

Trees contribute greatly to the character and appearance of conservation areas, and designation provides a general protection for all trees over a certain size within the area. Some trees may already be protected by a specific Tree Preservation Order but for all others you must give the Council six weeks written notice before lopping or felling them.

Trees have legal protection equivalent to a TPO for that period, and the Council may make an Order if it is considered appropriate. Fruit trees cultivated for fruit production are exempt, as are trees with trunks less than 7.5 cm in diameter at 1.5 m above the ground. Once a tree is protected by a TPO, the consent of the Council must be obtained for any work to that tree, whatever its size.

To ensure that the public has an opportunity to comment on new development proposals, all planning applications which affect the character of a conservation area must also be advertised on site and in the local newspaper.



ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

The character of a conservation area can easily be spoilt by well-intentioned home improvements, such as the insertion of plastic windows or the addition of a new porch, which can result in a gradual loss of the special, historic details which contribute so much to the attractiveness of each area. Therefore, to control unsympathetic alterations to unlisted family dwellings within conservation areas, Winchester City Council may decide to serve an Article 4(2) Direction, removing certain permitted development rights to these properties. This can be done without referral to central government although public consultation must be carried out. The Direction can cover alterations to roofs (including chimneys and materials), front elevations (including porches, extensions,

windows and doors), and front gardens (including vehicular hardstandings, walls, gates and fences). Other more comprehensive types of alteration can be controlled by an Article 4(1) Direction, but the approval of central government is needed. The Council will consider the need for such Directions periodically.

If you have any queries relating to conservation areas, please contact:

Winchester City Council,
Historic Environment
Colebrook Street
Winchester,
Hampshire SO23 9LJ

Email: conservation@winchester.gov.uk

Web site: www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/conservation

Guidance notes to date in this series are:

1. Listed Buildings
2. Listed Buildings: Alterations and Repairs
3. Conservation Areas
4. Sash Windows
5. Casement Windows

CONSERVATION AREAS



One of a series of Guidance Notes about historic buildings and conservation areas, produced by Winchester City Council

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities as *areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*, and there are now more than 8,000 throughout the country. They may vary in character, form and size from a small group of buildings to a major part of a town, but their designation means that they are all worthy of protection as areas of special merit. They usually contain buildings which are 'listed' but this is not a prerequisite of designation.

The legislation relating to conservation areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and government advice is contained within another important document, Planning Policy Guidance: Planning and the Historic Environment, more commonly referred to as PPG15. Copies of both of these documents can be viewed at the Planning Department.

Conservation Areas in Winchester District

Winchester City Council has already designated thirty-seven conservation areas in the District and additions to this number will be considered periodically. They vary from the urban centre of Winchester to small, downland villages such as Ovington, or from New Alresford, with its market place surrounded by listed

buildings, to Bishops Waltham, which includes ponds and the ruins of a bishop's palace. Each of these areas is unique with its own 'sense of place', providing a variety of open spaces, buildings, trees, and water features which give the area its special character.

Policies which seek the protection and enhancement of these conservation areas are included within the Winchester District Local Plan, adopted in 1998. These

policies follow the Government's advice contained within PPG15 and seek to ensure that new development is in accord with the special character of the conservation area concerned. When considering new development in conservation areas, the Council will therefore expect applicants to submit detailed plans and elevations, and they may also

be asked to provide additional information to show the likely impact of their proposals on the surrounding area.

Conservation Area Character Appraisals

To identify the special character of its conservation areas, the Council has already completed a number of 'Conservation Area Character Appraisals' which consider the historic development of each area and record its most notable features. Copies of these appraisals are available from the Planning Department at a small charge.



WHAT DOES DESIGNATION MEAN?

Conservation area designation automatically increases the Council's control over demolition of buildings and over certain alterations to residential properties occupied by a single family which would normally be 'permitted development'. These are specified in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, but briefly planning permission is required when any of the following are proposed:

- Extend the building by more than 50 cubic metres, or 10%, whichever is greater.
- Erect or alter a building, such as a garden shed, in the curtilage of a dwelling house, which is larger than 10 cubic metres.
- Install external cladding, such as weather-boarding or false stone.
- Install roof dormers.
- Fix a satellite dish to a chimney; or to a building over 15 metres high; or to a wall facing a highway.
- Install radio masts, antennae, or radio equipment housing with a volume in excess of 2 cubic metres.

This list is not meant to be definitive, so if you are in any doubt whether or not you need planning permission, please contact the Council before starting work. Buildings in non-residential uses (such as shops and offices), and buildings in multiple occupation (such as flats or bedsits), are covered by separate legislation and have fewer 'permitted development' rights than houses which are occupied by a single family.

Demolition in Conservation Areas

Following the publication of Circular 14/97, Conservation Area Consent (CAC) is required for the total or substantial demolition of any building with a total cubic content in excess of 115 cubic metres in a conservation area. Consent is also required for the total or substantial demolition of a boundary wall over 1 metre high adjoining a highway or over 2 metres elsewhere. If the building is listed, in ecclesiastical use, or a scheduled ancient monument, then different legislation applies.