

CONSERVATION AREA



GENERAL GUIDANCE

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1. ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This new Conservation Area General Guidance aims to improve the overall management and quality of Conservation Areas in the borough, so that they can be better protected. It is intended to be useful for owners and occupiers of sites in Conservation Areas, as well as people interested in understanding changes and proposed alterations to buildings and spaces.

This document outlines the context of existing planning policies, sets out the principles of the law, and gives good practice guidance for consideration when preparing changes to land or buildings in a Conservation Area.

The information is relevant to all of Kingston's Conservation Areas, and not specific to any one area. Brief summaries of the interest and character of each individual Conservation Area can be found on the [council's website](#), with links to the original Designation Report, and later Appraisal where applicable. At the time of publication, the Council is beginning a process of producing up-to-date Appraisals and Management Plans (CAAMPs) for all of Kingston's Conservation Areas. This General Guidance document is intended to lead and streamline these updates, by avoiding duplication of common points and issues.

This guidance document is intended to support the borough's existing [Adopted Development Plan Documents](#). The Council is in the process of producing a new [Local Plan](#), which is anticipated to be submitted to the Secretary of State for public examination in 2024.

The hyperlinks in this document were correct at the time of publication. If a link should become inactive, please refer to the most up-to-date guidance from the relevant organisation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 What is a Conservation Area?

2.2 What are the criteria for designating a Conservation Area?

2.3 Conservation Areas in Kingston upon Thames

2.4 Conservation Area Advisory Committees (CAACs)

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 What is a Conservation Area?

Kingston's historic pattern of development has created places with different local identities, shaping the distinctive townscapes we are familiar with today. This has come about through an ongoing process of change; our built environment is constantly evolving to address current needs and circumstances. Some specific places and buildings are afforded additional protections, so that this change can be carefully managed in a way that mitigates harm to our valued historic environment.

A Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset, protected by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It is an **area of special architectural or historic interest** with a **definable character and appearance**. Kingston Council, as the Local Planning Authority, has designated these following extensive research and consultation, and must pay "special attention" to "preserving or enhancing their character or appearance" when making planning decisions.

Planning permission is needed for some development which might normally be permitted outside of Conservation Areas. For further information, see Section [4](#).

2.2 What are the criteria for designating a Conservation Area?

Kingston Council has a duty under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate as Conservation Areas those 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which is desirable to preserve or enhance.'

A Conservation Area will often include a range of listed and locally listed buildings, unlisted buildings of different ages and styles, open spaces, walls and other boundary treatments, trees and other features. However, it is the overall character and appearance of an area, considered as a whole, which is important to consider when designating a Conservation Area; and how these different buildings and features contribute to this special character.

Decisions to designate a Conservation Area will only be made following a detailed assessment of the character of an area and local consultations. The NPPF states that, "when considering the designation of Conservation Areas, Local Planning Authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest."

Section 69(2) and 70(1) of the Act place a continuing duty on Local Planning Authorities to consider whether they should designate new Conservation Areas or extend existing ones. The designation of new Conservation Areas, the amending of existing ones and the adoption of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans requires the approval of councillors (council members) at the relevant council committee, or via delegated powers.

Consultation will take the form of:

- Consultation letters to the existing occupiers of the properties within the area;
- A public exhibition or meeting; and
- A report to the relevant council committee

If you have evidence to demonstrate that an area has special and definable architectural or historic interest that is worthy of preservation, you can ask the Council to consider designating it as a new Conservation Area. Such evidence would include supporting information such as a Historic Area Assessment, which charts the history and character of the area, illustrations including historic maps, an audit of important buildings, suggested boundaries and details of any threats to the area's character.

For further information, refer to [*Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal. Designation and Management*](#) (2nd ed, 2019).

2.3 Conservation Areas in Kingston upon Thames

As of 2023, there are 26 Conservation Areas in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, covering around 9.4% of the borough (351 hectares) and containing around 10,000 postal addresses.

The council's [interactive Heritage Map](#) shows the location and extent of all of the borough's designated and non-designated heritage assets.

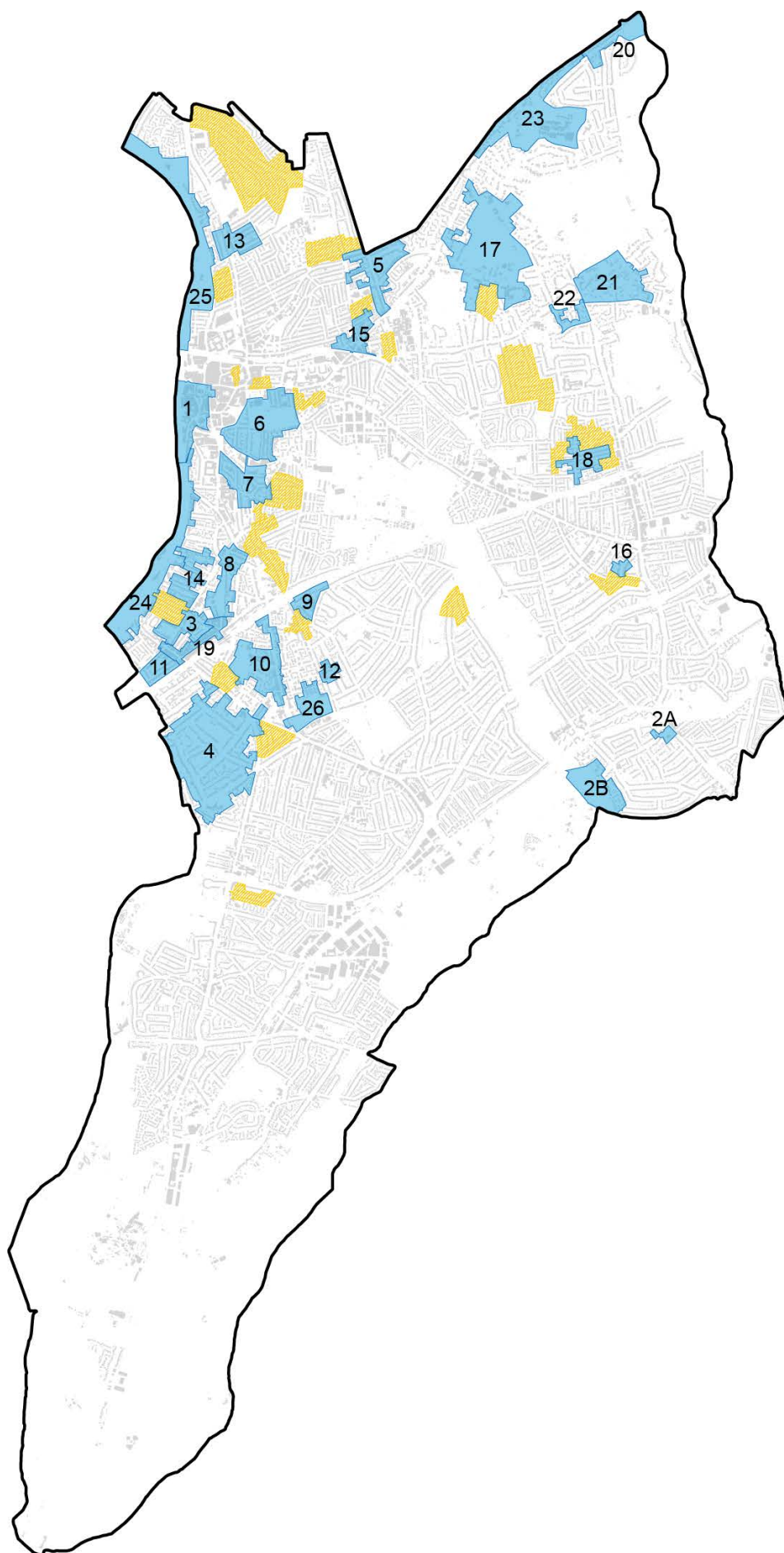
A summary of the historic or architectural interest of each Conservation Area can be found on the [council's website](#), along with the original Designation Reports and existing character appraisals where they exist.

The council has a continuing work programme to revise and produce up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, in line with current planning policy and guidance.

2.4 Conservation Area Advisory Committees (CAACs)

There are currently three independent bodies committed to working with the council on Conservation Area matters. These CAACs work across the three neighbourhood areas which contain Conservation Areas in the borough - Kingston and North Kingston, New and Old Malden, and Surbiton - and comprise a cross-section of local people who are often either professionally or voluntarily involved in heritage and the built environment. While not a statutory consultee, the CAACs comment on planning applications and relevant policy and council projects, monitor development activity in their respective areas and make suggestions for improvements.

Further information on the CAACs, including their Terms of Reference, can be found on the [council's website](#).



No	Name
CA01	Kingston Old Town
CA02	Old Malden (St Johns)
CA03	Old Malden (Plough Green)
CA04	St Andrew's Square
CA05	Southborough
CA06	Liverpool Road
CA07	Fairfield/Knight's Park
CA08	Grove Crescent
CA09	Claremont Road
CA10	Surbiton Hill Park
CA11	Oakhill
CA12	Victoria Avenue
CA13	Christchurch
CA14	Richmond Road
CA15	Cadogan Road
CA16	Park Road
CA17	Presburg Road
CA18	Coombe Wood
CA19	The Groves
CA20	Surbiton Town Centre
CA21	Kingston Vale
CA22	Coombe Hill
CA23	Coombe House
CA24	Riverside South
CA25	Riverside North
CA26	Fishponds Park

Borough map of **Conservation Areas** (blue) and **Local Areas of Special Character** (yellow)

3. LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

3.3 Kingston's Adopted Development Plan

3.4 Kingston's new Local Plan

3. LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

All development proposals are determined by Local Planning Authorities in accordance with the relevant legislation, Government policy and guidance and Kingston's Local Development Plan.

3.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The primary legislation with regard to Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (The Act), as amended and updated. [Part II of the Act](#) sets out the statutory duties of Local Planning Authorities, including designating Conservation Areas, publishing proposals for their preservation and enhancement, and paying “special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing their character or appearance” in the exercise of planning functions.

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

[The National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

Chapter 16 sets out policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets, which include designated Conservation Areas. It stresses that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and their conservation offers a “contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations”; with “wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits”.

The NPPF has related guidance in the [Planning Practice Guidance](#) (PPG) and in Historic England Good Practice Advice Notes: [Good Practice Advice 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans](#) (March 2015); [Good Practice Advice 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment](#) (March 2015); and [Good Practice Advice 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets](#) (Dec 2017).

3.3 Kingston's Adopted Development Plan

The current Development Plan for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames consists of the following:

- [The London Plan](#)

The London Plan is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, prepared by the Mayor of London. All planning decisions must be taken in accordance with it, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The London Plan stresses the importance of heritage conservation to London as a whole. It promotes the sustainable growth of London, and includes a set of policies for the historic environment under Chapter 7, 'Heritage and Culture'.

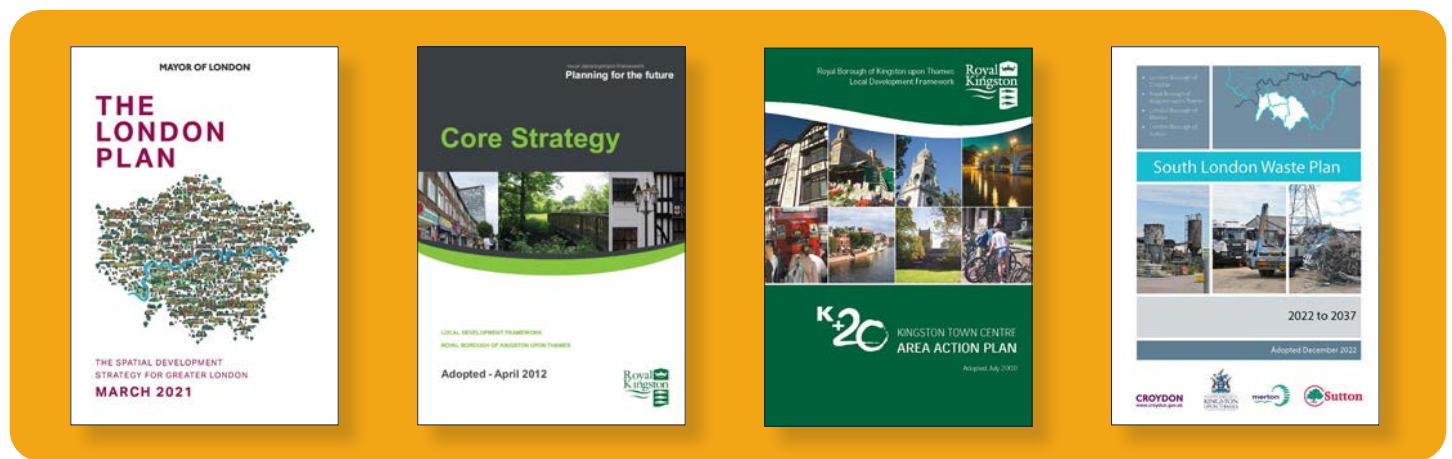
- [Core Strategy](#)

Policy DM 12 covers Development in Conservation Areas and Affecting Heritage Assets.

