

PLACES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:	Adoption of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for Romford, Rainham, and Gidea Park
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Policy context:	Havering Local Plan 2021 National Planning Policy Framework 2024

SUMMARY

This report provides a briefing on the development of Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans (CAAMPs) for Romford, Rainham and Gidea Park. The decision to adopt and publish the CAAMPs is due to be presented at Cabinet on 17th September 2025. Draft CAAMPs were consulted on earlier this year, comments have been incorporated, and final CAAMPs are now ready for adoption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee are asked to note the contents of this report and the CAAMPs for Romford, Rainham and Gidea Park (appendix 1, 2, and 3).

REPORT DETAIL

1.1 Conservation Areas (CAs) are areas which have been designated because of their special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they are considered to be of architectural and historic interest as conservation areas. Section 71 of the Act requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas, and requires proposals to be submitted for consideration in a public meeting in the area to which they relate.

1.2 The Local Planning Authority has a legal duty to review and manage conservation areas. This includes review and updating of CAAMPs as required under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69 (2) states “It shall be the duty of a Local Planning Authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.”

1.3 The CAAMPs play a crucial role in informing planning decisions and assists the Local Planning Authority in assessing the impact of proposed developments on the character of the conservation area. CAAMPs for Romford, Rainham, and Gidea Park were last updated in 2008 and are considerably out of date. In view of this, it is of critical importance that the CAAMPs are up to date to ensure these areas are protected sufficiently.

1.4 Heritage consultants Purcell have been working to update the CAAMPs for Romford, Rainham and Gidea Park for the Council. Public consultation on the draft CAAMPs was held from 28th April to 9th June 2025. During the consultation, three in-person consultation events were held. For full details of the consultation, please see the Consultation Statement (Appendix 4), which sets out detail of the consultation undertaken, comments received, and changes made.

1.5 The CAAMPs are attached as appendices 1, 2 and 3. Each CAAMP summarises the area’s special interest and historic development. It then goes onto the character assessment which explores key buildings in the area, important views, setting of the conservation area, etc. Issues and opportunities facing the CA are then presented, and finally how to manage change in the CA and specific recommendations for its protection. During the review process, boundary changes for all three CAs were recommended by our heritage consultants. These changes were consulted on and are reflected in the final CAAMPs. The changes to the conservation area boundaries are shown in Appendix 5.

1.6 Romford’s boundary will expand significantly in the new CAAMP. An expansion was previously suggested in the 2008 Romford character appraisal but never implemented. Romford’s current CA boundary is concentrated around Market Place and St Edwards Church, also spreading out along High Street and part of South Street, covering the facades of buildings. The approach of only protecting facades is no longer recommended by Historic England and is why expansion was suggested previously in 2008. Romford’s new CA boundary reflects this. It also now extends further along South Street to Romford station. The new Romford CAAMP (appendix 1) reflects the changes in the area since the last appraisal was done (2008), and the ongoing challenges the conservation area faces. Section 6 ‘managing change’ provides detailed guidance for the Council and developers on how to manage change in Romford while protecting its historic character.

1.7 For Rainham, an expansion is proposed to include the whole garden area at Rainham Hall, which the boundary previously cut across. A small area in the North of the CA is proposed to be removed from the conservation area after a thorough site assessment finding the buildings in this area incongruous with the overall

character of Rainham. Please see appendix 5 for the details of the boundary changes. Rainham CAAMP (appendix 2) reflects the changes in the area since the last appraisal was done (2008), and the challenges the conservation area faces. Section 6 'managing change' provides detailed guidance for the Council and developers on how to manage change in Rainham while protecting its historic character.

1.8 A small expansion of the Gidea Park CA is proposed to include the Interwar parade of shops with flats above at 142-156 Balgores Lane, to more effectively encompass the townscape composition at the base of the conservation area where Balgores Lane and Crossways meet. The Gidea Park CAAMP (appendix 3) reflects the changes in the area since the last appraisal was done (2008), and the challenges the conservation area faces. Section 6 'managing change' provides detailed guidance for the Council and developers on how to manage change in Gidea Park while protecting its historic character.

1.9 Part 2 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (2) states that "...to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly". Changes to the boundary of a CA is classified as CA designation, and under part 3, section 4 of the constitution, approval of the Executive is required to designate a CA.

1.10 Havering has 11 conservation areas and the Council intends to update all CAAMPs to make sure they are up to date and sufficient to protect the CAs in the borough. Cabinet will be recommended to delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Public Protection for adoption of future CAAMPs, if there are no boundary changes proposed.

1.11 Documents included in the Appendix:

- Appendix 1 – Romford CAAMP
- Appendix 2 – Rainham CAAMP
- Appendix 3 – Gidea Park CAAMP
- Appendix 4 – Consultation Statement
- Appendix 5 – CA Boundary Changes

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks: The review and expansion of the existing CAAMPs within this cabinet report does not have any material financial implications on the authority. They will provide material considerations for planning decisions within the designated new boundaries of the three plans, and must be taken into account when assessing planning applications.

The cost of updating the CAAMPs has been funded by existing budgets.

Legal implications and risks: The Council as Local Planning Authority (“Council”) has a duty under section 69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (“the Act”) to determine which parts of its area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

Under section 69(2) of the Act from time to time the Council shall review the past exercise of the section 69(1) functions.

The designation of a conservation area has several planning consequences. These include (and are not limited to):

- ☐ Restrictions (and potential criminal offence) concerning demolition in a conservation area without express planning permission;
- ☐ Engagement of Statutory duty under section 72 of the Act, when determining planning applications in a conservation area to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the conservation area;
- ☐ Engagement of statutory duty under section 71 of the Act from time to time to formulate, publish proposals and hold a public meeting about them, for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area;
- ☐ Restrictions on cutting down, topping, lopping, or uprooting trees in a conservation area;
- ☐ Greater restrictions for certain otherwise permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (“the GPDO”);
- ☐ Restricts the power of the secretary of state to cancel or modify an immediate Article 4 Direction (restricting permitted development rights) under the GPDO for certain classes of development;
- ☐ Greater controls to display certain types of advertisement under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

The Council has discharged its responsibilities under section 71 of the Act to: (1) formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas; (2) consider proposals at a public meeting; and (3) have regard to any views expressed at any public meetings.

Human Resources implications and risks: The recommendations made in this report do not appear to give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

Equalities implications and risks: The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) is usually carried out when a proposed or planned activity is likely to affect staff, service users, or other residents.

The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

There are no equalities implications.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The recommendations made in this report do not appear to conflict with the Council's policy on Environmental and Climate implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

n/a