

Conservation Areas Management Plan

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Annex 1 Objectives and Actions

1 Aim and Statement of Purpose

Aim

- 1.1 To focus the attention of all agencies and organisations with roles in conservation areas, as well as individuals who live and work in them, on the need for appropriate standards that reflect the special nature and character of these areas, and encourage practices and procedures that allow those standards to be achieved.

Statement of Purpose

- 1.2 The conservation areas management plan sets out the principles New Forest National Park Authority believes should be adopted by all involved in taking decisions and actions that affect the environment within conservation areas.
- 1.3 The conservation areas management plan sets out a range of objectives that will facilitate the National Park Authority's management of those parts of the National Park that are conservation areas.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on a local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas.
- 2.2 This management plan covers all conservation areas and is part of a framework for New Forest National Park Authority's management of conservation areas and sets out a series of objectives to facilitate and implement management. There are separate detailed management proposals for individual conservation areas.

3 Core principles

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The management plan sets out the core principles which underlie the management of conservation areas through which the character and appearance of any area may be preserved or enhanced.
- 3.1.2 These core principles are split into four sections:
 - General
 - New work
 - Maintenance and repair
 - Consultation, collaboration and participation

3.1.3 The principles are a guide to best practice when considering development in any historic environment and in particular in conservation areas.

3.2 *General*

3.2.1 Work should be designed with specific regard to the need to maintain and reinforce those characteristics of a building and the landscape which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the characteristics that create its local distinctiveness.

3.2.2 Work should be carried out to the highest quality standard with the aim of preserving or enhancing the special aspects of character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.2.3 Work carried out should be economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.

3.2.4 The necessity to make changes should be carefully considered. Physical alterations required simply to fall in line with a corporate identity, such as shop fronts, banks and public houses, but which otherwise are not needed, should not be undertaken.

3.2.5 The environmental impact of all new work should be assessed as part of the planning and preparation for it, whether or not Environmental Impact Assessments are formally required.

3.2.6 Where opportunities occur to achieve positive enhancement of a building or landscape they should be carefully integrated into development proposals.

3.2.7 Existing buildings of special or architectural interest and character which are redundant should be retained.

3.2.8 Historic spaces and important views should be preserved, for example, views along streets, views taking in old buildings, boundary features and mature, especially veteran trees. Green spaces within conservation areas should be protected as should important spaces between buildings.

3.2.9 Vegetation management, in the widest sense should reflect ecological imperatives and aim to work with nature.

3.2.10 Existing road frontages, building lines and boundaries which are typical of the area should be retained.

3.3 *New works*

- 3.3.1 An assessment of any development site should be undertaken to ensure any new buildings compliment the character of the immediate area, including existing buildings, their settings and the spaces between them.
- 3.3.2 Prospective developers should explore the history of the site they propose to develop with regard to archaeological importance.
- 3.3.3 New buildings should be of an appropriate size, scale and design, reflecting the context of their location.
- 3.3.4 It is important when designing proposals for development, to ensure that the ratio of buildings to spaces on a site reflects existing patterns and that over intensification, or under intensification is avoided.
- 3.3.5 New work should continue the use of materials that have been traditionally used locally, or use materials that match or are compatible with those materials. This does not rule out modern alternatives which would not detract from the essence of local distinctiveness or design traditions. Where available, materials should be locally sourced.
- 3.3.6 New buildings need not slavishly follow existing old buildings which make a positive contribution to an area in their design and architecture, but they should complement them in the use of materials and design.
- 3.3.7 Whenever infrastructure is due to be replaced, the continuing need for that infrastructure to remain in place should be questioned.