- [Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan](#)

Chapter 7 covers objectives and policies that concern the Historic Environment within the Kingston Town Centre Area. Chapter 12 includes a character analysis of the town centre, and corresponding objectives and policies for specific character areas.

- [South London Waste Plan](#)



Kingston's Adopted Development Plan documents

3.4 Kingston's new Local Plan

The Council's new [Local Plan](#) is anticipated for adoption in 2024, subject to further public consultation and [examination by the Planning Inspectorate](#).



Kingston's Draft Local Plan for consultation

4. WHEN IS PLANNING PERMISSION REQUIRED?

4.1 The definition of development

4.2 'Like-for-like' replacements

4.3 Permitted development

4.4 Article 4 Directions

4.5 Trees

4.6 Additional designations to consider

4.7 Lawful Development Certificates

4.8 Planning enforcement

4. WHEN IS PLANNING PERMISSION REQUIRED?

Additional planning controls in Conservation Areas are not intended to prevent all change, but rather to ensure that all development is sensitive and sympathetic to the area's defined special character and heritage interest. Most development in a Conservation Area requires planning permission.

4.1 The definition of development

'Development' includes building operations, such as structural alterations, construction, rebuilding and most demolition. The statutory definition of 'development' is set out in [Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#).

[Section 57 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) directs that all operations or work falling within the statutory definition of 'development' require planning permission.

However, there are different type of planning permission, such as:

- local authority grants of planning permission;
- national grants of permission by the The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, which allows certain building works and changes of use to be carried out without having to make a planning application;
- local grants of planning permission through Local or Neighbourhood Development Orders, or Community Right to Build Orders; and
- development which is to be carried out by a local authority, national park authority or statutory undertaker that has been authorised by a relevant government department.

Following this, some specific types of small development work, such as small extensions and loft conversions, can be completed under permitted development without needing to submit a planning application; unless Permitted Development Rights are restricted by an Article 4 Direction. For further information, refer to Section [4.3](#) and [4.4](#).

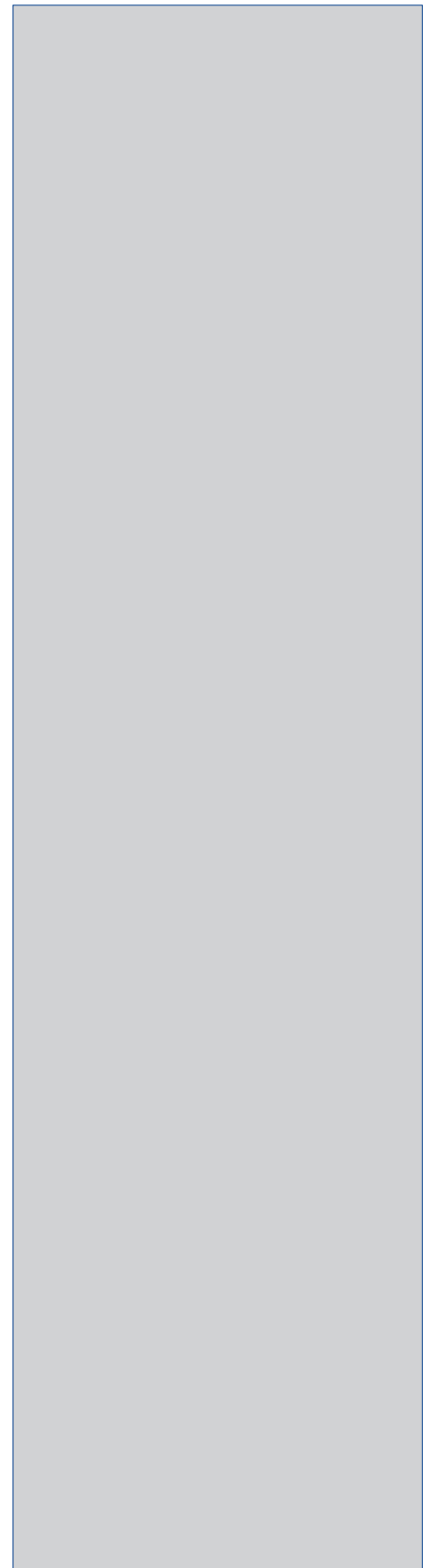
For interactive, step-by-step guidance on what constitutes 'development' and what requires planning permission, please refer to the [Planning Portal](#) and [Government guidance](#).

4.2 'Like-for-like' replacements

If existing features are beyond cost-effective repair, you may wish to replace them with 'like-for-like' replacements. Both 'like-for-like' replacement and repair may not need planning permission.

'Like-for-like' approaches are those that match the existing, in terms of:

- material, colour and surface finish;
- dimensions;
- pattern, layout and detailed profile; and
- original details, e.g. window catches, handles, pulleys, etc (which can often be transferred from the existing feature to the replacement).



Examples of 'like-for-like' replacement or repair

4.3 Permitted development

Some minor developments, mostly to single dwelling houses, can be carried out without the need to apply for planning permission. This is known as 'permitted development', derived from a general planning permission granted by the Government under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, and its subsequent amendments. The Order sets out the types of development for which a grant of planning permission is given, provided that no restrictive condition is attached to the site. Instances where permitted development does not apply include flats, commercial buildings and listed buildings.

Further details are available via the [Planning Portal](#), the [Permitted Development Rights for Householders and Technical Guidance](#), and a section on the council's website on '[when you don't need planning permission](#)'.

If proposals do not constitute permitted development, then a full planning application to seek permission is required.

Examples of works that require planning permission, as a result of Conservation Area status, include:

- the demolition of all, and in some cases part, of any building or structure;
- house extensions that extend beyond any side wall of the 'original' dwelling house, or to rear greater than a single storey;
- the cladding of any part of the exterior;
- any enlargement or addition to the roof;
- the erection of detached ancillary buildings, sheds, or stores, e.g. garden shed, between a wall forming a side elevation of the dwellinghouse and the boundary;
- the erection of chimneys, flues or soil and vent pipes to front or side elevations, or fronting a highway;
- the installation of an antenna or satellite dish on a chimney, wall or roof slope which faces a highway and is visible from a highway, and on buildings over 15 metres high; and
- the installation of photovoltaic or solar thermal equipment on a wall facing a highway.

The above list is not exhaustive. To seek assurance that any building works can be done under permitted development, the Council encourages applications for a Lawful Development Certificate, as outlined in Section [4.7](#).

4.4 Article 4 Directions

Where evidence suggests that the exercise of permitted development rights would, or has, harmed the significance of the Conservation Area, the Council can serve an Article 4 Direction to withdraw specified classes of permitted development rights. If implemented, planning permission is needed for those specified types of development; giving the Council more control over small-scale changes that might otherwise erode the area's character and appearance. This might include alterations to windows, doors, roofs and front gardens. There is no fee for planning applications required due to an Article 4 Direction.

Current Article 4 Directions may be found on the [council's website](#). In due course, updated and new Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (CAAMPs) may result in the introduction of Article 4 Directions.

For further information, refer to Article 4 of [Article 4 of The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(England\) Order 2015](#), as well as Government guidance on Article 4 Directions.

4.5 Trees

[Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) (The Act) grants protection to any trees within the boundaries of a Conservation Area. For the purposes of The Act, a tree must measure 7.5cm in diameter at 1.5m height from ground level or more in order to be protected. The act protects trees only, and does not protect hedges, shrubs, bushes, palms, climbers, ornamental grasses such as Bamboo, or any other plants.

If a tree in a Conservation Area is also protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), then normal TPO procedures apply and permission must be sought from the Council for any work to the tree via an application.

If a tree in a Conservation Area is not subject to a TPO, then Section 211 of the Act requires anyone wishing to work on such a tree to notify the Council, using a '[Section 211 Notice](#)' 6 weeks before carrying out the work. This notice period is provided in law to give the Authority an opportunity to consider whether it should serve a TPO upon the tree in order to further control or prevent the works, if those works pose a significant loss to public amenity.

If Notice is not given for work on trees in Conservation Areas, the same penalties as those for contravening a TPO apply. If a tree is deliberately destroyed, or damaged in a manner likely to destroy it, this could constitute a Criminal Offence with fines up to £20,000. The Crown Court may also consider any financial gain made from the offence under the Criminal Proceeds Act, in which case the fine is not limited by law and will be decided by the Crown Court. In addition to any legal action taken by the Council, you will also normally be required to plant a replacement tree if the original tree was removed.

4.6 Additional designations to consider

4.6.1 Listed and locally listed buildings

If your property, or site, is within the vicinity of a listed or locally listed building, you must also consider the impact any development proposal will have on the setting and the significance of this building, in addition to the impact on the significance of the conservation area in which it is sited.

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are, like Conservation Areas, statutorily [designated heritage assets](#), under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A Listed Building is a building of special architectural or historic interest that is included on the national list of historically important buildings. The Government puts together this list with advice from Historic England.

All buildings included on the statutory 'List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest' are subject to controls and regulations under the 1990 Act. These controls apply regardless of whether or not a property lies within a Conservation Area.

Any internal or external works to a listed building that affect its special architectural or historic interest will require [Listed Building Consent](#), in addition to any required planning permissions.



Range of listed buildings

Locally Listed Buildings

Locally listed buildings are buildings or structures which do not, or are unlikely to, meet the criteria for statutory designation as nationally listed buildings as defined by Historic England.

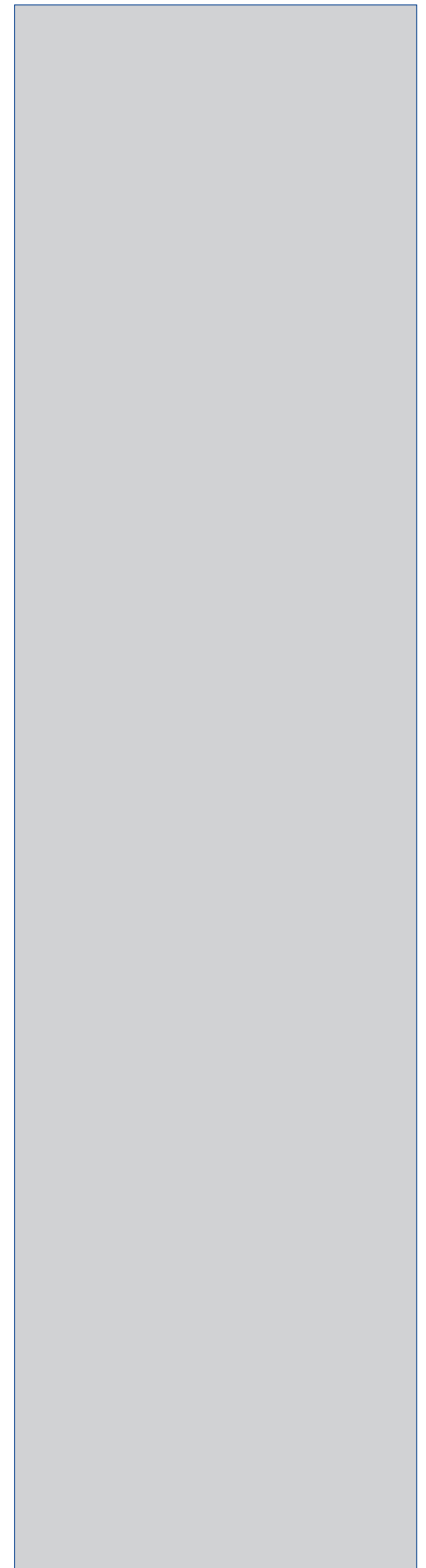
However, they possess sufficient historic, architectural, townscape and environmental interest to make them of local value to the borough, and are therefore considered [non-designated heritage assets](#). They don't have to be a building; they can be any structure, memorial or monument.

When deciding whether to locally list a building or structure, the Council will review whether:

- it is proved to be older than 1840;
- it dates from 1840 to 1939 and is of 'definite quality and character', e.g.
 - it was included as Grade III on the former statutory list;
 - it retains a substantial proportion of its original features;
 - it has group value;
 - it has association with well known characters or events;
 - it displays special value within a certain type or illustrates social, economic or industrial history (eg railway stations, schools, almshouses etc); or
 - it makes a contribution to the landscape (by reason of its appropriateness to the site and interrelationship with other buildings).
- it was built after 1939, but is an exceptionally good example of the architectural output of the period and or the work of principal architects; or
- it demonstrates building materials or methods or external decorative features that are of special interest, due to their rarity or to demonstrating local character (no matter when it was built)

Buildings may be identified as non-designated heritage assets as part of the decision-making process on planning applications.

