

A. HOUSING, DESIGN & CHARACTER CHARACTER

POLICY 3: Safeguarding and enhancing Conservation Areas and heritage assets

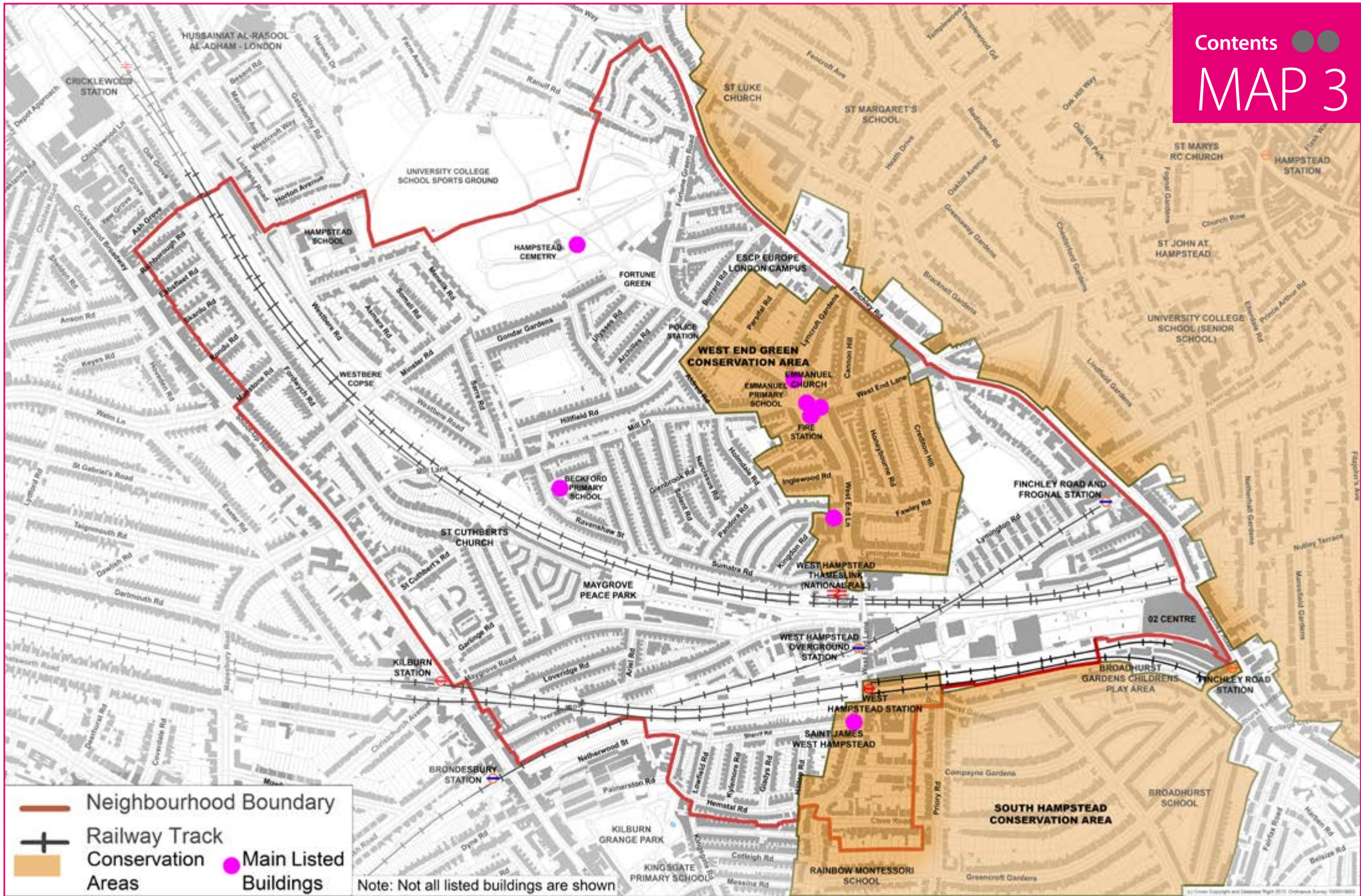
- i. Development that enhances or preserves Conservations Areas and heritage assets in the Area – as well as their distinct character, appearance, and setting – will be supported.
- ii. Proposals which detract from the special character, and/or, architectural and/or historic significance, and setting of Conservation Areas and heritage assets in the Area will not be supported.
- iii. In West end Lane, development will be expected to deliver improvements to the street environment and public realm of West End Lane, where appropriate. Such improvements shall be of a high standard and shall preserve or enhance the character of the West End Green and South Hampstead Conservation Areas (as appropriate).

