Conservation Officer for up-to-date advice.

Legislation is complex and changes from time to time, so contact the National Park’s Building Conservation Officer for special advice before you start work.

If a building is listed, additional controls apply to the appearance and character of both the outside and inside of a property. If replacement is the only option, use the existing features such as chimneys, doors and windows.

Older properties need regular and sympathetic maintenance. Unfortunately, restoration does not always restore and ‘improvements’ don’t necessarily improve historic buildings. Good restoration is a skilled business. It is very often the accumulation of small changes carried out over a number of years that can end up harming the special character of a building. Construction details and materials are very important, so look carefully at existing buildings in the area for ideas. Repairing or replacing parts of a building will reduce its historic value. From the conservation point of view it is always better, where possible, to repair features rather than to remove them.

Sympathetically restored cottage with cast-iron windows, timber porch and windows remade to match the originals.

If a building is listed, additional controls apply to works which affect the appearance or character of both the outside and inside of a property. If in doubt ask for advice before you start work. Legislation is complex and changes from time to time, so contact the National Park’s Building Conservation Officer for up to date advice.

If you have time, why not explore the history of your local area?

There are several local history publications and societies in the area.

If you do not have access to a computer and would like to refer to any of these documents produced by the Western Escarpment Conservation Area Steering Group, please contact the New Forest National Park Authority and speak to a Planning Officer.

Planning applications / development

For general advice contact the planning team at the National Park Authority and speak to a Planning Officer.

Planning Hotline

Telephone: 01590 646615, 8.45am - 3pm, Monday to Friday

Email: dev.control@newforestnpa.gov.uk

Conservation area / historic buildings

For special advice contact the National Park Authority’s Building Conservation Officer.

Telephone: 01590 646678.

The National Park Authority has produced a series of leaflets and publications on building conservation and design. Please refer to the New Forest National Park Authority’s website or send an email (details to the right).

Tree

For advice on trees contact the National Park Authority’s Tree Officers.

Telephone: 01590 646600.

Email: trees@newforestnpa.gov.uk

Further contact:

Royal Institute of Architects

Telephone: 0207 580 5533

Email: info@riba.org

National Park authorities

The New Forest National Park Authority has produced a number of publications relating to the conservation of historic buildings.

Planning applications / development

Planning applications / development

Further reading:

The following can be found on the National Park website:

- ‘Design Guide’
- ‘Buildings of local interest’
- ‘Village Design Statements eg. Hyde VDS’
- ‘Western Escarpment Conservation Area Character Appraisal’

National guidance:

- National Planning Policy Framework

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk

Telephone: 01590 646615, 8.45am - 3pm, Monday to Friday

Email: dev.control@newforestnpa.gov.uk

This leaflet has been prepared by the Western Escarpment Conservation Area Steering Group consisting of representatives from Hale, Woodgreen, Godshill, Hyde and Ellingham, Whitchurch & Ringwood Parish Councils and Ringwood & Fordingbridge (Town Councils) working with the New Forest National Park Authority.

The leaflet provides advice and information for anyone living, working or with an interest in the Western Escarpment Conservation Area. It explains what a conservation area is, what it does and how to use it. It also gives you and where to go to obtain further advice.

What is a conservation area?

A conservation area is defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 as an area of special architectural and historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is the quality and character of the area, not just the individual buildings, which are the prime consideration in designating a conservation area. The focus is on the built environment.
Planning in a conservation area

Planning in this area is the responsibility of the New Forest National Park Authority. Planning applications are determined against the National Park Authority’s Core Strategy policies. These can be found on the National Park Authority’s website (address on back cover).

Development in a conservation area can require more detailed information to support a planning application, such as a Heritage Statement explaining how the proposed development relates to existing buildings in the area, the materials to be used etc. An outline application for development in a conservation area is generally not considered sufficient.

Applications that would affect the character or appearance of the conservation area are advertised (through local papers and by site notice) and the public have the opportunity to comment. Parish and town councils and amenity societies are also consulted as part of the planning process. Proposals for development outside the conservation area may also be included in this process, if it could affect the views into and out of it.

If you are thinking of submitting a planning application for development in the conservation area, it may be helpful to use a planning agent; and if the proposals are significant, or on a sensitive site, consider appointing an architect familiar with this type of work. Advice on employing an architect can be obtained from the Royal Institute of Architects (contact details on back cover).

Design of new development

The National Park Authority has a duty to ensure that the character of a conservation area is preserved or enhanced when considering applications for development. New development that makes a positive contribution to the area will be acceptable provided it meets planning policies.

Attention should be paid to ensuring that proposed new works do not harm the special character of the conservation area, and that buildings are sympathetically designed and complement the best that is already there. For more guidance refer to the National Park Authority’s Design Guide.

Conservation Area Consent

Conservation Area Consent is normally needed to demolish all, or the substantial majority of, any building with a total cubic content exceeding 115 cubic metres.

Consent is also needed for the entire removal or construction of any gate, wall, fence or railing more than one metre high abutting a highway, public footpath or open space, or more than two metres high elsewhere.

If you are not sure, check with the planning team at the National Park Authority.

Consent is not normally granted for the demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. If you are considering proposals to redevelop a site within the conservation area, conservation area consent will be needed to demolish existing buildings and this should be submitted at the same time as the planning application for any replacement buildings.

Buildings of local interest

There are a number of buildings of local interest within the Western Escarpment Conservation Area. These are unlisted buildings which do not have the same protection as statutorily listed buildings, but are important nonetheless as they contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area. To check if your property has been identified as a building of local interest, refer to the ‘My Property’ facility on the National Park Authority’s website.

Trees

Trees in the conservation area have similar protection to those covered by Tree Preservation Orders. It is an offence to carry out works to trees without prior written consent from the Local Planning Authority. You should write to the New Forest National Park Authority giving six weeks’ notice of your intention to carry out any such works.

A free explanatory leaflet Protected Trees—a guide to Tree Preservation Procedures is available from the New Forest National Park Authority or for further advice on trees, contact the National Park Authority’s Tree Officers.

Outbuildings

Outbuildings are an essential part of rural character. Many outbuildings have been built randomly over time in response to agricultural or industrial use. Outbuildings can have a detrimental impact. They should not compete in size with the main building. They should be incidental and subservient to the dwelling in scale and appearance.

Attention should be paid to ensuring that outbuildings are sympathetically designed and complement the best that is already there. For more guidance refer to the National Park Authority’s Design Guide.

Outbuildings can also be included in this process, if it could affect the views into and out of a conservation area. If you are considering proposals to redevelop a site within the conservation area, conservation area consent will be needed to demolish existing buildings and this should be submitted at the same time as the planning application for any replacement buildings.

Before employing an agent or architect ask to see examples of their work and the fees charged, to make sure they are suitable for your needs.