

APPENDIX 2

Design Guidelines for Conservation Areas

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APPENDIX 2

Design Guidelines for Conservation Areas

Introduction

- A2.1 These guidelines apply Policies C4 and C5 in Chapter 2 (pages 24 and 26) to specific aspects of development in Conservation Areas. It should be noted that they include some items which may fall outside the scope of planning control. These items are, nevertheless, set out below in order to present comprehensive design guidelines for the Conservation Areas. They should be read in conjunction with Appendix 4, which sets out design criteria for housing development and building within residential streets, and Appendix 3 in relation to advertisements, satellite antennae, trees, planting and landscaping.
- A2.2 Aspects contributing to the character and appearance of Conservation Areas which the Council will seek to preserve and enhance include:
- (i) The layout, density and scale of buildings and streets in the area;
 - (ii) The relationship of open spaces, gardens and trees to buildings and streets in the area;
 - (iii) The original design, detailing and materials of the area's buildings, structures and streets;
 - (iv) Unique features of the area such as vistas, views and focal points.
- A2.3 Compliance with the following general principles for development in Conservation Areas will normally be required:
- (i) Existing features of the area and of its buildings which contribute to its character and appearance should be retained;
 - (ii) Original external features of buildings should, where practical, be repaired rather than replaced;
 - (iii) Where possible, opportunities should be taken to enhance the area by reinstating original designs, materials and features which have previously been altered unsympathetically.
 - (iv) New buildings, extensions and alterations visible from public places should positively enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Windows

- A2.4 Historically, the design of windows has evolved over the years. This helps determine the age of a building and establish the character of an area. The majority of buildings in the Borough's Conservation Areas were designed to have vertical sliding sash windows recessed in the window openings. Those pre-dating the mid 19th Century are normally subdivided with glazing bars. Later sashes generally have one vertical glazing bar, or none at all, and include window horns. Late Victorian and Edwardian windows sometimes include glazing bars in all or part of the upper sash. Small side-hung sashes are evident in older cottage-style buildings and

for inconspicuous Victorian windows. Side-hung and fixed casement windows with top-hung fanlights and substantial mullions and transoms are typical of some late Victorian and Edwardian buildings. Some have leaded lights with coloured glass. In order to maintain the character of Conservation Areas:

- (i) Where the repair of the original windows is impractical, replacement windows should normally match the materials, glazing bars, window horns, frame and means of opening of the original. They should normally have a painted, not stained, finish. Non-traditional forms of window such as modern bow and louvre windows, picture windows without glazing bars or other forms of subdivision, metal and plastic framed windows and windows with stick-on strips to resemble glazing bars are normally out of character with Conservation Areas and will not be acceptable.
- (ii) The replacement of windows which have previously been altered should normally reinstate the original style of window as set out in (i) above.
- (iii) The installation of sealed units in place of original windows should normally only be considered if it is impractical to repair the original windows and upgrade them with weatherstripping and inconspicuous secondary glazing and if the materials and external appearance of the replacement windows match the original, as in (i) above.
- (iv) Decorative surrounds to windows, including brick arches should be retained.
- (v) Most window frames in older brick buildings are set back from the face of the wall. This gives the facades shadow and depth. The position within the opening of replacement and newly formed windows should follow the original pattern for the building.
- (vi) The original window openings in older buildings were usually designed to have well balanced proportions and positions. Where visible from public places, a window opening should normally only be formed or altered if it is compatible with the overall design of the fenestration.

Doors and Porches

A2.5 The original front doors of buildings in Conservation Areas are usually well proportioned and have detailing appropriate for the age of the building, in contrast to standardised modern doors. Recessed open porches are features of many Victorian and Edwardian buildings and sometimes incorporate top and side lights around the door.

- (i) Where the repair of an original front door is impractical, the replacement door should normally be similar to the original and include the appropriate style of panelling and glazing, if any. Standardised modern doors will normally not be acceptable.
- (ii) Recessed entrance porches should not be enclosed with doors.
- (iii) New porches enclosing front doors will only be acceptable where they complement the original design of the facade, use traditional materials appropriate to the building and do not disrupt original decorative detailing. Porches which would disrupt the design of a terrace or pair of semi-detached buildings will not normally be acceptable.
- (iv) The original decorative surrounds to porches and doors should be retained.

Outside Walls and Decoration

A2.6 The original facing materials and detailing of buildings are essential components of the character of the Borough's Conservation Areas. Predominant materials are yellow stock brick, local red brick and feather edged weatherboarding. Decorative detailing varies depending on the type and age of the building. It includes friezes, stringcourses, arches over openings, use of brick of different colour and shape, cornices and decorative panels set into the brickwork.

- (i) The original facing materials and decorative detailing of a building should normally be retained, repaired or restored, as appropriate, to match the original.
- (ii) Repointing should match the original style of pointing - normally flush or slightly recessed and not struck or projecting - and the original colour. The strength of mortar should be slightly weaker than the brick and should include lime.
- (iii) The removal of paint from, and the restoration of, facing brickwork will be encouraged where this can be achieved without damaging the face of the brickwork.
- (iv) The application to facing brickwork of paint, render or other forms of cladding should not normally be carried out to buildings in Conservation Areas. In exceptional circumstances painting or rendering a building in a terrace may be acceptable where more than two-thirds of the buildings have already been altered in this way, where the visual unity of the terrace as a whole would be improved and where important decorative features would not be obliterated.
- (v) For terraced and semi-detached buildings, the colour scheme of painted elevations should help unify the appearance of the terrace or pair of buildings and be sympathetic to the original character of the building. (Colour codes for buildings in Conservation Areas will be drawn up by the Council, in liaison with local residents and property owners).
- (vi) Weatherboarding should have a painted, not stained, finish.
- (vii) Utility boxes for electricity, gas and other meters should be positioned out of sight from public places.

Roofs and Chimneys

A2.7 The design and materials of roofs and chimneys help establish the character of Conservation Areas. Welsh slate is a widely used traditional material for 19th Century buildings and helps unify the Borough's Conservation Areas and their terraces and semi-detached buildings. It also weathers well to produce attractive roof surfaces. Towards the end of the Victorian period clay tiles began to supersede slate for new buildings. Normally this blends well with the overall design of the building. Chimney stacks and pots, decorative ridge tiles and finials also add to the character of the Conservation Areas.

- (i) Traditional roofing materials, including decorative ridge tiles and finials, should normally be retained, repaired or restored as appropriate to match the original.
- (ii) Welsh slate (new or good quality seconds) should normally be used to repair or restore original slate roofs. Artificial slate will only be acceptable as an alternative if it matches the dimensions, thickness, texture and colour of the original Welsh slate and has random bevelled edges and if it does not adjoin another roof of natural Welsh slate

(with or without a projecting party fire wall).

- (iii) Concrete tiles are normally not an acceptable alternative to clay tiles owing to their different weathering characteristics and appearance.
- (iv) Painting the external surface of a slate or tiled roof with a sealant is not acceptable as this will alter the appearance of the roof.
- (v) Rooflights will normally be acceptable only if they are not readily visible from public places, if they are of a discreet design and if they do not dominate the appearance of the roof pitch.
- (vi) Chimney stacks and pots usually emphasise the roofline and often have good detailing which adds to the character of the building. Stacks and pots visible from public places should normally be retained and repaired as necessary. Brickwork of stacks should not normally be rendered or painted.

TV Aerials and Satellite Dishes

- A2.8
- (i) TV aerials fixed to chimney stacks and walls tend to spoil the appearance of buildings in Conservation Areas as well as being potential sources of damage to brickwork and roofs. Where possible, they should be installed within the building or out of sight from public places, and for flats in the same building should be limited to one communal aerial.
 - (ii) Satellite dishes tend to conflict with the historic character of Conservation Areas. Also, when fixed to buildings they are usually incompatible with the appearance of the facade. They should be installed out of sight from public places or be of such a colour, design and position that they are inconspicuous. In addition to Policy C4 (page 24), they will be expected to comply with Policy C9 (page 29) and the design guidelines in Appendix 3.

Gardens, Trees and Hardstandings

A2.9 Trees, gardens and planted open areas contribute to the appearance of most of the Borough's Conservation Areas, softening the "visual hardness" of buildings and streets, as appropriate to the character of the area. In addition to Policy C4, proposals for development will be expected to comply with Policies C13 and C14 (pages 32 and 33), the guidelines in Appendix 3 and the following requirements:

- (i) Front gardens should normally be maintained as planted areas with the traditional boundary treatment of brick walls, piers and iron railing as appropriate for the area.
- (ii) Unless they can be satisfactorily screened by planting and are inconspicuous, refuse storage facilities should not normally be located in front gardens.
- (iii) Hardstandings which front a street would normally only be acceptable if no reasonable alternative to parking is possible and:
 - (a) there is adequate space in the garden to allow a sympathetic design which incorporates adequate planting,

- (b) the hard surface does not extend across the full frontage of the property,
- (c) appropriate boundary walls and/or iron railings are provided across part of the frontage,
- (d) the proposal does not involve the loss of street or other mature trees,
- (e) the hardstanding is surfaced in traditional materials, appropriate to the character of the area, such as natural stone paving, cobbles, setts or brick pavers.

Commercial Frontages and Advertisements

A2.10 Whilst commercial properties in Conservation Areas need to cater for modern commercial requirements, care is needed to ensure their external appearance is compatible with the character of the building and Conservation Area. Many frontages are unsympathetic to the character of the area and the appearance of the building above. Significant improvements in the design of replacement frontages will be required.

- (i) Original frontages, features and elevational detail, such as fascia scrolls and columns, cornices and windows above fascia level should normally be retained. They should not be obliterated by new frontages or fascias. In particular, the traditional non-commercial character of frontages above fascia level should be maintained.
- (ii) The design of new ground floor frontages, where these are appropriate, should be seen to give structural support to the upper floors of the building by incorporating piers and columns of sympathetic materials.
- (iii) The arrangement of the elements of the ground floor frontage - windows, piers, doors, etc. - should normally relate to the arrangement of those of the upper elevation.
- (iv) Frontages of adjoining buildings should be kept visually separate. Where a shop extends across more than one original building, this is especially important. Fascias and advertisements should not extend across what were originally separate buildings.
- (v) The dominant type of modern materials in commercial frontages - large areas of glass, perspex, plastics, etc. - generally give an untextured glossy appearance alien to traditional buildings. They should be used with care and should not dominate the appearance of the frontage. In particular:
 - (a) Large areas of plate glass window should be sub-divided by mullions, columns or transoms, or be recessed behind the "structural" elements.
 - (b) Fascias of perspex and other forms of plastic will not normally be allowed. Fascias should normally have a painted finish. Alternatively it would normally be acceptable to omit the fascia panel and reinstate the wall to match the brickwork or render of the first floor and fix appropriate individual lettering to it.
- (iv) Fascias should normally be at least 300mm below the cill level of first floor windows and no more than 600mm deep.
- (vii) Internally lit fascias will not normally be acceptable. External illumination is preferable as it highlights some parts of the frontage whilst providing texture and shadow. Projecting box signs will only be acceptable in commercial areas at fascia level if they

are not intrusive on the frontage and do not add to a clutter of projecting signs in any one part of the street. Painted hanging signs would be an attractive alternative and might be externally lit.

- (viii) The style of lettering and the colour scheme of fascias and other advertisements should be appropriate to the character of the building and the area and should not visually dominate the frontage.
- (ix) On properties which have maintained a predominately residential character, advertisements should be kept to a minimum and be discreet.
- (x) Brightly coloured plastic entrance canopies and window shades are not usually suitable in Conservation Areas. Canopies and window shades would only be acceptable if they are designed to blend with the frontage of the building.

Fascias and advertisements should also meet the requirements of Appendix 3 where appropriate.

Demolition

- A2.11 (i) The character of Conservation Areas depends on their buildings. There will be a presumption against the complete or partial demolition of all buildings, walls and other structures in Conservation Areas unless:
- (a) the building, etc., harms the character or appearance of the area and cannot be practically repaired or altered for it to contribute in future to this character or appearance,
 - (b) the building, etc. contributes nothing to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area by virtue of its size, position in the street scene and lack of historic or architectural interest,
 - (c) the proposal, including the design of any replacement buildings and associated landscaping and surfacing treatment, positively enhances the character of the Conservation Area.
- (ii) Demolition will not be allowed where it is required to enable intensification of development on the site or the development of large gardens and backland, unless the above criteria are met.

Extensions and New Buildings

A2.12 The acceptability of extensions and new buildings will depend on their situation in relation to neighbouring buildings, public streets and open spaces, their design and materials and their contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

- (i) New buildings and extensions must not reduce unduly the daylight, outlook and privacy for neighbouring properties or obstruct views from public places.
 - (ii) New buildings and extensions should respect the general pattern of development in the area and maintain the setting of existing buildings. In particular, extensions should not normally infill spaces between two terraces or other buildings. In exceptional circumstances, such an extension might be acceptable if it produces a significant improvement to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
 - (iii) Extensions should respect the character of the existing and any adjoining buildings. In most cases:
 - (a) Materials for an extension should match those of the existing building.
 - (b) The pitch of the roof to an extension should be similar to that of the main roof.
 - (c) The proportions of the window openings and frames should match those of the main building.
 - (d) Facing brickwork should have a similar style of bonding, mortar and pointing to the existing building.
 - (e) Extensions should not disrupt a balanced design. New dormer windows (or roof lights) for a loft conversion, therefore, would not be acceptable in terraced or semi-detached properties where they would be easily visible from the street. Where they are appropriate, they should not dominate the roof area.
 - (iv) New buildings should be compatible with the traditional character of the Conservation Area and of neighbouring buildings within the Conservation Area in terms of massing, height, elevational design and the use of traditional materials, and should positively enhance the character of the area. In particular:
 - (a) The fenestration should normally comprise windows and doors of traditional proportions and have a vertical emphasis.
 - (b) The cill height of windows to the upper floors should normally relate to that of neighbouring buildings.
 - (c) Windows and doors should normally be well recessed in the openings to provide visual depth to the facade.
 - (d) A good standard of decorative detailing appropriate to the style and status of the building and the character of the area will normally be required. This should also provide visual depth to the facade.
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- (e) Traditional chimney stacks will normally be required for buildings of a residential character.
- (f) The design and location of services, including refuse disposal, utility boxes, extract vents and ducts, and soil pipes should normally be discreet, and located away from the main elevation of the building out of sight from public places. Pipes and extract vents projecting through roof pitches will normally not be allowed.

Cocklesheds, Leigh Old Town Conservation Area

A2.13 In order to protect and facilitate the expansion and continued viability of existing cockle processing facilities in Leigh Old Town without harming the appearance of the area, development of the cocklesheds to the west of Belton Bridge should normally comply with the following guidelines:

- (i) A rear building line of 10 metres from the back edge of the High Street (this applies to oil storage tanks, plant and machinery as well as to buildings and other structures).
- (ii) A maximum height for the north elevation of 3 metres above the level of the adjacent highway.
- (iii) A maximum height for the south elevation of 4 metres above the natural level of the adjacent foreshore, subject to the height of the eaves not exceeding 3 metres above the level of the adjacent highway.
- (iv) Spaces between cocklesheds should be maintained.
- (v) Materials for extensions should either match the existing building or be of corrugated iron or timber weatherboarded cladding with a painted finish on concrete or rendered bases and plinths.

Alley Dock, Leigh Old Town Conservation Area

A2.14 Development at the rear of 19-24 High Street and 3-5 Theobalds Cottages, High Street, should normally comply with the following guidelines in addition to the other relevant guidelines of this Appendix:

- (i) Only ground floor rear extensions will be acceptable, subject to a maximum projection of three metres from the rear wall of the original building and a mono-pitch roof of a traditional design. Extensions should not incorporate balconies in the roof space.
- (ii) Balconies will be acceptable on buildings which do not already have a ground floor rear extension, other than a small lean-to extension. They should be limited to a maximum projection of 1.5 metres from the face of the building. Balustrading should comprise vertical posts and handrail painted or stained black and have a maximum height of one metre. Horizontal ranch-style balustrading will not be acceptable.
- (iii) Window openings should remain unaltered other than to accommodate a balcony door. Balcony doors should normally be contained within the reveals of the original window opening.

- (iv) Boundary fences and gates should be of close boarded vertical feather-edged timber boarding to a maximum height of 1.8 metres. They should have a dark stained finish. (The existing fencing presents a poor frontage to Alley Dock. As it needs replacing a uniform treatment, as set out above, will be sought.)