3.4 *Maintenance and repair*

- 3.4.1 When planning the maintenance of sites and spaces, opportunities should be taken to remove redundant items of infrastructure.
- 3.4.2 Where maintenance involves the repair of historic fabric, the maximum amount of the original historic fabric should be retained.
- 3.4.3 Features which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a building should be retained.
- 3.4.4 Works of repair or replacement should reproduce detailed features of the existing work that contribute to a sense of local distinctiveness.
- 3.4.5 The maintenance of existing fabric should continue the use of materials that have been traditionally used locally, or use materials that match or are compatible with those materials.

3.5 *Consultation, collaboration and participation*

- 3.5.1 Authorities, councils and agencies proposing significant new works or replacement of existing infrastructure should incorporate within the planning and preparation for the work a consultation of local people and organisations.
- 3.5.2 Whenever new or altered maintenance regimes are to be introduced by public authorities, councils or agencies, which would significantly affect the character and appearance of public land, consultation with local people and organisations should be undertaken.
- 3.5.3 Opportunities should be taken to maximise collaboration between agencies to better achieve on the ground enhancements.

4 Management tools

4.1 *Legislation and guidance*

- 4.1.1 Important buildings in conservation areas are being identified and recorded in the conservation area character appraisals. This information will be the basis upon which the merit of any building submitted for demolition will initially be judged. However, any application for demolition within a conservation area will be carefully scrutinised, and if a building not identified as an important local building should come forward for demolition and is found to have merit during the application process, its retention will be sought.
- 4.1.2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment sets out the guidance on the historic environment and will continue to be used in the management of conservation areas.

4.2 *Development*

- 4.2.1 In any conservation area, promoting best practice and quality control in development is often more effective than prevention and is the key to effective planning policy, the aim being to ensure new development preserves or enhances the special character of an area. The National Park Authority will consider proposals for development in a conservation area and works involving listed buildings or archaeological features under the relevant planning policies¹.
- 4.2.2 The use of planning policy, Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 and the core principles outlined in this document will be the starting point for any proposed development in a conservation area.

¹ At date of publication the 'History and Archaeology' chapter of the New Forest District Council Local Plan (First Alteration), adopted in August 2005 to be superseded by New Forest National Park Authority Local Development Framework.

4.3 *Building condition and repair*

4.3.1 A key factor in the conservation of historic buildings and the character and appearance of conservation areas is the good condition of the buildings themselves. Poorly maintained or derelict buildings are regularly cited as having a negative impact on the character and appearance of conservation areas. The regular maintenance and repair of a building will keep it weathertight, (especially roof repairs, clearance of gutters and downpipes, etc) and can make more extensive and therefore more expensive work avoidable.

4.3.2 There is a general misunderstanding that the life of a historic building is finite. The life of a historic building can often be prolonged indefinitely so long as quality maintenance and occasionally major repairs are undertaken. However, neglect and poorly executed repairs can lead to a situation where serious problems arise and the need for urgent and extensive works which may result in loss of fabric and character.

4.3.3 Legislation places no specific duty on owners to keep their buildings in a good repair, but does provide both an obligation on, and the powers, through Sections 54 and 76 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, for, local authorities to ensure the good repair of historic buildings, both listed buildings and buildings which contribute positively to the character and appearance of a conservation area.

4.3.4 The National Park Authority will seek to use these powers where negotiation, advice and encouragement have failed to achieve the suitable repair of a historic building.

4.3.5 In order to inform this process the National Park Authority will, on production of a conservation area specific management plan, compile a record of the general condition and state of repair of the buildings within that conservation area. This will provide a baseline of data from which specific actions may be drawn. To assist in this, a regularly updated condition survey complete with dated photographs will be produced.

4.4 *Building alterations and permitted development.*

4.4.1 Another key factor in conservation of the character and appearance of conservation areas is the implication of gradual changes to buildings that occur through piecemeal development. Poorly designed or poorly thought through development often can have a negative impact on the character and appearance of a conservation area.

4.4.2 While much development is controlled through the planning system, all dwelling houses have certain permitted development rights and it is

often these small changes that can have the greatest effect when taken cumulatively.