Further information on Locally Listed Buildings can be found on the [council's website](#).



Range of locally listed buildings

4.6.2 Local Areas of Special Character (LASCs)

Some parts of the borough have high quality townscape, architecture and landscape, which add to the richness of the local built environment and local distinctiveness, but are not considered to meet the requirements for designation as Conservation Areas. Refer to the [map on pg. 12](#) to see where these are.

By setting these areas out as Local Areas of Special Character (LASC), and therefore as non-designated heritage assets, the council recognises:

- the quality of the architecture and landscape
- the local value of that area
- the importance of its protection for future generations

How LASCs differ from Conservation areas

Conservations areas recognise:

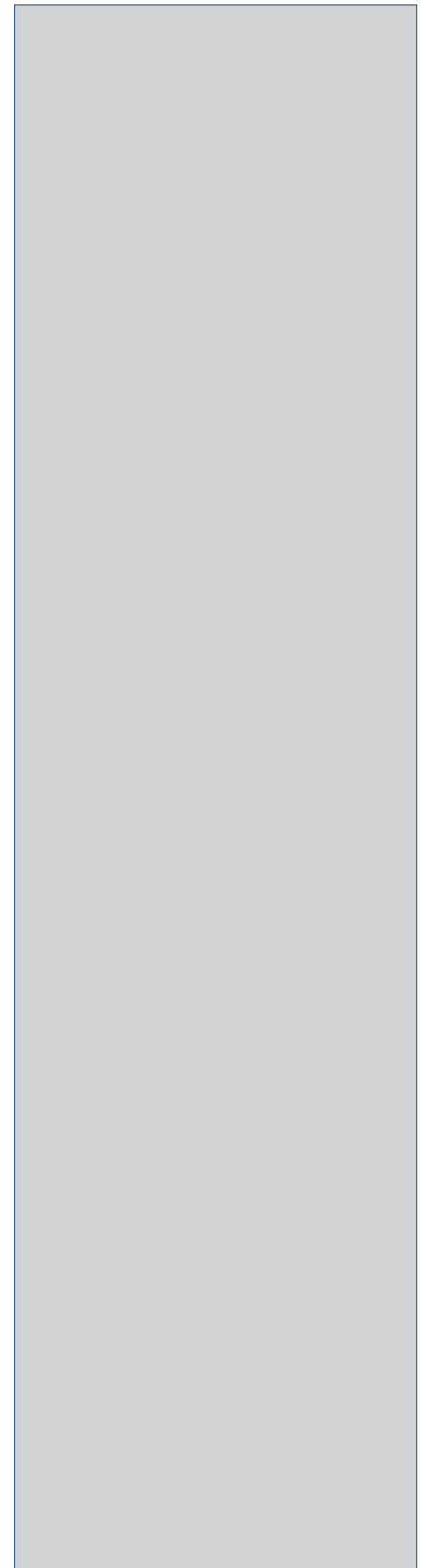
- outstanding environmental interest or importance
- outstanding historical interest or importance

LASCs recognise:

- particularly good examples of environmental interest or importance
- particularly good examples of historical interest or importance

In a Local Area of Special Character your permitted development rights are not affected. However, you do need to demonstrate that any development proposal has a positive impact on the Local Area of Special Character.

Further information on LASCs can be found on the [council's website](#).



Local Areas of Special Character

4.7 Lawful Development Certificates

If you think that your building works can be done under permitted development, you can apply for a [Lawful Development Certificate \(LDC\)](#).

This isn't the same as planning permission, but is proof that your building work is lawful. Lawful development certificates are not compulsory. However, not obtaining a Lawful Development Certificate for development that comes under permitted development could potentially lead to future legal difficulty.

Before you apply, you should check to see if you need planning permission instead.

For more information and to apply for a Lawful Development Certificate, see the [council's website](#).

4.8 Planning enforcement

4.8.1 Enforcement action

Appropriate enforcement of planning regulations by the Council, with the support of the community, is essential to protecting the special character of a Conservation Area.

If unauthorised works have been carried out that required planning permission or Listed Building Consent, the Council has powers to take enforcement action.

The Council can request the submission of a retrospective application for work already carried out. If this retrospective application is refused, the Council can issue an enforcement notice which requires reinstatement of a building or site to its former condition. Persons found to have carried out unauthorised works may be prosecuted if they do not comply with the enforcement notice. It is also a criminal offence to undertake the unauthorised felling or pruning of trees within Conservation Areas, or those covered by TPOs.

Unauthorised breaches of planning control can be reported via the [council's website](#).

4.8.2 Official Notices

The Council is within its rights to serve a Section 215 Notice on the owner or occupier of any land or building whose condition is adversely affecting the amenity of the Conservation Area. If served, the Notice requires the owner or occupier responsible to remedy the site's poor condition. If the obligatory works are not carried out, the Council can carry out the works and reclaim the cost from the owner or occupier.

Similarly, if Listed Buildings, or unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area, are not maintained in good repair, then the Council can ensure that necessary and relevant repairs are carried out by serving a Urgent Works notice. If necessary, the Council may undertake essential repairs and recover the cost from the owner. A Repair Notice may also be served on the owner of a listed building, specifying those works it considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building.

Further information on enforcement action through official notices can be found in Historic England guidance note [Stopping the Rot: A Guide to Enforcement Action to Save Historic Buildings](#) (Jan 2023).

5. HOW TO APPLY FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

5.1 Pre-Application advice

5.2 Submitting a planning application

5.3 Decision-making

5. HOW TO APPLY FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

5.1 Pre-Application advice

Most development in Conservation Areas is sensitive in nature. It is advisable that the Council is contacted at an early stage if any building work is proposed, to check what permissions are required and to seek design advice and guidance. The pre-application service can assist applicants in identifying potential issues at an early stage, saving time and costs by improving and streamlining the submission of a full planning application at a later date.

For further information and to apply for pre-application planning advice, see the [council's website](#).

5.2 Submitting a planning application

When a planning application, or application for a Certificate of Lawful Development is submitted, a Planning Officer will first make sure all the required information has been provided. This is called 'validation'. If an application is missing any information, it cannot be processed until this has been received.

Information on the required information for submitting your application can be found on the [council's website](#).

5.3 Decision-making

All applications for planning permission in Conservation Areas will be assessed in terms of impacts to the significance of the Conservation Area, and whether the character and appearance is conserved or enhanced. See Sections [6](#) and [7](#) for guidance on what may need to be considered in order to successfully achieve planning permission.

For general information on the stages of assessment of your planning application, refer to the [council's website](#).

HERITAGE STATEMENT

- Following the NPPF, all applications either in a Conservation Area or affecting its setting must include a Heritage Statement.
- This should describe the significance of the Conservation Area and any other heritage assets affected by the proposal, and quantify the contribution made by their setting, in a manner proportional to their importance and the impact.
- Ideally this understanding of heritage significance will have informed an understanding of potential impacts of the proposal and opportunities to enhance that significance; hence informing a proposal that will have the most positive impact.
- For further guidance, refer to Historic England Advice Note 12: [*Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*](#) (October 2019).

6. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Special character and appearance

6.2 Settings

6.3 The historic environment and sustainability

6. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Special character and appearance

As described in Section [2](#), the significance of a Conservation Area lies in the area's special historic or architectural interest; the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

While listed buildings, locally listed buildings or scheduled monuments often sit in Conservation Areas, and recognised on individual merit, it is the overall *combination* of features and qualities (such as those listed below) that contribute to an area's significance and distinctive sense of place.

Key factors that contribute to Conservation Area's special character and appearance include, but are not limited to:

Architecture - the art and design of individual buildings:

- Building form
- Materials
- Detailing
- Building typologies and uses

Townscape - the arrangement and appearance of buildings, spaces and other physical features:

- Public realm and streetscape
- Massing and scale
- Boundary treatments
- Groupings of buildings
- Roof pitches
- Topography
- Landscape
- Planting, vegetation and trees

Urban morphology - the pattern of historic settlement, development and its proportions:

- Layout and the location of buildings within their plots
- Street patterns, and the interaction of the public and private realm
- Views from both inside and outside the Conservation Area

Ambience and other sensory experiences:

- Light
- Noise
- Smells
- Patterns of activity

Some Conservation Areas may also have important historic associations with notable people or events.



Birds eye view of Kingston Old Town

6.2 Settings

While the settings of Conservation Areas are not protected in the same way as the settings of listed buildings, careful consideration should be given to the impact of proposals on the settings of all heritage assets, as per the NPPF and Historic England Good Practice Advice (GPA) Note 3 on [The Setting of Heritage Assets](#) (Dec 2017).

The setting of a Conservation Area can have a large impact on the appreciation of its significance. Views and vistas in and out of the Conservation Area are important considerations when defining the contribution of its setting.

6.3 The historic environment and sustainability

A quarter of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions are attributable to the built environment. Greenhouse gases are emitted at every stage of the construction and use cycle, from the manufacture of materials through construction and maintenance to eventual demolition.

In June 2019, The UK Government passed legislation committing to becoming carbon neutral by 2050; and adopted the 6th Carbon Budget in 2021, requiring carbon emissions to be reduced by 78 percent by 2035, as compared to 1990 levels. Hence, emissions from the built environment are to be reduced if the UK is to meet its net zero targets.

The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, and reinforced its commitment to combating carbon emissions and rising global temperatures. Following a Kingston Climate Conversation in 2021, the Council adopted an updated [Climate Action Plan](#) in 2022. This aims to reduce emissions, protect and enhance nature and prepare the borough for the unavoidable impacts of climate change, while also bringing other benefits such as safer streets, warmer homes, new jobs and improved air quality. This marked a widening of the council's aims and ambitions to further help move the borough to carbon neutrality by 2038, while working with residents and partners to influence carbon reduction.

The London Plan recognises the need to 'seek to improve energy efficiency and support the move towards a low carbon circular economy, contributing towards London becoming a zero carbon city by 2050'.¹ There are targets for all development referable to the GLA to be both net-zero carbon and net-zero waste. In part this means reducing greenhouse gas emissions in operation and minimising energy demand through the following energy hierarchy²:

1 The London Plan, Good Growth objective GG6 Increasing efficiency and resilience

2 The London Plan, Policy SI 2 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions

1. **be lean:** use less energy and manage demand during operation
2. **be clean:** exploit local energy resources (such as secondary heat) and supply energy efficiently and cleanly
3. **be green:** maximise opportunities for renewable energy by producing, storing and using renewable energy on-site
4. **be seen:** monitor, verify and report on energy performance.

In 2022 the GLA introduced Whole Life Carbon (WLC) Assessments, to provide a true picture of a building's carbon impact on the environment; by measuring the projected carbon emissions over its entire life, from materials and construction, to demolition and disposal. The GLA [London Plan Guidance on WLC Assessments](#) sets out that the retention and reuse of existing materials and structures, over demolition, is a key priority for achieving carbon reduction, while often reducing construction costs and contributing to a smoother planning process. This principle - alongside a 'fabric first' approach to building design, maintenance and repair, and the local sourcing of materials - can both learn from, and be integrated with, the practice of building conservation.

The increasing awareness of the role of the historic environment in addressing sustainability challenges is supported by extensive research by Historic England and other heritage organisations. This includes Historic England's 'Heritage Counts' research, on [Carbon in the Built Historic Environment](#) in 2019, and on [Reducing Carbon Emissions in Traditional Homes](#) in 2020. The contribution that protecting and enhancing our built and historic environment makes to the strategic environmental objectives of sustainable development³, and the "wider environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring"⁴ is recognised in the NPPF.

3 NPPF, para. 8

4 Ibid, para. 190

7. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES & BEST PRACTICE

7.1 Key building elements

7.2 Sustainability and energy-efficiency improvements

7.3 Extensions

7.4 Changes of use

7.5 Additional development within a plot

7.6 Demolition

7.7 New development

7.8 Boundary treatments and landscaping

7.9 Public Realm

7.10 Trees

7.11 Open spaces and views

7. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES & BEST PRACTICE

7.1 Key building elements

All elements of a building are important features that are integral to the whole design of a building, reflecting its period and style.

Permitted development rights enable alterations to single dwelling houses, provided that, “the materials used in any exterior work (other than materials used in the construction of a conservatory) must be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the exterior”.¹ However, care must be given to any changes to features which contribute positively to the special character of the conservation area. The replacement of original historic features, unless ‘like-for-like’, are likely to require planning permission.

The permitted development rights to flats and commercial premises are limited.

Negative changes that have already occurred, perhaps prior to the designation of a Conservation Area, should not be used as justification for further inappropriate development. Common examples include the replacement of traditional windows or doors with uPVC or aluminium alternatives, or the introduction of poorly designed rooflights or dormers, which have a large adverse impact on the character and appearance of a building and streetscene. The Council encourages the enhancement of building and Conservation Area through the reinstatement of missing original features, or the reversal of poor quality alterations.

