

PLANNING DIVISION INFORMATION SHEET 2.6 EFFECTS OF CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

A conservation area is an area of architectural and historical interest with a character and appearance that it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Conservation areas are designated by Councils, following consultation with residents and businesses. Once a conservation area has been designated, the Council obtains some additional planning controls. These are described below, together with other steps that the Council takes to preserve or enhance the area.

DEMOLITION

Subject to minor exceptions, conservation area consent is required for the total or substantial demolition of most structures. Undertaking demolition works without consent is a criminal offence, therefore it is important to be certain whether it is required before demolishing any structure within a conservation area. Application forms for conservation area consent are available on the Council's website.

PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT FOR DWELLING HOUSES

Outside conservation areas, some small-scale works to dwelling houses can be undertaken without applying for planning permission. Such works are known as permitted development. Dwelling houses in conservation areas however, have restricted permitted development. For example the installation of a satellite dish may require planning permission, depending on its location on the building. More information regarding permitted development rights is available on the Planning Portal www.planningportal.gov.uk. Application forms for planning permission are available on the Council's website or from the Civic Centre.

PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT FOR FLATS, SCHOOLS AND OTHER PREMISES

Schools, commercial premises and flats **do not** have significant permitted development rights, and thus alterations to windows, doors and other external features may require planning permission. It is therefore sensible to check with the Council before undertaking external alteration works, especially if the building is within a conservation area. Application forms for planning permission are available from the Environmental Services Department.

DIRECTIONS RESTRICTING PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

The Council can make Article 4 Directions that further restrict permitted development in order to preserve the character or appearance of a conservation area; works to boundary walls, windows, doors and roofs may therefore require planning permission. Chancery Lane and Barnmead Road conservation areas in Beckenham and Vincent Square in the RAF Biggin Hill conservation area all have such directions in force. As Article 4 Directions vary from area to area, it is sensible to view a copy of the Direction before undertaking works.

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NEW DEVELOPMENT

The Council expects all new development to preserve or enhance the existing character or appearance of the conservation area; therefore a high standard of design will be required. Design advice is contained within the Supplementary Planning Guidance for each conservation area; where this does not exist; advice is available from the Conservation Officers.

TREES

Whilst important trees may already be protected by Tree Preservation Orders, the Council **must** be given six weeks written notice of intention to undertake works to **any** trees within conservation areas. This gives the Council time to check the proposals and make a new Tree Preservation Order if the trees are important to the character of the area. Works should not be undertaken during that period without permission. Undertaking tree works without giving notice could lead to prosecution.

SHOP FRONTS

High quality shop fronts are an essential part of a town or village centre conservation area. New shop fronts should normally relate to the existing building and to the street scene. Good period shop fronts should be retained and re-used wherever possible.

PUBLICITY FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Where development proposals affect the character or appearance of a conservation area, the law requires that a notice is posted on the site and published in the local press. This will normally apply to all developments within a conservation area and some on or near to its boundary.

ADVISORY PANEL FOR CONSERVATION AREAS (APCA)

Before the Council makes its own decisions, planning applications in conservation areas are often referred to this independent panel for comments on design and conservation matters. The panel includes representatives of the architectural and planning professions as well as local representatives.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE & FURTHER INFORMATION

The Council has detailed guidance for most conservation areas that will supplement the planning policies contained in the adopted Unitary Development Plan. It provides essential information for anyone undertaking works within a conservation area and is used in the assessment of applications for planning permission and conservation area consent. Copies can be obtained from the Planning Strategy and Renewal Team.

For further information about the issues discussed above please contact:

Built Heritage
Urban Design
Private Trees

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This form is also available upon request in large-print format.
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