier environment in a modern idiom. By consciously adopting a clear design ethos, such examples sit more happily in the Conservation Area than more complex and self-consciously wharf-style designs.

5.3 Public Realm

5.3.1 In this context the public realm includes everything visible from publicly accessible areas, including both street spaces and any areas up to the front elevations of buildings. The essential components of the public realm that development and improvement should address are:

- Boundaries and frontages that define its edges;
- The surfaces and design of the space itself
- Trees, street furniture and other artefacts in the space.

Boundaries

5.3.2 In those parts of the Conservation Area where the morphology of the warehouse areas is very tight, the quality of building façades is of paramount importance. Design should avoid creating any intermediate areas between buildings and the street itself.

5.3.3 Interesting places are generally characterised by “active edges”, i.e. where there is stimulus and interaction between the public realm and buildings. This can be by direct access or through visual connection (windows, and shopfronts for example). Even in quiet areas, windows and doors at street level provide a level of activity, and promote better surveillance of the street.

Ground surfaces

5.3.4 Some street improvement schemes have been implemented in the Conservation Area, notably at the western end of Shad Thames. These schemes should be extended to cover the whole area, and new development schemes should be expected to make a contribution to their own immediate public street space. The range of materials in use is limited, and should remain so for new work, based on granite kerbs and sett paving and natural flagstones. Brick and clay pavements are not part of the historic street scene and should be used with discretion. Trees and street furniture

5.3.5 Trees are of importance in Tooley Street in the Conservation Area to define lines of sight and movement. There may be some scope for new street trees in relation to new development and public realm improvement. Semi-mature specimens planted with tree guards are to be preferred to saplings, to have greater resistance to damage and a stronger visual impact.

5.3.6 A modern street furniture range has been adopted for the Conservation Area, and its use should be extended throughout the area. Simple street lamp designs will usually be most effective, practical yet not utilitarian in style, appropriate to the Conservation Area's industrial heritage, and avoiding "Victoriana" clichés.

5.4 Improvements and repairs

Materials

5.4.1 Choice and use of materials can have a significant effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is therefore important that materials are appropriate for the building and for the Conservation Area. Care should be taken to ensure that original materials are retained wherever possible, and if replacements are necessary because of decay or damage, materials are chosen to match the originals as closely as possible in both appearance and performance.

5.4.2 The use of natural, traditional materials will be encouraged and expected, particularly on listed buildings. Artificial modern materials such as concrete tiles, artificial slates, UPVC windows etc., generally look out of place, and may have differing behavioural characteristics to natural materials. Where such inappropriate materials have been used in the past, their replacement with more sympathetic traditional materials and detailing, where possible, will be encouraged.

Maintenance

5.4.3 Repair works can prove costly and may require authorisation, which can cause delays. It is therefore far better to ensure that regular maintenance is undertaken, thus preventing unnecessary decay and damage and the resultant costs and problems. Works such as the regular repainting of woodwork and timber, clearing out of debris in rainwater pipes and gutters, cutting back of vegetation in close proximity to buildings, repointing of failed mortar, and refixing of loose roof slates are all in themselves relatively minor tasks that will not require authorisation but which may lead to much more complex and expensive works if left unattended.

Windows and Doors

5.4.4 Where original elements exist they should wherever possible be retained in situ and repaired. All external joinery should be painted, which is the traditional finish. Stained or varnished timber finishes are inappropriate in the Conservation Area. Most window frames are

painted white, although white may not have been their original colour; however repainting in garish colours would be inappropriate.

5.4.5 At the same time, there is the opportunity to introduce more colour, in the repainting of doors, shopfronts and retained mechanical features. Subdued and darker shades of red, green or blue can provide a highlighting theme, without being garish.

5.4.6 Replacement windows to listed buildings need to match the original glazing bars and detail of the originals. Where the existing windows or doors are however later alterations that detrimentally affect the character or appearance of a building, the Council will consider their replacement with appropriate traditional designs. The use of modern materials such as aluminium or UPVC is inappropriate and not acceptable on historic buildings.

Roofs

5.4.7 Where possible, original roof coverings should be retained and if necessary repaired with slate to match the existing. Where re-roofing is unavoidable because of deterioration of the existing roof covering or inappropriate later works, the use of natural slate will usually be required. The use of more modern materials such as concrete tiles and artificial slate is unacceptable, and their greater weight can lead to damage and deterioration of the roof structure if inappropriately used. Natural roof slates should be used in the Conservation Area: they have a better appearance than artificial slates and weather gradually and evenly over time.

5.4.8 In order to preserve the historic skyline of the Conservation Area, further roof extensions and changes to the basic roof form are generally unacceptable. This is particularly important in respect of long views to the skyline of the Conservation Area from the river.

5.4.9 Where they exist, original chimney stacks and pots should always be retained and repaired if necessary. The reinstatement of appropriately designed replacement chimney pots where these have been lost will be encouraged.

Brickwork

5.4.10 The painting or rendering of original untreated brickwork should be avoided and is usually considered unacceptable. Where damaged bricks are to be replaced or new work undertaken, bricks should be carefully selected to match those existing in texture, size and colour and should be laid in an appropriate bond to match the existing.

5.4.11 The most dominant visual components of the brick façades are the bricks themselves, rather than the pointing. Traditional bricks were a slightly larger format than metric bricks and were often laid in softer lime based mortar in a thinner bed, which reduced the appearance of the joints relative to the bricks. Repointing should only be undertaken where necessary to prevent further damage to a building's structure and should be kept to a minimum. Usually a lime based mortar mix no stronger than 1:1:6 (cement: lime: sand), is recommended and this should be coloured with sand to match the original mix. Joints should be flush or slightly recessed (not weather struck or raised) finished neatly and cleanly with the mortar brushed back to expose the edges of adjacent bricks.

5.4.12 Cleaning of brickwork is a specialist task, which may dramatically alter the appearance of a building. If undertaken incorrectly cleaning may lead to permanent damage to the bricks and ultimately the structure of a building. Advice should be sought from the Council before attempting such a task.