¹ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1, A3

7.1.1 Windows

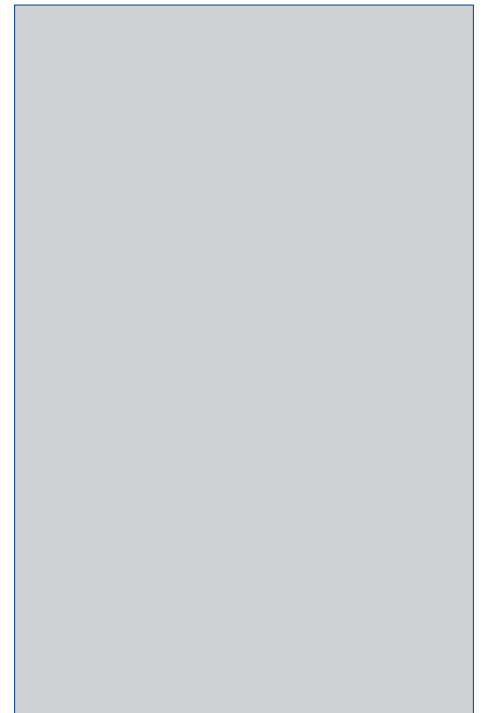
The design, quality and materials of windows make an important contribution to the character of a building and the wider Conservation Area.

Repair vs. Replacement

Original timber or metal window frames and historic glazing are integral to a building's historic fabric and character, and their retention should be a priority.

Many historic timber frames are of a high quality, and most defects can easily be repaired. This is not only more cost-effective and less disruptive than replacing the whole window, but saves the embodied carbon of the existing and replacement windows. Professional joiners with expertise in traditional windows should be consulted in the first instance.

The thermal performance of existing windows can be improved with maintenance, and through draught proofing. Further advice can be found in Historic England guidance on [Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: Draught-proofing windows and doors](#) (April 2016).

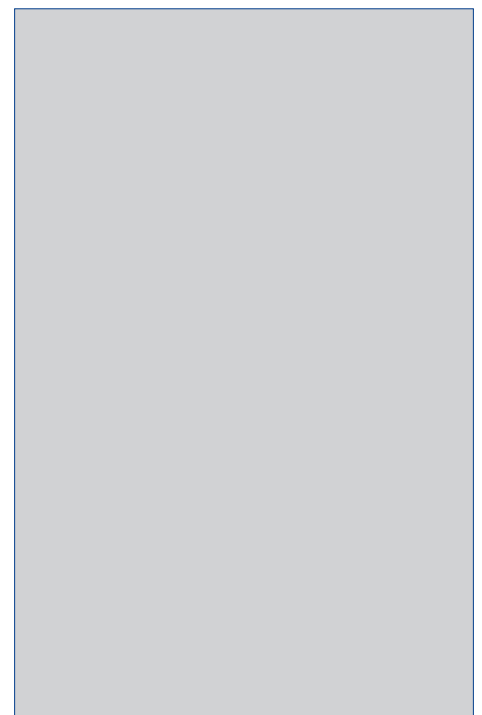


Timber window frame repair

Secondary glazing

Secondary glazing is a fully independent window system installed to the room side of existing windows. When carefully designed and installed, it can enable original windows to be retained unaltered or repaired, while reducing air leakage and conducted heat losses. It can provide a considerably higher thermal performance than draught-proofing alone, and may also be chosen where installing draught-proofing is particularly unsuitable or difficult, e.g. to some metal or leaded windows.

Secondary glazing is available as openable, removable or fixed units. The openable panels can be either side-hung casements or horizontal or vertical sliding sashes, allowing access to the external window for cleaning, and the opening of both windows for ventilation. Fixed forms of secondary glazing are designed to be removed in warmer months when the thermal benefits are not required.



Secondary glazing

Careful consideration is needed with regard to the design of the frames, mullions, openings and glazing type; the position of the secondary glazing within the window reveals; as well as historic shutters, where they exist.

Further advice can be found in the Historic England guidance on [Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: Secondary Glazing for Windows](#) (April 2016)

New window units

The Council encourages the replacement of existing unsympathetic, unoriginal windows where they have an adverse impact on character and significance; however, it is important to check whether planning permission is required.

If the replacement of windows is justified, then their design, material and detailing, should be carefully considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. If new windows are to replace original units, they should be designed to match the originals on a 'like-for-like' basis. uPVC replacements should not be installed in historic buildings as they can significantly alter a building and area's original character, are carbon intensive to manufacture, have a relatively short lifespan and are not easily repairable.

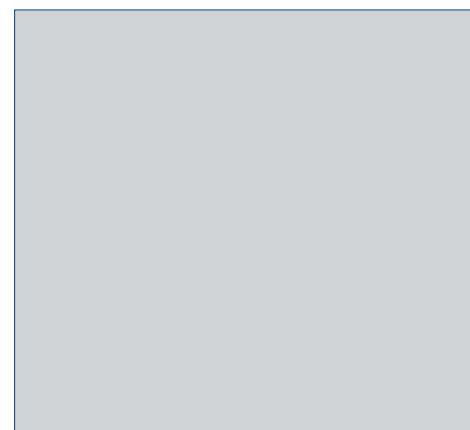
The replacement of unsympathetic windows can offer an opportunity to both enhance significance, and improve thermal performance with the use of slimline double glazing, vacuum glazing or laminated glazing.

Bay windows

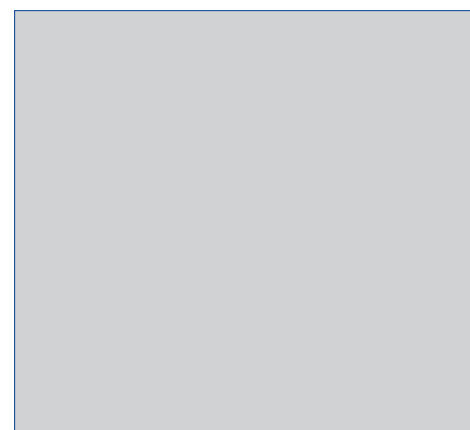
Bay windows are a common and important feature in many of Kingston's Conservation Areas. The shape, height, form and spacing of bays often establishes the basic rhythm of the street scene. The removal of bay windows is very unlikely to be considered acceptable, given the impact on the character of a building and overall townscape, particularly when a consistent feature within a terrace, parade or pair of semi-detached buildings.



Building with uPVC windows



Building with replacement timber sash windows



Bay window

Dormers

Planning permission is required for the installation or removal of dormer windows in a Conservation Area.

Where dormers are an integral part of the character of a building, their loss or unsympathetic alteration will generally be resisted. Conversely, the removal or replacement of modern, poor quality dormer installations will be supported.

The introduction of new dormers will only be acceptable if they are based on local historic precedents, and are appropriate to the age and style of the building. They must be appropriately sited and designed so that they are subordinate to, and integrate with the composition of, the host building. Generally, dormers should be smaller than windows on the elevation below and set in from the edge of the building, and should not compromise nor dominate the roof. The windows should be in-keeping with the design of the original windows on the main building. Materials and detailing must be carefully considered, including that of rainwater goods if required.

While an important part of upgrading the energy performance of a roof, care must be taken when insulating dormers. Refer to Historic England guidance on [Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: Insulating dormer windows](#) (April 2016).

Rooflights

Roof lights are generally not an original feature of traditional buildings; where historic examples exist, they tend to be very small and placed at the rear, to light attic spaces and tank areas.

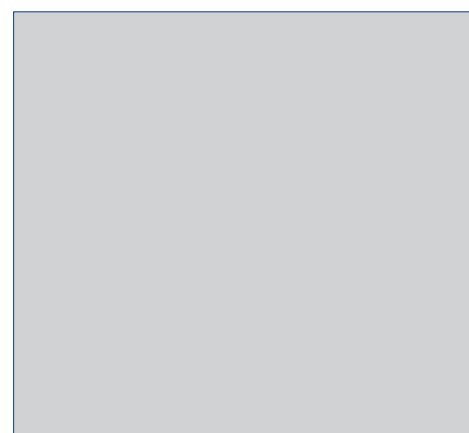
However, the installation of new rooflights are within permitted development, provided they meet certain conditions.²



Unsympathetic dormer



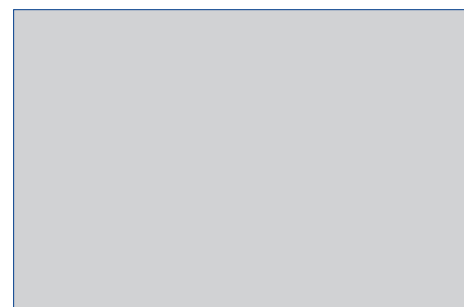
Integral dormers



Unsympathetic rooflights

² The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1, C2

New rooflights in the ‘conservation style’, to sit flush into the roof slope, are the most appropriate. Care should be taken to not affect the character of the building or streetscene, limiting them in size and number, and preferably locating them to the rear elevation where possible. Particularly where street-facing, careful placing and alignment is required so they align with the overall composition of the building.



‘Conservation style’ rooflights

7.1.2 Doors

As with windows, wherever possible, traditional doors should be retained due to their attractive appearance and high quality, which is difficult and expensive to replicate today. Draught-proofing and maintenance can improve the thermal performance of doors (refer above to ‘Repair vs. Replacement’ of windows in Section [7.1.1](#)).

If justified, any replacement doors should match the original design and material, or appropriate historic examples. The removal of unsympathetic later alterations, such as of uPVC or aluminium, to buildings is encouraged. If glazing is part of the design, any replacement glazing could be slimline double glazed, vacuum glazed or laminated. If painted, a paint colour that is sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area should be used.



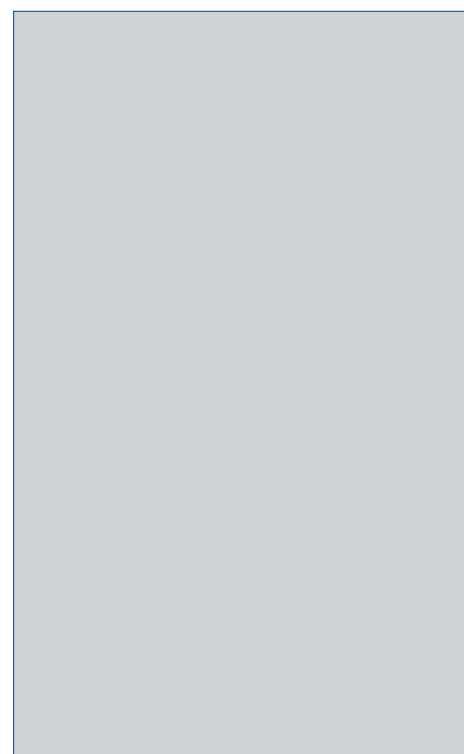
Traditional timber door

7.1.3 Ornamental features

Ornamental features around windows and doors is a significant feature of many buildings within Conservation Areas, and should be retained and protected. Wherever possible, existing fabric should be repaired instead of replaced.

Common features include surrounds, lintels, architraves, cills, window boxes, pediments, swags and pilasters. Not only do they heavily contribute to a building’s character and distinctiveness, but they have structural function.

There may be the potential to install replicas of original features, where they have been lost and sufficient information is available about the designs.



Range of ornamental features

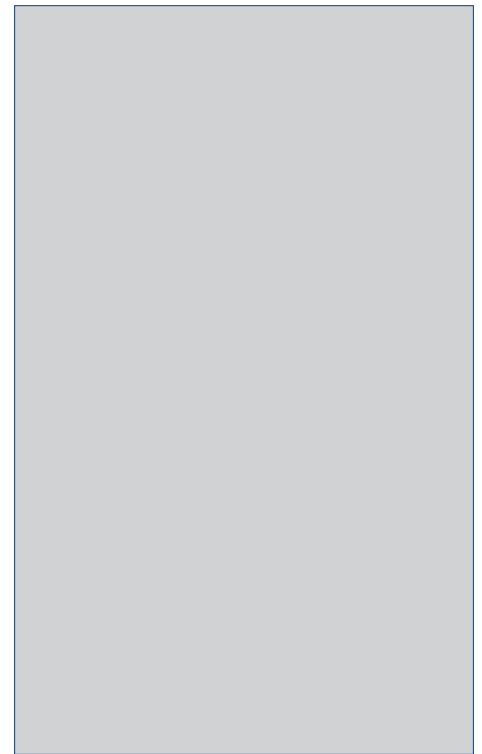
7.1.4 Porches

Historic porches within Conservation Areas, especially recessed porches, articulate an entrance and add interest to a street, and can be of a high architectural quality with interesting detailing.

