

Climate Emergency Conservation Area Toolkit

Architects Climate Action Network

<https://www.architectscan.org/conservation-area-toolkit-retrofit-homes>

What is the problem?

- **High energy prices** coupled with need to cut carbon.
- **5% of total UK Carbon** emissions come from heritage or architecturally constrained homes.
- **Expensive planning gamble** for residents if local guidance is not up to date. Perception is that work will be denied, therefore, most residents choose not to invest in carbon and energy reduction.

Who is this guide for?

Essential reading for policymakers, planners, and building professionals but also for citizens who want to understand our planning system, or plan carbon and energy reductions for their homes.

What is it?

The toolkit was designed using current planning good practice drawing on a survey of one inner city conservation area Islington CA13, established 3 years after the 1970 Parliament Act.

1) Data found surprising opportunities for beneficial change with lessons for other localities.

22% of buildings are negative or harmed which give opportunities for development, p 27,

49% of roofs are harmed traditional or new roofs and suitable for modern improvement, p 37,

31% of roofs are now suitable for solar panels, p 66,

75% of buildings suitable for double/triple glazed windows, p 76,

44% of solid walls suitable for external insulation with listed & public facades intact, p 107.

2) It sets out conservation technical details and manufacturers that meet best practice standards for typical Victorian and Georgian terraces for:

Mansard and modern roof extensions, pages 35-53

Chimneys and rear extensions, pages 55-63

Solar panels, pages 65-73

Conservation windows, pages 75-99

Secondary windows, pages 80-81

Ventilation strategies, pages 82-83

External wall insulation, pages 101-113

Conservation shopfront design, pages 115-127



3) It explains planning concepts such as **significance, public realm, and harm** with examples.

Planning law is discussed with detailed analysis of evolving changes to policy.

Relevant Planning Law changes:

February 2019, “**environmental benefits**” in the NPPF 2019 (National Planning Policy Framework).

February 2019, **detailed mapping** in ‘Conservation Area Management Guidance’, Historic England.

June 2019, **Net Zero by 2050**, the UK Parliament amended the Climate Change Act.

July 2019, “**Identifying opportunities for beneficial change**”, government Planning Policy Guidance.

from 2019, “**Positive to negative detailed mapping**” from both Historic England and PPG 2019.

Relevant Local Council obligations:

Legal obligation under 1990 Planning Act, all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to regularly update and publish conservation guidance.

New 2019 obligation to proactively identify “beneficial change” & “environmental benefits”.

Current LPA Conservation Guidance is often inaccurate, vague, and unrevised for decades.

