



Planning Committee

12 March 2014

Report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration & Growth

For Information

Wards affected: Northwick Park

Updated Sudbury Court Estate Conservation Area Design Guide

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 A review of Brent's Conservation Area Design Guides is being undertaken with the overall aim of producing up to date documents to give clear guidance primarily to residents on acceptable types of development. These documents have an important role in ensuring the special character of our conservation areas is preserved and where possible enhanced. New versions of Design Guides for Barn Hill Conservation Area and Queens Park Conservation Area have already been adopted. Now a draft replacement Sudbury Court Estate Conservation Area Design Guide has been produced.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Planning Committee are invited to make comment on the draft Sudbury Court Estate Conservation Area Design Guide and give their endorsement prior to public consultation scheduled to commence in April 2014.
- 2.2 Following public consultation, consideration will be given to comments received with the final documents presented to the Executive Committee for formal adoption.

3.0 Discussion

Sudbury Court Estate Conservation Area Design Guide

- 3.1 The current Sudbury Court Estate Conservation Area Design Guide is now over ten years old. Whilst the general approach to development remains unchanged, the updated document is intended to be more 'user friendly' and provide clearer advice on interpretation of the guidance.

3.2 A copy of the draft Design Guide has been sent to the Sudbury Court Residents Association, ward councillors and the Lead Member for Regeneration & Major Projects.

3.3 The following are the key changes to the Design Guide:

- While the general approach towards extensions and alterations of properties within the Conservation Area remains unchanged the draft replacement design includes detailed illustrations, diagrams and examples. It should therefore be a far more useful guide than the existing design guide which has very little of this.
- Further detail regarding replacement windows including examples of the plans and level of detail required as part of a planning application to assist applicants and ensure acceptable replacement windows are provided.

3.4 As well as providing more clarity for residents, it will assist the Council in defending a decision where an appeal has been lodged.

3.5 Officers are aware of the desire of some residents for the Council to take a more permissive stance on new porches within the Sudbury Court Estate Conservation Area and to a lesser degree on new extensions to roofs. It was not felt at this stage that it was appropriate to consider such fundamental changes to the design guide, but rather to gauge the feelings of residents through the estate wide consultation for which we are seeking members' endorsement. So far only a small number of residents have had sight of the draft design guide and it would be premature to suggest fundamental changes to the general approach to managing change in the conservation area until all residents have had the opportunity to comment.

3.6 Whatever the feelings of local residents, the Council has a statutory duty through its policies and decision making to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of its conservation areas and any change in approach would have to satisfy this principle. If the consultation does reveal sufficient support for a more permissive approach to development then it may prompt a review of the Sudbury Court Estates status as a conservation area.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The guides are intended to provide more detailed guidance for residents, giving a greater level of certainty as to whether works are likely to be acceptable. This may help reduce the expense for residents of submitting multiple applications in order to gain an approval.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 If formally adopted by the Executive Committee, the documents will replace the existing Design Guides and carry significant weight when determining planning applications.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 It is not the intention to prevent people carrying out improvement works to their homes but to ensure that the works are appropriate in the context of the conservation area designation.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

7.1 The updated documents are intended to be more 'user friendly' and may reduce the level of input required from officers both at pre-application stage and during the course of the application though seeking revisions.

8.0 Environmental Implications

8.1 The aim of these documents is to ensure development preserves and where possible enhances the character of the area.

9.0 Draft Design Guides

Appendix 1:

Sudbury Court Estate Conservation Area Design Guide (Draft)

Contact Officers

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