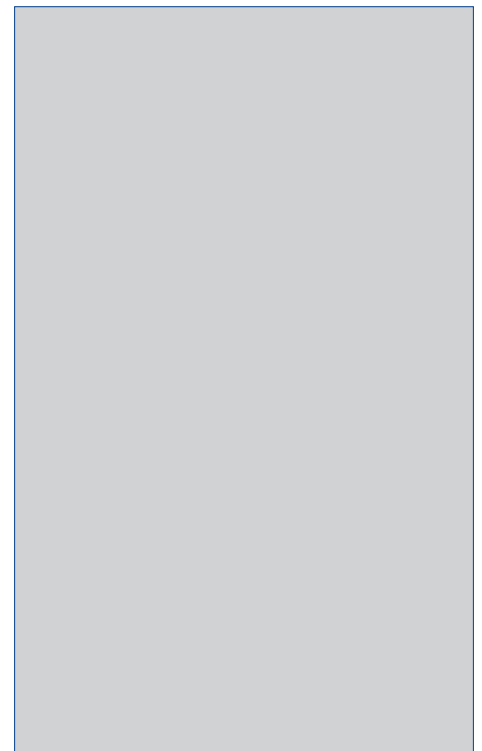
The erection of porches on single dwelling houses come under permitted development, provided they meet certain criteria.³

However, careful consideration should be given not to negatively impact the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. New porches, particularly when poorly or inappropriately designed or overly large, can heavily detract from a streetscene. Porches should be sympathetic to the host building in terms of scale, style and material, and will ideally match historical precedents where applicable.

Where porches are part of the original design of a building or are a traditional and consistent feature within a row of building they should be retained. Inappropriate removals can affect the character, design and rhythm of both individual houses and the street. Both recessed and overhanging porches should not be infilled or enclosed, due to the negative impact on the special character of individual buildings and the disruption of the architectural rhythm of groups of buildings.



Unsympathetic porch



Sympathetic porch

³ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1, D

7.1.5 External walls

The quality and material of wall finishes has a large impact on the character and appearance of a building and unifies buildings of a similar character within an area. Common wall finishes in the borough include brick, stone, timber, render (including stucco) and tile hangings

Brickwork

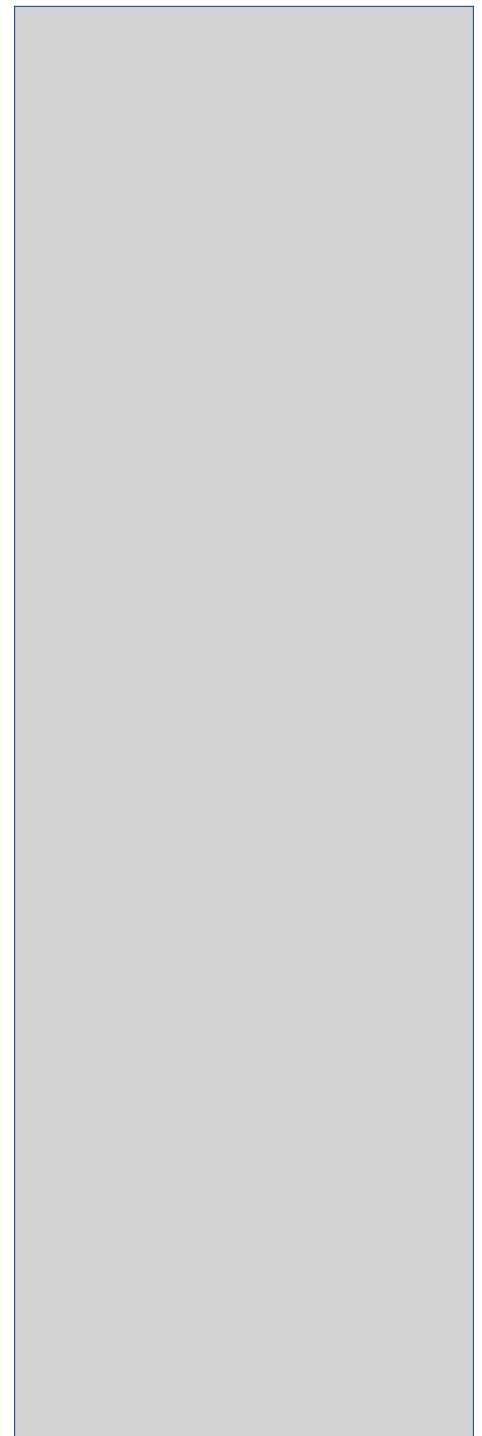
The repair and replacement of bricks must be carefully considered, in terms of whether it is essential. The source of deterioration must be examined carefully, and remedial work kept to a minimum. Common causes of deterioration include poor repairs, neglected maintenance or unsuitable alterations.

In general, only severely damaged bricks need replacing. Bricks can often be carefully removed and then reversed.

When replacing bricks, rebuilding external walls or extending an existing building it is important to study existing brickwork so that any new work matches the old, in terms of brick type, colour, bond pattern, mortar and pointing style.

Re-pointing should be undertaken only when necessary and must be done in an appropriate manner. Lime-based mortars must be used in traditional buildings for reasons of appearance and performance; cement-based mortars are generally inappropriate. Joints should be flush or slightly recessed, and finished and brushed to expose brick edges. Refer to Historic England guidance on [*Repointing Brick and Stone Walls: Guidelines for Best Practice*](#) (Jan 2017).

Specialist advice should be sought before attempting to clean brickwork, as it is specialist work and it can dramatically alter the appearance of a building. If not undertaken correctly, cleaning may lead to permanent damage to bricks and possibly the structure of a building, as well as causing an adverse visual effect.



Range of brick types around Kingston

Cladding, rendering and painting

The cladding or rendering of walls in Conservation Areas requires planning permission, which is unlikely to be considered acceptable where walls were originally exposed brick.⁴

Additional impermeable coatings, such as pebbledash or cement-based render, to originally exposed brickwork can damage the fabric, character and original qualities of a building, and the cohesive appearance of a terrace or group of buildings. They can be unnecessary, impractical and expensive; requiring a higher level of maintenance than if bricks were left exposed. Non-breathable products will affect the performance of the building, and can create problems such as damp.

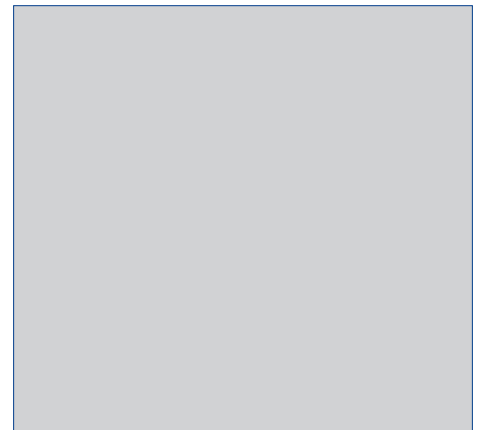
Surface materials such as stucco or lime-based render, where part of the original design of a building, should be retained and maintained regularly. Any defects will result in rapid deterioration through water ingress, which may lead to further damage to the structures underneath. Early localised repairs should be carried out to prevent the need for subsequent, potentially major, repair works. Where there is precedent, breathable paint such as lime-wash should be used.

Where possible, consideration could be given to removing non-original, unsympathetic surface treatments to restore originally exposed brickwork, or replace them with lime-based alternatives.

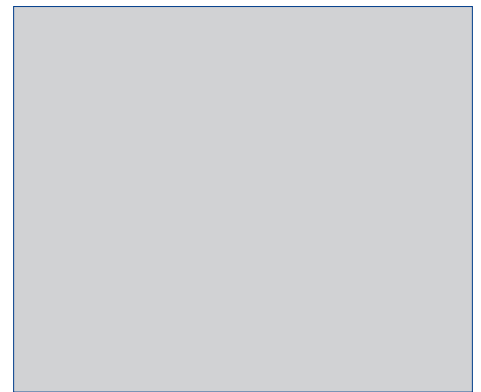
Where cladding or rendering is considered appropriate, it may be an opportunity to consider the addition of breathable external wall insulation, to improve the thermal performance of a building. However, this must be undertaken with caution. See Section [7.2.1](#).

External wall tiles

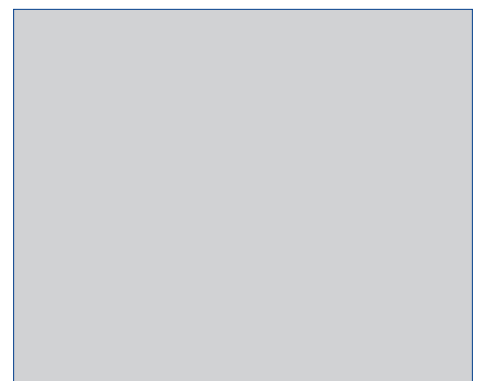
Hanging tiles are an important and characterful design feature in many of Kingston's Conservation Areas. Existing vertical tile hanging should be retained and any damaged tiles replaced with matching tiles.



Pebbledash



Stucco



Hanging wall tiles

⁴ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1, A2

Decorative wall features

Features such as terracotta panels, carved bricks, glazed tiles or plaques were often used as decorative elements on the walls of 19th and early 20th century buildings in Kingston. Such details are often unique to the building and are a stamp of the individuality of a building, or of groups of buildings. They may also provide some additional historical insight into the original function, owners or developers, or period. They are therefore valued features that should be retained. It may be difficult and expensive to replace such features once removed.

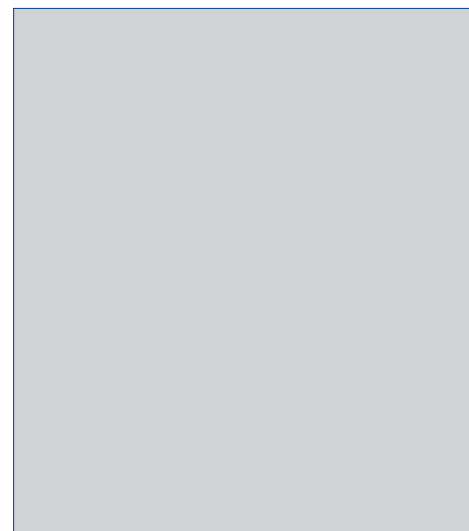


Decorative wall plaque

7.1.6 Ironwork

Historic iron railings, balustrades, window boxes and balconies are important features that positively contribute to the character of a building and wider area. The reinstatement of lost ornamental ironwork, with good quality replacements of an appropriate design, would be encouraged.

Ironwork should be protected through regular maintenance and painting, which forms an important protective layer against weathering. Neglect can cause wrought iron to rust and warp, and cast iron to fail and crack. Rusting ironwork also expands, which could cause cracking of the masonry it is embedded into.



Ironwork

7.1.7 Roofs

The original roof form and details are essential design aspects of a building. Any enlargement by way or addition or alteration to a roof will require planning permission, and any major alterations should be avoided.

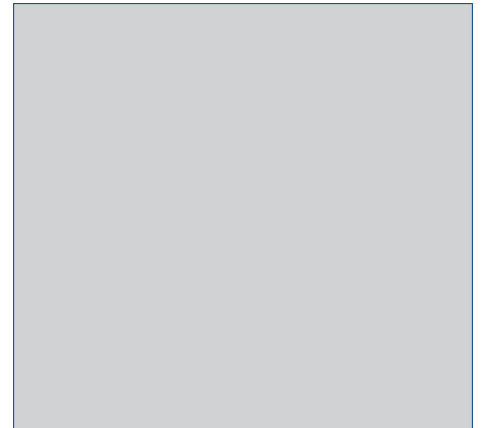
Slate and clay tiles

Most buildings in Kingston were built with either natural slate or hand-made clay tile roofs. The origin of the natural slate or clay will have an impact on the colour and appearance.

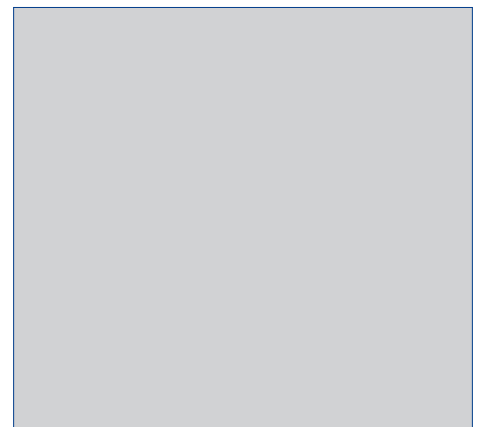
Hand-made clay tiles usually come in either flat or cambered peg tiles, or curved pan tiles. Decorative roof pattering can be created by alternating different types of tiles. This is a common feature of many buildings in Kingston's Conservation Areas, and is considered to be characteristic of many local areas. Ornamental ridge tiles can also add interest and character to a roofline.

The failure of roofs is often due to the rusting of fixing nails. If tiles are removed carefully they can often be salvaged and reused. If there are insufficient slates or tiles to cover the entire roof, it is advisable to reuse the originals on the front slopes that will have the greatest impact on the streetscene, supplemented by second hand or alternative materials matching as closely as possible on the rear slopes. Many building and roofing contractors stock second hand slates and tiles which can be used to replace any broken ones.