A21. Significant parts of the Area are covered by **conservation areas**. These designated areas give a higher level of protection to buildings and land, with the aim of preserving and enhancing the architectural heritage. The **NPPF** states as a core planning principle (17) that heritage assets should be conserved “so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations”. It also encourages (137) local planning authorities to “look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas... and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance”.

A22. The West End Green Conservation Area covers a large part of West Hampstead. The *West End Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy* (February 2011) recognises that the Conservation Area (CA) has a special character and seeks to outline the “the key issues and pressures that are affecting the area”. The Appraisal and Management Strategy (AMS) describes the CA as “London village” with a “village character”, which it describes as “a very homogeneous piece of Victorian and Edwardian domestic architecture and planning”. The CA was designated in 1993 and expanded in 2011. Despite the success of the CA in protecting the character and heritage of the area, the AMS highlights a number of problems and issues that need to be addressed to prevent a deterioration in the CA.

In terms of West End Lane, the AMS finds that “... signage is large and disorderly and the street and pavements are overlaid with clutter” and “...some recent ad hoc extensions from the restaurants are of poor design and quality” and that “the Lane has become cluttered with signs, barriers and advertisements”. It adds that “the proliferation of advertisements and decline of the shop fronts is detrimental to the area”. It suggests the declaration of an Area of Special Control of Advertisements to control and restrict the use of outdoor signage, which can degrade the streetscape.

In the rest of the area, the AMS notes concerns about poor quality alterations to houses, particularly windows and doors – as well as the demolition of boundary walls and the paving over of front gardens. It says “the erosion of the details and the gardens is detrimental to the quality of the residential area”. It says any new work or buildings in the area “should reflect the materials, colour palette, scale and character of the area” and that new development “must preserve or enhance the character or appearance” of the Conservation Area. In order to prevent a deterioration of the Conservation Area, the AMS suggests the use of an Article 4 Direction on residential and commercial properties in the Conservation Area. An Article 4 Direction imposes additional restrictions on alterations to properties without planning consent.



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The AMS also raises significant concern about the overall street environment of the area: “This is an area of fairly low grade public realm and very little original surfacing or street furniture. Worn-out and outdated concrete paving is a characteristic of the pavements; side streets are predominantly tarmac and in many cases lifted by tree roots”.

Consultations for this Plan revealed concerns among a large number of local residents and businesses about a lack of enforcement of the rules and policies of this Conservation Area. In particular, concern was also expressed about the state of West End Lane and damage to the historic character and streetscape of the road and its surroundings.

A23. The southern part of the Area includes a small part of the **South Hampstead Conservation Area**. As the vast majority of this conservation area is outside the Area of this NDP, it is not felt necessary to make extensive comments on this CA – other than to say that this NDP supports the strong enforcement of CA policies (including the existing Article 4 Direction) and requires the involvement of local residents in any changes to these rules.

A24. Residents in some parts of the Area have expressed interest in **new Conservation Areas**. The main proposal (as suggested in the West End Green Conservation Area AMS) is for a ‘Fortune Green Conservation Area’ covering the Green, the cemetery and the ‘Greek streets’ (Ajax Road, Agamemnon Road, Ulysses Road & Achilles Road). This could also include Hillfield Road and Gondar Gardens. Camden Council should keep their conservation areas under review and investigate the merits of designating new CAs in the Area, where a clear majority of residents request them.

A25. In addition to the list above, Camden Council is compiling a **Local List** for heritage assets that are of importance to the community as being significant elements of the borough’s heritage. It is proposed that these assets will merit consideration in the planning process. The NDF supports the formation of such a List and the protection it affords to these assets. The final version of this List should be based on widespread consultation and engagement in the local area - and be subject to regular review.

A26. The Area has a number of **listed buildings** which are widely appreciated and which provide an important element to the feel of the Area. These heritage assets, and their settings, should receive the highest possible levels of protection and care, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The main listed buildings in the Area are:

- **Hampstead Synagogue, Dennington Park Road (1892-1901), Grade II***
- **Fire Station & firemen’s cottages, 325 West End Lane (1901), Grade II**
- **Emmanuel Church (1897-1903), Lyncroft Gardens, Grade II**
- **Beckford Primary School buildings (1885-6 & 1891), Grade II**
- **Hampstead Cemetery buildings & various gravestones (mainly Grade II)**
- **Public Conveniences (1890s), West End Green, Grade II**
- **Drinking Fountain, West End Green, Grade II**
- **St James’ Church (1887-8), Sheriff Road, Grade II**

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RECOMMENDATION B: in support of Policy 3 the following actions are recommended.

- i. The introduction of an Article 4 Direction on all commercial and residential properties on West End Lane.
- ii. The declaration of an Area of Special Control of Advertisements on West End Lane.
- iii. Consultations on new Conservation Areas where residents request them. Such consultations should be open to all those living or working in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.