4.4.3 Where it can be shown that the exercise of permitted development rights is leading to a gradual decline in the character and appearance of a conservation area the Authority may decide to adopt extra planning controls through the use of Article 4 (2) directions.

4.4.4 Each conservation area specific management plan will include a record of the buildings which are considered to make a positive contribution in that conservation area. This will provide baseline data from which specific actions may be drawn. A photographic survey of buildings in a conservation area will be maintained and reviewed. This will also provide a record of changes over time allowing the National Park Authority to assess the improvement or decline in the condition of its conservation areas and take measures accordingly.

4.5 *Tree works and woodland management*

4.5.1 When considering whether to extend protection to trees in conservation areas, local planning authorities should always take into account the visual, historic and amenity contribution of trees. In some instances new plantings or re-plantings may be desirable where this would be consistent with the character and appearance of the area.

4.5.2 Work is in progress by the National Park Authority to identify the ancient and veteran tree resource in the Park and to formulate methods for future strategic management of the resource and engagement with stakeholders. This will be used to provide baseline data for the resource in conservation areas and to develop objectives for each conservation area.

4.5.3 A review of tree preservation orders in the National Park is ongoing and will include conservation areas as part of their effective management

5 *Improvement strategy and enhancement schemes*

5.1 This management plan identifies the need to establish an improvement strategy for each conservation area. This will form part of the conservation area specific management plans and will include an assessment of the conservation area and opportunities for enhancement.

6 Collaboration

6.1 The New Forest National Park Authority is the local planning authority, however its role as a manager of the conservation areas is limited as it is not a landowner, and has no remit for carrying out or maintaining

physical work. The National Park Authority may on occasion place items of physical infrastructure in conservation areas in connection with its statutory purpose to promote understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park. Its primary role in managing conservation areas therefore lies in its development control role and as a facilitator.

- 6.2 The character and appearance of many conservation areas is dependent on the treatment of roads, pavements and other public spaces, the provision of public utilities and other general infrastructure. Many other agencies and organisations therefore have a physical management role in conservation areas.
- 6.3 These include other local authorities at district and county level. Their functions range from refuse collection and litter picking at the district level to highway works and maintenance by the county councils. Parish and town councils often own and maintain land, particularly for recreational purposes.
- 6.4 Other public authorities and organisations have roles too. These include the Forestry Commission and the National Trust. Natural England has a statutory responsibility in respect of wildlife and ecology of the Park. The Environment Agency has duties especially with regard to watercourses and flood risks. Statutory undertakers and public transport operators have significant roles when it comes to infrastructure repairs, replacements and new developments.
- 6.5 Private land / home owners have, cumulatively, the greatest influence on what happens in conservation areas. There are large landowning estates within the Park and their ownership often extends within conservation areas. Much development activity that takes place on private land, although visible from public areas, is outside the scope of planning control or control over work to trees. In such cases the aim is to engage land / home owners in implementing the guidance in this management plan for conservation areas generally, and take decisions that reflect the spirit of the guidance.
- 6.6 The National Park Authority intends to consult widely with the above organisations in order to encourage them to sign up to an accord regarding works with in conservation areas. It is intended that this management plan and each conservation area specific management plan will form the basis of that accord and that organisations will be encouraged to sign up to the objectives identified in these documents.

7 Objectives

Objective 1: Develop awareness, understanding and application of the core principles of the management plan with local communities, developers and agents, parish councils, local and statutory

organisations and any other organisation or agency whose work might impact upon the character and appearance of a conservation area.

Objective 2: Ensure that the National Park Authority has and uses planning policies that are effective in maintaining the special character and appearance of conservation areas.

Objective 3: Record and understand the physical condition of the historic environment in conservation areas to inform their future management

Objective 4: Seek to prevent a decline in the character and appearance of conservation areas which is otherwise occurring through the exercise of permitted development rights.

Objective 5: Effectively manage trees within conservation areas.