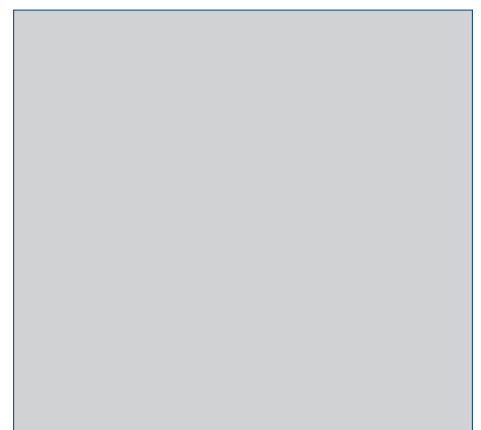
New slates and tiles should only be used if second hand ones are not available, and the existing tiles have come to the end of their useful life. It is important to ensure that slates or tiles of a similar colour, texture and size to those of the original roof covering are used, particularly on terraced and semi-detached houses. The replacement of roof materials with non-natural materials will not only have a detrimental effect on the appearance of a building and the townscape, but can cause structural issues due to the variation in loading. For example, the replacement of slate roofs with concrete tiles.



Slates



Slates



Clay tiles

Photovoltaic slates are also available. These can be made to look very similar to existing tile materials and also provide a sustainable way of producing energy.

All flashings should be in lead, or a material with a similar appearance, and should be installed by an experienced craftsman or tradesman.

Alternative roof coverings

Bituminous, plastic or other waterproof coatings should generally not be applied to existing roofs, except where there is precedent, i.e. in a non-traditional Conservation Area.

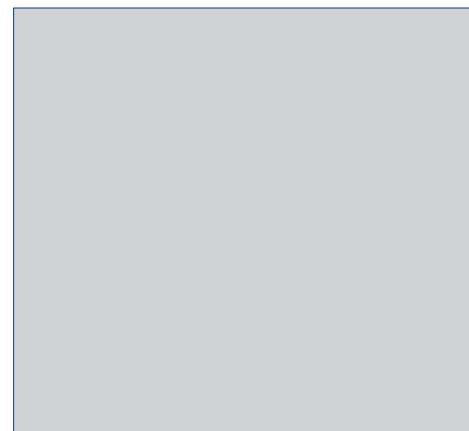
Chimneys, Flues, Soil and Vent Pipes

The installation of new chimneys, flues, or soil and vent pipes on a single dwelling house are permitted development, unless facing a highway or on the principal or side elevation.⁵

Chimney stacks and pots

Chimneys are important, often ornamental, architectural features present on many historic buildings. They make a valuable contribution to the special character of a building and that of the wider Conservation Area, particularly on semi-detached and terraced housing, where their regular spacing contributes to the rhythm of the street. Chimney stacks and pots can be prominent in long distance views.

Original chimney stacks should be retained, even if the flues are not in use. If unused fireplaces are fitted with panels and grilles, and chimney pots capped with ventilating top covers, chimneys can remain useful by providing controllable ventilation, and thereby reducing internal condensation.



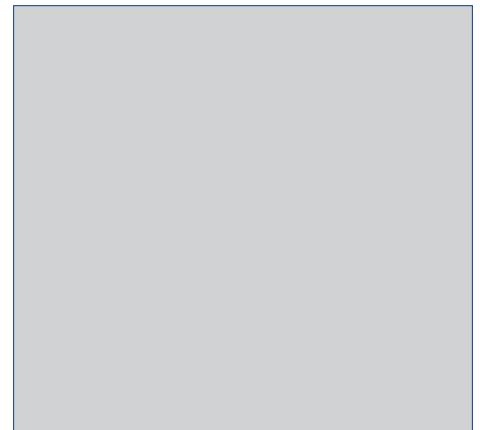
Chimney stacks

⁵ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1, Class G

Drainage and Rainwater Systems

Many buildings in Conservation Areas have cast iron gutters and downpipes, which make a positive contribution to the appearance of a building. Where metal gutters and drainpipes exist, we would encourage replacement on a like-for-like basis, in terms of design and materials, and using traditional joints and fittings.

Additional soil and waste pipes should be located internally where possible, to avoid clutter on the outside of a building. Where this is not possible, stacks should be designed to minimise the number of untidy branches. Plastic rainwater goods should be avoided.



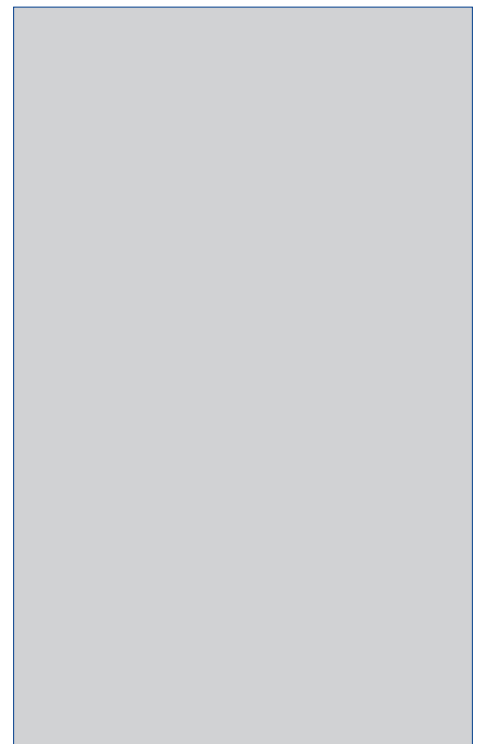
Cast iron pipes

7.1.8 Additional external fixtures

Careful consideration should be given to the siting of extraneous fixtures, including TV aerials, satellite dishes and other telecommunication equipment, solar panels and air conditioning units, as they can have a significant impact on a building's appearance. Planning permission may be required.⁶

The Council encourages locating all fixtures to the rear of a property, below the level of the roof eaves, to minimise their visual impact on the Conservation Area. Fixtures should not project above the height of the roof and should not be visible from the street.

Electric metre boxes should be placed in the ground or internally if possible as they can damage the appearance of a building, especially when placed in prominent locations such as next to main entrance doors. If they are to be positioned on a building wall, an inconspicuous location should be found.



Unsympathetic features

⁶ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1, Class H

7.1.9 Shopfronts, advertising and signage

Particular attention is paid to commercial frontages in Conservation Areas, as they play a prominent role in the street scene. While the principle purpose of a shopfront is the advertisement and display of the goods and services provided inside the building, the use of high quality design promotes the individual business and contributes to the vitality and special character of the local area.

In general, the design of shopfronts, advertising and signage should:

- be well-proportioned, and considered as part of the overall composition of the building and the wider street scene;
- reflect and respect the history of the surroundings and the local area;
- be of high-quality materials that respect the host building; and
- maintain accessibility for clients, customers and passing pedestrians.

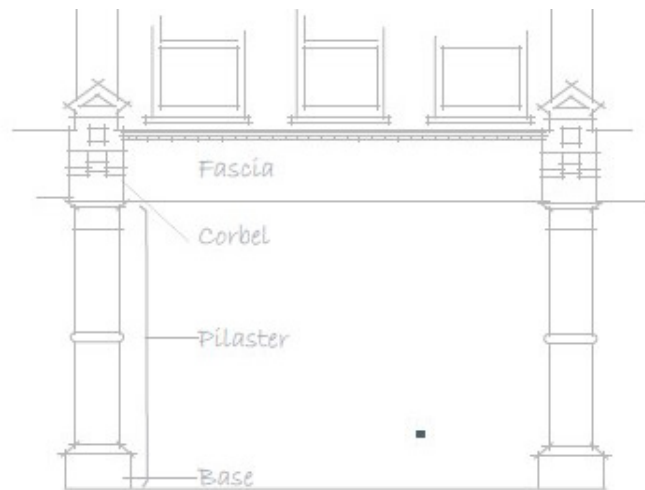
Where applicable, a company's standard 'house design' should be sensitively adapted to reflect the special characteristics of the street scene and building.

Planning permission is required for works such as the following:

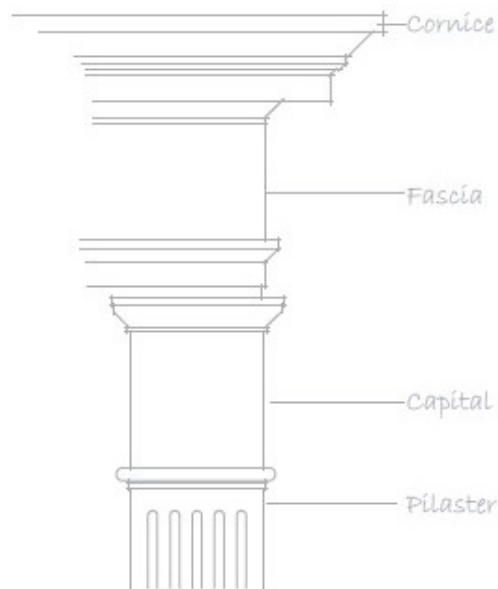
- Installation of external security shutters and grilles
- Removal of architectural features including stall risers and pilasters
- Installation of permanent awnings and canopies
- Installation of new entrances
- Shopfront or frame replacement
- All new fascias
- All illuminated signage

Some signage, including proposed illuminated and non-illuminated signs, may require advertisement consent. Alterations to shop fronts in listed buildings require listed building consent and planning permission, and should generally not be altered without clear and convincing justification. Planning permission is not required for the installation of glazing and internal shutters within a shopfront, or the repainting and repairing of an existing shopfront, where there is no change in appearance.

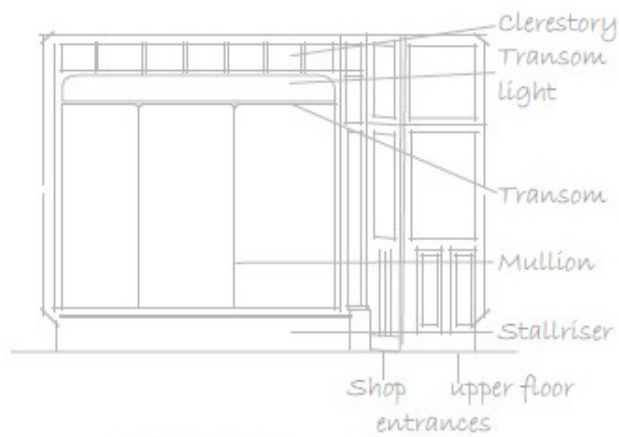
For further information please also refer to the council's [Shopfront and Shopsign Design Guide SPD](#).



Architectural framework



Architectural detail



Shopfront

Shopfront design

Existing historic shopfronts are often intrinsic to a Conservation Area's special character and appearance, while being of a quality that is difficult and expensive to replace. As such, they should always be retained and repaired in the first instance.

Where inappropriate replacement shopfronts have already been installed, the Council may encourage the reinstatement of traditional-style shopfronts. It is important that they are designed to be in-keeping with the period and design of the host building and Conservation Area.

The primary elements of a typical shopfront are illustrated overleaf:

- Side columns or pilasters frame the sides of the shopfront, usually denoting the building lines on the front elevation. These will be capped by decorative capitals, corbels or console brackets, and sit on bases.
- The shopfront will be capped by a projecting cornice, sitting above a fascia panel or signage zone which sits between the corbels or console brackets. Projecting box fascias or signs are not accepted.
- Below the fascia will be the shopfront windows and doors, often with a door to the shop and a door to the accommodation above. A fanlight above the door will align with transom lights to the windows.
- Below the windows will be a cill above the stallriser, which may be plain, panelled or tiled.
- Some historic shopfronts may contain canvas awnings or canopies, which should be integrated into the overall design, sitting above or below the fascia, with the mechanism and storage housing recessed behind the fascia.

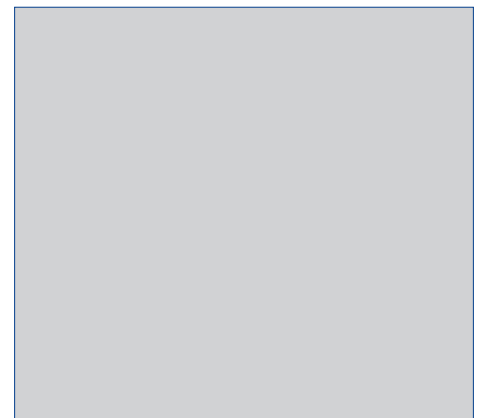
A shopfront of a high-quality contemporary design may also be considered appropriate; but it should be of the same order as a traditional shopfront, be of high-quality materials and clearly align with the design of the host building and the street in which it sits. Shopfronts should be painted in a colour that is respectful to the character of the Conservation Area. Historic brickwork should not be painted.



