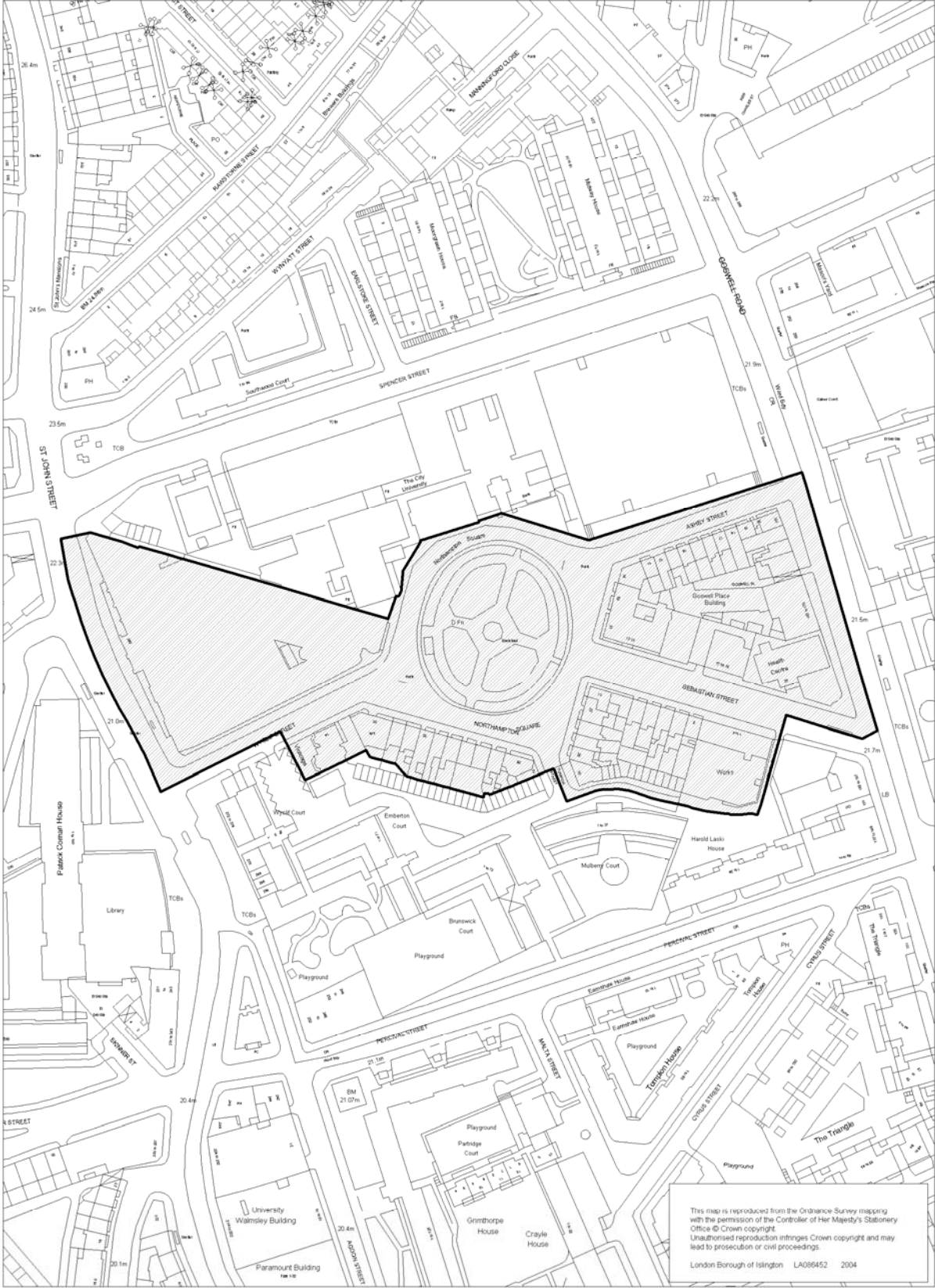


**Northampton Square (CA29)
Conservation Area Design Guidelines**

January 2002

Northampton Square (CA29)