Objective 6: Encourage schemes for the enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Objective 7: Develop and strengthen relationships with key stakeholder organisations and seek their active engagement and participation in works to conserve and enhance conservation areas.

Objective 8: Seek external resources to achieve specifically identified objectives of the management plan

Annex 1 sets out actions associated with these objectives.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 The National Park Authority will produce an annual report to assess progress towards achieving objectives of the management plan.
- 8.2 The conservation areas management plan will be reviewed within a period of five years of publication.

Annex 1 Objectives and Actions

Objective 1: Develop awareness, understanding and application of the core principles of the management plan with local communities, developers and agents, parish councils, local and statutory organisations and any other organisation or agency whose work might impact upon the character and appearance of a conservation area.

Action:	Outcome:
1. Publish the conservation areas management plan, within six months of adoption.	A working document to inform future works within conservation areas.
2. On publication of the management plan organise events to discuss and emphasise the core principles, to take place over a twelve month period.	Increase the level of awareness of stakeholders.
3. On publication of the management plan, produce a publication emphasising and encouraging the use of the core principles	Increase the level of awareness of all those involved in work in conservation areas.

Objective 2: Ensure that the National Park Authority has and uses planning policies that are effective in maintaining the special character and appearance of conservation areas.

Action:	Outcome:
1. As part of the Local Development Framework, develop planning policies which reflect the core principles identified in the conservation areas management plan.	Development control decisions which preserve and enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Objective 3: Record and understand the physical condition of the historic environment in conservation areas to inform their future management

Action:	Outcome:
1 Develop a baseline record of the general condition and state of repair of the buildings in each conservation area, by means of a survey of condition.	A basis to assess the improvement or decline in the condition of buildings in conservation areas and take measures accordingly.
2 Develop a photographic record of the buildings in each conservation area.	A basis to assess the improvement or decline in the condition and appearance of buildings in conservation areas and take measures accordingly.

Objective 4: Seek to prevent a decline in the character and appearance of conservation areas which is otherwise occurring through the exercise of permitted development rights.

Action:	Outcome:
1. Identify key issues which are leading to any decline in the character and appearance of a conservation area with a view to the use of Article 4(2) directions.	A basis to take measures to preserve the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Objective 5: Effective management of trees within conservation areas.

Action:	Outcome:
1. Compile existing review data or carry out a new review of existing Tree Preservation Orders.	A basis to assess the improvement or decline in the in conservation areas and take measures accordingly.
2. Identify ancient and veteran trees.	A basis to assess the improvement or decline in the condition of trees in conservation areas and take measures accordingly.

Objective 6: Encourage schemes for the enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Action:	Outcome:
1. Compile an improvement strategy for each conservation area.	Provide information for partnership working with stakeholders.

Objective 7: Develop and strengthen relationships with key stakeholder organisations and seek their active engagement and participation in works to conserve and enhance conservation areas.

Action:	Outcome:
1 Identify key stakeholder organisations with the greatest potential to assist in achieving conservation area enhancement.	Establishment of a basis for joint working with stakeholders.
2. Identify and take forward joint projects with identified key stakeholder organisations	Implementation of conservation area improvement strategies.

Objective 8: Seek external resources to achieve specifically identified objectives of the management plan

Action:	Outcome:
1. Monitor funding opportunities available either to the National Park Authority or local organisations and seek funding to enable the achievement of conservation area improvement opportunities.	Implementation of conservation area improvement strategies.

Conservation Area Specific Management Plan

Conservation area name

This document will be completed for each conservation area. The following sets out in draft the contents.

Contents

- 1 – Issues and concerns
- 2 – Building condition and repair (urgent works and repairs notices)
- 3 – Building alterations and levels of development (Article 4(2) directions)
- 4 – Tree works and woodland management
- 5 – Improvement strategy and enhancement schemes
- 6 – Resources
- 7 – Good practice guidance
- 8 – Objectives
- 9 – Monitoring and review