Change in decoration



Traditional style awnings



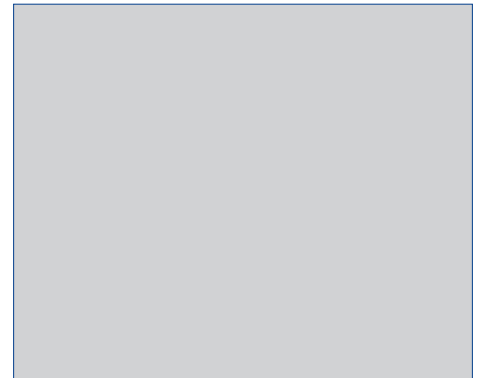
Contemporary shopfront

Advertising and signage

Oversized and poorly-designed signage will have a negative impact on a Conservation Area's special character.

In general, the following guidelines for non-residential uses within a Conservation Area should be followed:

- All materials should be high quality and durable, preferably timber or metal.
- Signage should be painted, or applied, solid cut letters.
- All signs and fascias should be externally illuminated with subtle spot or trough lighting.
- Advertising should be contained within the fascia and not painted on the building.
- Appropriately designed and positioned projecting signage, hung from metal brackets, can add interest and vitality to a building and street. This should generally be limited to one hanging sign per premises, to avoid excessive clutter.
- Advertisements attached to buildings, such as large posters and signs, add to visual clutter and downgrade the appearance of a building.
- Advertisement hoardings that are within or in the setting of Conservation Areas are not normally permitted.
- The use of A-boards should be limited to avoid street clutter and blocking pedestrian flows.



Unsympathetic signage



Sympathetic signage

7.2 Sustainability and energy-efficiency improvements

7.2.1 Increasing energy efficiency

Given the conditions of climate change, and the age and condition of the UK's building stock, the Council recognises that measures to upgrade existing buildings to improve energy efficiency and thermal comfort are urgently needed in order to lower carbon footprints. There is a good opportunity to integrate retrofit works as part of other development or maintenance projects, when there might already be the 'upheaval' of works, and contractors and scaffolding, on site.

As with all retrofit projects, care must be taken to understand the appropriate measures to be taken, using a 'whole-house approach'. However, this is particularly true for traditional buildings and in Conservation Areas; so that both historic building fabric, and that the character and appearance of the building and wider area, are not unnecessarily compromised. The advice of a Retrofit Coordinator, and particularly specialists with experience in retrofitting traditional buildings, is recommended.

Historic England has a growing series of [technical advice](#) on retrofit and energy efficiency in historic buildings. In addition, the [Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance](#), supported by Historic England, has a number of useful resources and tools in the [Responsible Retrofit Knowledge Centre](#).

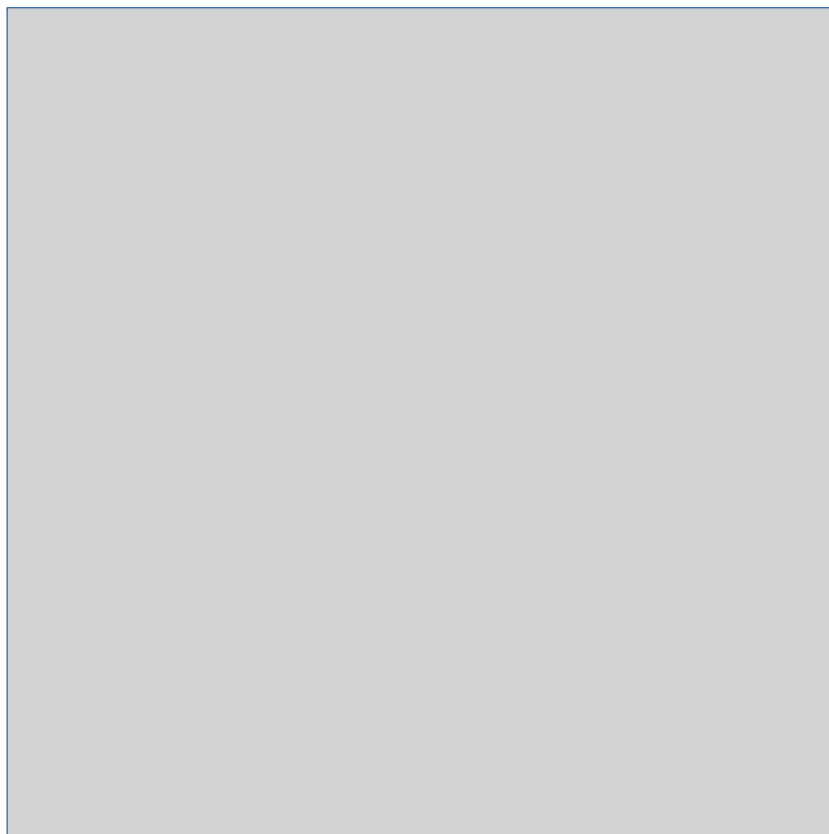


Diagram illustrating 'whole house approach'

The refurbishment of existing buildings provides an opportunity to improve their energy efficiency. Potential benefits of doing this include:

- A reduction of fuel bills
- Improvement of thermal comfort of buildings
- A reduction in the consumption of fossil fuel resources
- A reduction in CO2 emissions

When refurbishing a building, the following energy and water efficiency measures should be considered:

- Floor, wall and roof insulation
- Draught proofing
- Ventilation control to reduce risk of condensation
- Improvements to existing windows and doors
- Heating system replacement and upgrades
- Lighting and electrical improvements
- Energy efficient appliances
- Use of water-efficient sanitary ware, e.g. tap operators or water saving shower heads

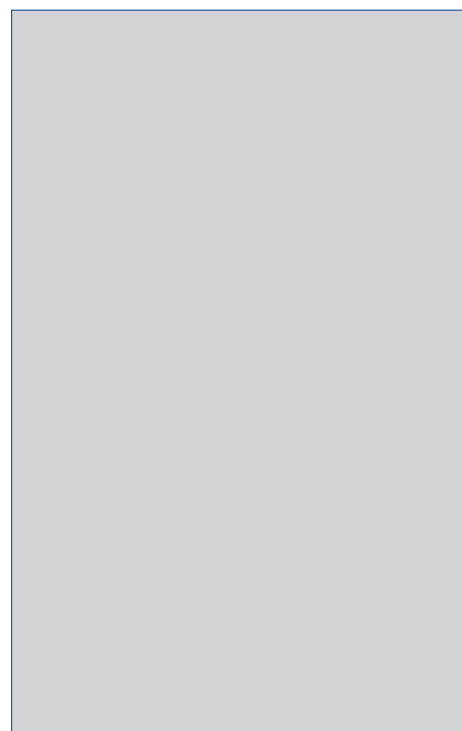
The addition of internal measures to increase energy efficiency do not require planning permission, unless on a listed building.

Wall insulation

While the addition of wall insulation can lead to a significant reduction in heat loss, thought and care is needed to make sure the proposed works are appropriate and effective. The advice of specialists is highly recommended.

Traditional solid wall construction is often the most difficult, and in many cases the least cost effective, part of a building to insulate. Whether applied externally or internally, it can have a significant impact on the appearance of the building. Planning permission will be required for external works.

Retrospective cavity wall insulation is not recommended.



Installation of wall insulation

Care should be taken to ensure that the installation of wall insulation will not induce the problem of interstitial condensation by preventing ventilation, creating further issues, such as mould and damp, which can both damage the building fabric and harm occupants' health. Bio-based materials, such as hemp or wood fibre insulation, are not only more suitable for traditional buildings due to their permeability, but are non-toxic and inherently more sustainable.

For further information, refer to Historic England guidance [Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings Insulating Solid Walls](#) (April 2016).



Hemp fibre panels

7.2.2 Renewable energy equipment

In Conservation Areas the design and siting of external energy generation equipment, such as photovoltaic and solar thermal panels, heat pumps and turbines, should be carefully considered so as to limit their visual impact on the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

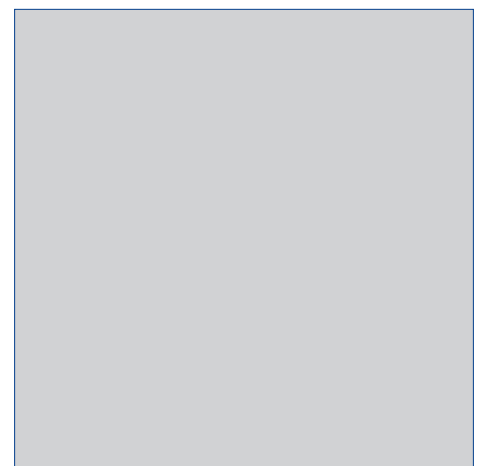
Permitted development rights allow for the installation of these fixtures on dwelling houses or blocks of flats, providing they are within certain parameters, and certain conditions are met. This includes being sited to minimise its effect on the external appearance of a building, and the amenity of the area.

A full list of the terms and conditions can be found in [Part 14 \(Renewable Energy\) of The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(England\) Order 2015](#).

Solar thermal panels

Solar thermal panels use the sun to heat fluid pumped through a coil in a hot water cylinder to heat water. That water is then stored for use as needed within the property.

A typical system under good operating conditions can reduce the energy demand for heating water by up to two thirds and provide all of a dwelling's hot water demand during the summer months, thus substantially reducing energy bills.



Solar thermal panels

Solar photovoltaic panels and battery storage

Solar photovoltaic panels convert UV light into electricity. They should be mounted on an un-shaded aspect of the building, ideally oriented between a south west and south east orientation and pitched between a 30-40 degree angle. A typical domestic system will take up between 14m² and 25m² of a roof.

A battery can store any surplus AC energy for later use.

Micro wind turbines

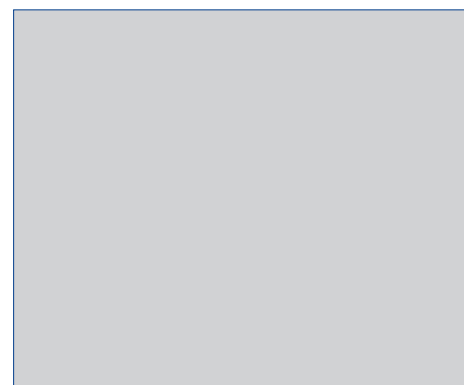
Small wind turbines, while technically feasible, are unlikely to be suitable for most sites in Kingston due to low wind speeds in the borough and turbulence caused by nearby buildings. When considering installing a wind turbine, siting, noise and visual impact should be taken into account as well as average local wind speeds.

Ground- and air-source heat pumps

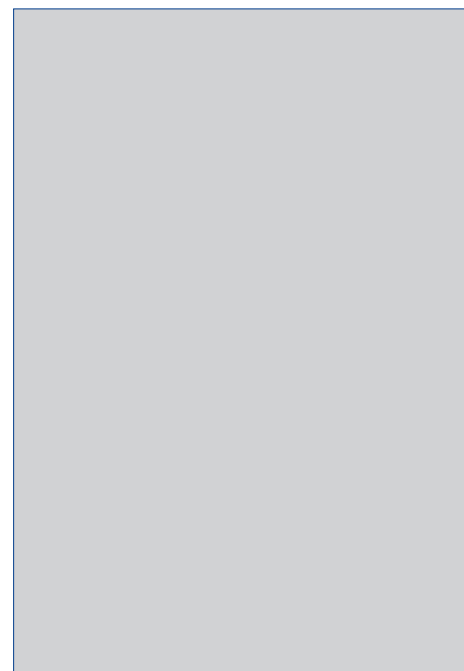
Ground source and air source heat pumps absorb and compress the heat naturally available in the ground or air to provide heat for space or water heating. Heat pumps extract heat from the air or ground in the same way as a fridge extracts heat from its inside. Heat pumps are usually used with a wet central heating system incorporating larger radiators or underfloor heating, and have the potential to provide significant energy bill and CO₂ savings depending on the heating system being replaced and the efficiency of the system.

While neither technology is renewable, as electricity is still needed to run them, they are generally more efficient than conventional electric heating. Savings will be substantially higher if a heat pump is replacing electric heating or an oil boiler.

For further information, refer to Historic England technical guidance on [Installing Heat Pumps in Historic Buildings](#).



Solar panels



Air source heat pump

7.3 Extensions

Given individual buildings within a Conservation Area make a contribution to the character of that area, the management of any proposed extensions and external alterations is important.