Map Scale 1:2000

CA TWENTY NINE

NORTHAMPTON SQUARE

- 29.1 The Council will operate special policies in the Northampton Square Conservation Area in order to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area.**
- 29.2 Northampton Square was laid out in 1802, and was one of the earliest squares in Islington, developed as part of the Marquess of Northampton's estate. Although the original formal symmetry of the Square has been lost by the redevelopment of the City University, many of the Georgian houses survive in the Square and the adjoining side streets. The oval open space, with its bandstand, drinking fountain and fine mature trees also preserve the cohesion and townscape quality of the Square.
- 29.3 The Council will operate its land use policies so as to enhance the character and vitality of the area. Planning permission will not be granted to change, expand or intensify uses which would harm the character of the conservation area.**
- 29.4 There are two predominant uses in the area, residential and educational use (the City University), and these are integral to the character of the area. In line with Borough-wide policies permission will not normally be given to extend or intensify other uses in the area. Sympathetic consideration will be given to the future requirements of the City University within the parameters of enhancing the appearance of the conservation area.
- 29.5 The Council wishes to retain all statutory and locally listed buildings in the area together with the 19th century buildings and structures listed below. Conservation area consent will only be granted for their removal where there are special circumstances or where the proposal would preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area.**

Ashby Street: 11-18 (cons)

Berry Place: Works to the rear of 1-4 Sebastian Street

Goswell Road: 167-181

Northampton Square: 18a, 19-35 (cons), bandstand and drinking fountain

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Sebastian Street: | 1-4, 5-13 (cons) |
| St John's Street: | City University Building and railings |
| Tompion Street: | 19 |
| Wyclif Street: | 14 |

29.6 PPG15 states that the general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area. It also states that the assessment of a conservation area should always note those unlisted buildings which make such a contribution. While some buildings are protected by statutory listing, there are also many other non-listed buildings which are important to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the area. Conservation area consent will only therefore be granted where demolition and redevelopment would positively enhance the character and appearance of the area. It is recognised that the adaptation of old buildings including alternative uses may be necessary to ensure their continued well-being and to assist their preservation. However alterations will only be acceptable where they are in keeping with the buildings character.

29.7 New buildings should conform to the height, scale and proportions of existing buildings in the immediate area, and should use vernacular materials.

29.8 Opportunities for redevelopment in the area are very limited but, where this is acceptable, it should be compatible with the existing character of the area. In particular:

- i) existing and established building lines, at the back edge of pavement should be retained or reinstated;
- ii) new buildings must conform to the existing prevailing parapet heights, normally three storeys;
- iii) material such as stock brick, render, timber windows and slate roofing should be used which will blend with and reinforce the existing appearance and character of the area.

29.9 New roof extensions and dormers or alterations to existing roof extensions, mansards and dormers will not be permitted, except as follows:

- i) **traditional double-pitch mansard extensions would be acceptable on 175, 179 and 181 Goswell Road, to match 177;**

ii) **a lightweight set-back extension would be acceptable on 167-173 Goswell Road.**

29.10 The Council is opposed to the erection of plant rooms, air conditioning units and other services including water tanks and radio or satellite equipment at roof level where this can be seen from street level or public space, including long views from side streets.

29.11 The roofline of a street, particularly on a terrace is a major component of the area's character. Alterations which are not in keeping with the existing buildings can have a deleterious effect on the whole area. The Council considers that visible roof extensions other than those listed above are harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Where concealed roofs behind parapets exist, any alterations to the roof which are permitted must respect and retain the butterfly or other original profile at the back.

29.12 Existing chimney stacks and pots must be retained, and should be reinstated where missing.

29.13 The Council is opposed to the erection of large vent pipes on the rear elevation of commercial properties, where this is harmful to amenity. Where possible existing chimney flues should be used. Any new flues should be modest in size and painted a dark colour.

29.14 Large flues and vent pipes can often detract from the visual amenity of the area. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that these are appropriately located and are of a suitable size and design.

29.15 Full width rear extensions higher than one storey or half width rear extensions higher than two storeys, will not normally be permitted, unless it can be shown that no harm will be caused to the character of the area.

