



John Biggs  
Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets

London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Mulberry Place  
5 Clove Crescent  
London E14 2BG

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Contact: Gulshan Begum  
Tel: 020 7364 6971  
Mayor@towerhamlets.gov.uk

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Dear Residents,

**RE Public consultation on Draft Mansard Roof and Draft Conservation Area Addendums**

I recognise the needs of families in our Borough. I also recognise the needs of those with caring responsibilities for elderly or infirm dependents. I understand that many would like to extend their homes in our conservation areas to accommodate these needs and in some cases be able to stay in the borough and are frustrated by the limits placed on them by our planning policies for development in conservation area. This is why this consultation was initiated.

In response to this concern our conservation officers have produced the draft documents for consultation. These are conservation officer's professional views on what is most appropriate within the bounds of the Council's duty to protect and enhance the character and integrity of our conservation areas.

I am aware that in these matters there is a balancing act between conserving our heritage and allowing communities to grow and families to respond to personal needs, while still respecting our heritage. When I saw the consultation papers, after they had been circulated, it was obvious to me that while the design guidelines seemed reasonable, the Draft Addendums to Conservation Areas Character Appraisals did not appear to go far enough in recognising this. In some areas it will be easier to push at these boundaries than in others, because we do have important heritage to preserve but I asked for the review in response to requests for greater flexibility and I expect to see this where it is reasonable. I see the draft proposals as a baseline and I want to hear your views about how you feel the balance should be struck.

This Consultation is a necessary first step in the process to change the Council's existing policies. I urge you to take part and let the Council know your views on this important matter

Yours faithfully,

John Biggs  
Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets