

## **Guidance for Owners/Occupiers**

This provides general information on Conservation Areas; it gives advice on the implications of designation, the special planning controls which operate in Conservation Areas and on what permissions you are likely to require for development proposals.

### **Designation**

Conservation Areas are identified by the District Council in consultation with Parish or Town Councils and other interested parties. The agreed areas are then formally advertised in local and national newspapers. There is no right of appeal against designation. District Councils also have a duty to review their areas from time to time. This may result in the designation of new Conservation Areas, or the modification of existing Areas.

### **Following Designation**

When an area is designated the District Council is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in exercising its town planning powers. Designation is therefore only a preliminary to action to preserve or enhance the character and appearance.

### **Controls and Consents**

#### **What is the effect of designation?**

A number of special planning controls operate in Conservation Areas. The following briefly outlines the instances where consent is likely to be required. These may vary between the different Conservation Areas and you should contact the Planning Services Department for advice before undertaking any works.

### **New Buildings**

Outside Conservation Areas certain new buildings may be erected without the need to obtain planning permission. These 'permitted development' rights are greatly reduced within a Conservation Area so that planning permission is required for most new buildings. For example, garden sheds, greenhouses and garages will almost always require planning permission within a Conservation Area.

### **Extensions and Alterations**

Normally certain minor extensions to a dwelling are exempt from planning controls; however, the amount of extension allowed within a Conservation Area is less than elsewhere. The restrictions on other alterations are also greater within a Conservation Area. Works to alter the external appearance of a dwelling such as changes to doors, windows, roofs and frontages, the erection of porches and the provision of hardstanding for cars, for example, may require planning permission.

### **Demolition**

As a general rule the demolition of a building within a Conservation Area requires Conservation Area Consent. Consent may also be required for the part demolition of a building.

## **Satellite Dishes**

The restrictions on the installation of a satellite dish within a Conservation Area are greater than normal and a satellite dish which may normally be installed without consent outside a Conservation Area is likely to require planning permission within a Conservation Area.

## **Trees**

Anyone proposing to do work on trees in a Conservation Area which are not already protected by a Tree Preservation Order, is required to give the District Council six weeks notice in writing of their intention before the work is carried out.

[Tree Preservation Guidelines](#)

## **Advertisements**

Many of the District's Conservation Areas are within an Area of Special Advertisement Control where the display of an advertisement is likely to require consent.

## **How do I make an application?**

All applications for planning permission, Conservation Area Consent and Advertisement Consent should be made on special forms available from and submitted to Malvern Hills District Council. Application forms should be accompanied by detailed drawings sufficient to fully explain the proposals. These drawings should include fully annotated survey drawings of existing buildings (where appropriate), plans and elevations of the proposed changes, together with details of materials. Outline planning applications will not be acceptable.

Applications affecting the character of the Conservation Area must be advertised in a local newspaper and by notice on site for 21 days. The application will also be available for inspection at the Planning Services Department.

[Application form](#) available here.

## **Design Considerations**

Conservation Area designation is not intended to freeze the whole area into a static museum piece. Change is inevitable, but successful conservation is a positive mixture of preservation and sympathetic development.

The integrity of the special character of a Conservation Area can be affected in a number of ways.

- it may be degraded by the use of materials or elements unrelated in terms of style or proportion.
- a lack of understanding of the architectural composition can result in the loss of detail due to inappropriate alterations.
- It may be disrupted by the introduction of discordant elements that draw the eye and break the rhythm.
- It may be degraded by the removal of features which are individually or cumulatively important to the character of the area.

Careful thought should always be given to the design of new buildings and to the alteration or extension of existing buildings.

In considering proposals and extensions for new buildings in Conservation Areas the principal concerns should be the appropriateness of the overall mass or volume of the building, its scale (the expression of size indicated by the windows, doors, floor heights,

and other identifiable units), and its relationship with its context - whether it sits comfortably in its setting. The new building should be in harmony with, or complementary to, its neighbours, having regard to the adjoining architectural styles. The use of materials generally matching those which are historically dominant in the area is important, as is the need for the development not to have a visually disruptive impact on the existing townscape or street scene. It should also, as far as possible, fit into the 'grain' of an historic area, for example by respecting surviving medieval street patterns.

Alterations to the external appearance of a building should also be considered with great care. The character of a Conservation Area can be damaged just as much by individual, and often relatively minor changes to building elevations, as by insensitive new development. Changes to window and door details, the addition of poorly detailed porches, or the painting of a building, for example, can destroy building qualities which are intrinsic to the character of a Conservation Area. Similarly, the removal of original boundary features, such as walls, hedges, wrought iron fences, the erection of standard facing panels, and the creation of drives and hardstandings can be equally damaging.