29.16 In order to preserve the scale and integrity of the existing buildings it is important that rear extensions are subordinate to the mass and height of the main building. Rear extensions will be permitted on their merits and only where the scale, design and materials to be used are in keeping with the existing property and where all other planning standards are met. Normally, the two storey part of the extension will be on the staircase side of the elevation. Original windows, especially those to the principal rooms of the property contribute to the character and appearance of historic buildings and should be retained

29.17 The Council will not normally permit the filling in or covering over of front basement areas, or the widening of front entrance steps, or the construction of dustbin or meter enclosures, or any other alterations which adversely affect the character of existing front basement areas.

- 29.18 The majority of properties in the conservation area have front basement areas, protected by cast iron railings, which are important to the character of the area. The filling in or covering over of these areas prejudices light to the basements and spoils the appearance of the front elevation. The widening of front entrance steps, and the construction of dustbin and meter enclosures have a detrimental effect on the area. Dustbins and meter enclosures should be discreetly located so as to be invisible from the street.
- 29.19 These developments will only be permitted where it can be shown that the development would preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. In addition, the needs of disabled people will be considered exceptional to this policy and essential adaptations will be allowed.
- 29.20 Permission will be given for the installation of metal stairs within basement areas to provide access, on condition that the gate matches the existing railings and does not disturb the existing rhythm and pattern of railings.
- 29.21 Conservation area consent will not be given for the removal of the shopfronts at 16 Ashby Street and 19 Tompion Street.**
- 29.22 Attractive shopfronts survive as listed above. These are important to the character of the area and the Council's 'Shopfront Design Guide' should be applied to any new shopfront.
- 29.23 Existing yorkstone paving, granite kerbs and cross-overs and cast-iron coal hole covers must be kept intact.**
- 29.24 The Council will seek to improve the quality of paving, street furniture, lighting and open space in the area.**
- 29.25 The quality of paving and street furniture within the area is variable and could be greatly improved to enhance the historic buildings. Large stretches of yorkstone paving survive in St John Street, Wyclif Street, Northampton Square and Sebastian Street. These should be retained and repaired as necessary. It is a long-term objective to reinstate yorkstone paving to the whole of this conservation area, when funds permit. In the meantime traditional slab paving should be laid in existing substandard areas. Great improvements could be made to the large pedestrianised roadway on the north side of the Square by re-exposing the original granite cobbles below the tarmac. In addition the existing granite kerbs, corner stones and granite sett crossovers, for example in Wyclif Street and Sebastian Street, should be retained, but improved by the installation of dropped kerbs.
- 29.26 Attractive cast-iron coal hole covers survive in Sebastian Street and Northampton Square, and these must be retained in the existing pavements. Unfortunately a large number of ugly concrete bollards exist at present, especially in Northampton

Square and Ashby Street. These detract from the appearance of the area and should be replaced by traditional metal bollards from the Council's approved range. The existing lighting in the area is also poor in quality and appearance. Victorian style Windsor period lighting would be appropriate for Sebastian Street, Ashby Street and Northampton Square. Floodlighting the bandstand would help to deter vandalism.

29.27 Northampton Square gardens, laid out in 1885, are an essential feature of the area, and the mature trees and the bandstand are assets which must be looked after. New plane trees should be planted so that these will be established when the existing trees reach old age. New trees should also be planted on the north side of Ashby Street.

29.28 The Council will not give advertising consent for new hoardings and will seek to remove those which do not have consent.

29.29 Advertising hoardings give an impression of clutter and lack of interest in an area. They also often obscure the nature and detailing of any building to which they are attached. The Council is opposed to the proliferation of advertisement hoardings in the area and will take action against the owners, advertisers and their agents for the removal of unauthorised hoardings.

29.30 Internally illuminated signs will not normally be permitted. Other signs should be of appropriate scale and design and conform to the Council's standards.

29.31 Advertisements and signs can often detract from the visual amenity of the area. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that signs, display panels and advertisements are appropriately located and are of a suitable size and design.