

# Character appraisal update

**In Autumn 2009, if all goes to plan, Barnet will consult Suburb residents on the Draft Hampstead Garden Suburb Conservation Area Character Appraisal. This document, which has been largely written by Suburb residents under the direction of the Trust, will guide the future protection of the character of the conservation area.**

The document will be made up of various parts:

- An explanation of what the Character Appraisal is and what it hopes to achieve.
- An introductory section which sets out the background to the Suburb, its history, topography, development and planning.
- Descriptions of the 22 Character Areas that the conservation area was divided into in order to break down the task. The text describes the essential characteristics that make each part of the Suburb so distinctive and which should be protected in future planning policies.
- A short section which identifies important management issues, such as traffic management and areas where enhancement would be desirable.

- Management Proposals, which explain how Barnet (and in some cases, the Trust) will develop policies to protect the character of the area.
- A list of buildings of particular architectural distinction which Barnet proposes to add to its Schedule of Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest (the Local List).
- Suggestions for updating the Article 4 Direction to bring it in line with the latest General Permitted Development Order (published in October 2008). This legislation enables Barnet to better control the sort of potentially damaging alterations to Suburb properties that would otherwise not require Planning Permission.
- Maps of the 22 Character Areas illustrating which buildings are listed, locally listed or contribute positively to the character of the area. Important views are also identified.

Normally, conservation area character appraisals are produced by heritage consultants employed by the local authority. For the Suburb appraisal, the text and photographs were produced largely by residents on a voluntary basis. This is an unusual way of producing an appraisal document but it helps to involve residents in understanding the special nature of the townscape better.



It also has the backing of English Heritage, which recently referred to Hampstead Garden Suburb in a press release as a 'textbook example of community engagement and a benchmark for other conservation areas'.

As part of the improved management proposals, the Design Guidance for the Suburb has also been revised. This was first published in 1994 and the updated version will bring it up to date to include new areas of development such as basements. This revised guidance will be included in the consultation with residents so everyone will be able to contribute to the process.

Copies of the Character Appraisal, Management Proposals and revised Design Guidance will be available from Barnet, the Trust Office or on Barnet's website.