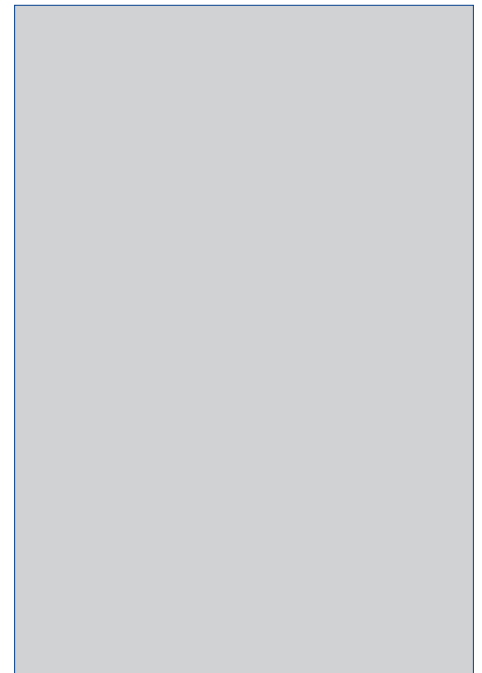
The criteria and standards expected for new development (see Section [7.7](#)) also apply to extensions, including Building Regulations compliance.

Extensions must be designed to complement and respect the character of their host buildings and the wider Conservation Area. Where applicable, important historic features, such as chimney stacks, should be retained and incorporated into the design of the new extension.

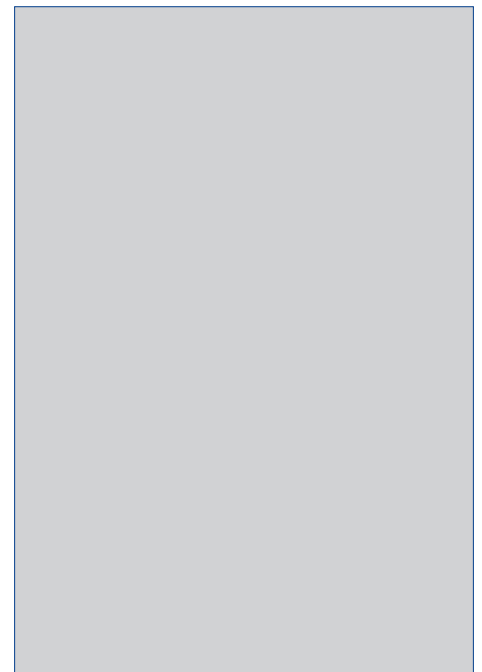
The architectural detailing and materials of the original building should be repeated or reflected in the design and detailing of any extensions, where appropriate. For example, if both the existing building and extension are to be in brick, the bonding, mortar mix, colour and pointing should be matched as far as possible (See Section [7.1.5](#)).

While contemporary architecture can be employed to offer an innovative and elegant contrast to the existing building, there should be a clear harmonious relationship. The scale, form, proportions, fenestration and external materials of the extension will be important considerations.

The development of extensions may offer an opportunity to integrate renewable energy equipment. Consideration should be given to this in advance of planning the final proposal, e.g. so solar PV panels can be accommodated within the accepted envelope, or do not exceed the parameters of permitted development.



Example of unsympathetic extension



Example of sympathetic extension

7.3.1 Extensions to single dwellings

Additional restrictions to extensions to houses apply within Conservation Areas, meaning planning permission is required for:

- Cladding the exterior of the building as part of the work
- A proposed extension greater than one storey
- A proposed single-storey rear extension that extends beyond the rear wall of the original⁷ house by more than four metres if a detached house; or more than three metres for any other house.

Where this is not the case, you may be able to extend or alter the house as long as it complies with the following requirements:

- Height - it is single storey, being less than four metres high; or where within two metres of a boundary, with a maximum eaves height of three metres.
- Site coverage - the total area of ground covered will not exceed 50% of the area remaining, after excluding all other buildings on the site.

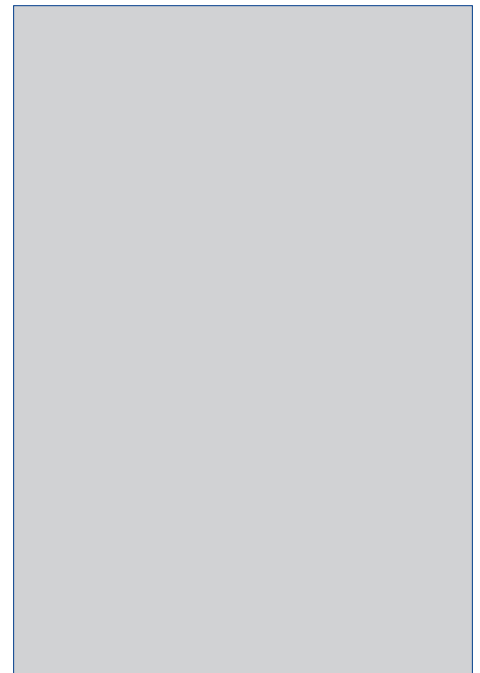


Diagram illustrating limits of permitted development

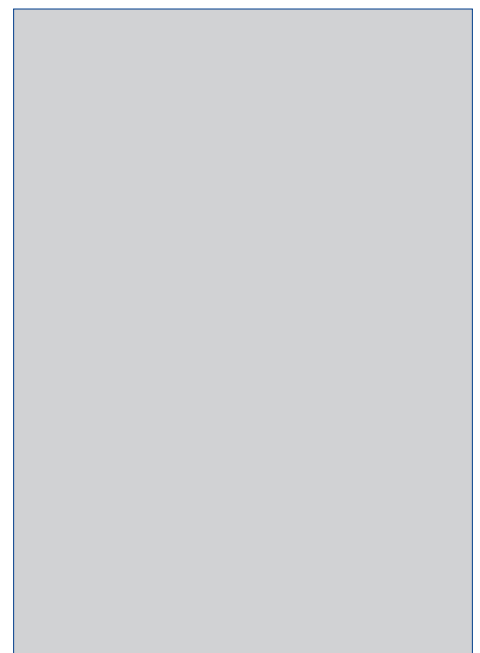
7.3.2 Front extensions

Given the principal elevations to a building usually make the greatest contribution to a Conservation Area's special character and appearance, front extensions to buildings will generally be considered unacceptable.

7.3.3 Side extensions

Side extensions will sometimes be acceptable, but this will be judged on a case-by-case basis. This will involve consideration of the design of the original and adjacent dwellings, and the effects on townscape and the street scene. For example, where the gaps between dwellings are considered to make a positive contribution to the special character of the Conservation Area, proposed side extensions are unlikely to be considered acceptable.

In most cases, any proposed side extensions should be sufficiently set back from the front elevation of the original building so that the new development appears subservient to the existing building and its primary elevation.

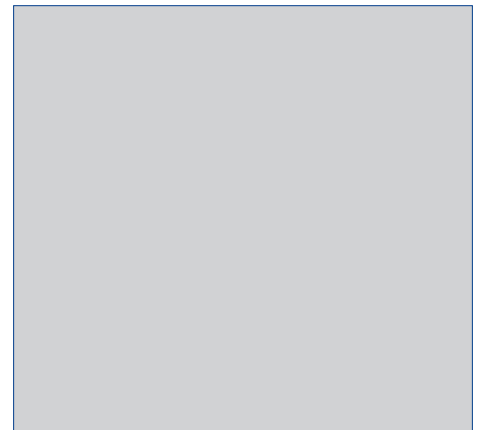


Side extension

⁷ The house it was first built, or as it stood on 1 July 1948

7.3.4 Rear extensions

Single storey rear extensions should be subordinate to the existing building, respecting its character and appearance. Two storey rear extensions are unlikely to be considered acceptable, due to the impact they are likely to have on the existing building, and on the group value of similar buildings in the vicinity. They are also more likely to cause unacceptable overshadowing of neighbouring properties.



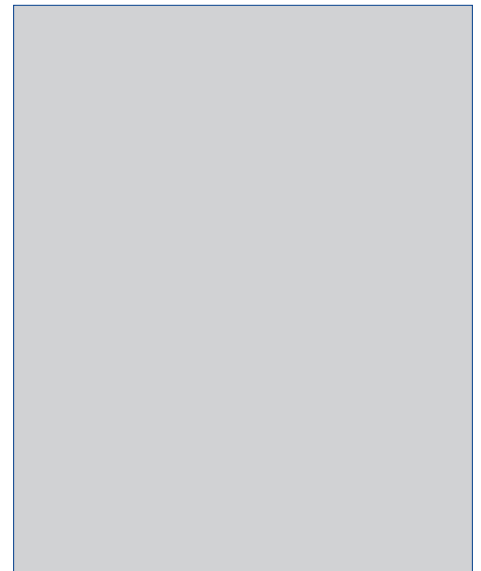
Rear extension

7.3.5 Roof extensions

Roof extensions and changes to an existing roof form can have a large impact on the character of a building and the wider townscape, so where visible from the public highway they are unlikely to be considered acceptable. For example, proposals to change hipped roofs to gable roofs.

Where roof extensions are considered appropriate, they will respect the architectural character of the existing building. All materials, roof forms and pitches should complement and respect those of the existing building, with any additional height and bulk kept to a minimum.

While dormer windows and rooflights can provide natural light to roof extensions, these should also be carefully considered. See Section [7.1.1](#) for further information.



Roof extension

7.4 Changes of use

Many Conservation Areas are characterised by either a single, or mix of particular uses. Some uses generate distinct patterns of pedestrian or vehicular activity, have characteristic hours of operation, generate a unique range of noises and smells, and result in related external alterations or additions.

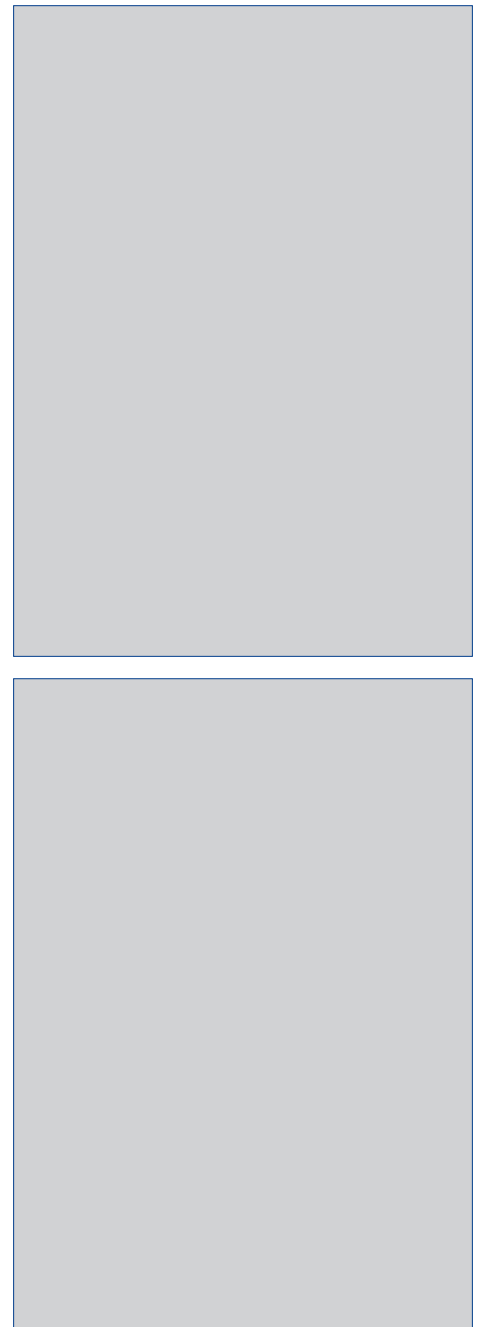
When considering applications for a change of use the Council will consider the contribution that the existing and proposed uses make to the area's special character. Where an existing use is redundant, or no longer economically viable, the conversion of a building to an appropriate new use is the best option for a building that makes a positive contribution to a Conservation Area.

Planning permission may be required for the change of use of a building. The council has an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights regarding the change of use from Class E (commercial, business and service uses) to C3 use (residential) in the borough's town centres, local centres and industrial areas. For more information, see the [council's website](#). For general information on changing use classes, please refer to the [Planning Portal](#).

7.4.1 Changing single dwellings to flats, or residential to commercial or community use

All proposals should demonstrate how all alterations will respect the original design of the building, preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and comply with the following guidelines:

- Material changes to the existing building should be kept to a minimum to protect its character and avoid the unnecessary introduction of extra points of entry to front elevations.
- All proposals should include adequate storage for all refuse and recycling bins; refuse storage areas should be designed so that they do not dominate the forecourt of a property.
- Landscape design proposals for front gardens should be submitted and cycle storage should be incorporated where appropriate (following guidance on outbuildings, see section [7.5.1](#)).
- An increased demand for parking will not be considered as a justification for the loss of front gardens, which should be maintained.
- Metre boxes should not be located on any street-facing elevations.
- All new doorbells and entry phones should be well integrated with the building to avoid a cluttered appearance.
- All new waste and ventilation pipes should be integrated and concealed where necessary.
- Any new shopfronts or signage should be well-integrated with the building, and active frontages should be maintained or created as appropriate. (See Section [7.1.9](#))



Examples of buildings that were originally single dwellings

7.5 Additional development within a plot

All development, even if not directly visible from the street, should respect the urban grain and wider character of the Conservation Area.

7.5.1 Small outbuildings

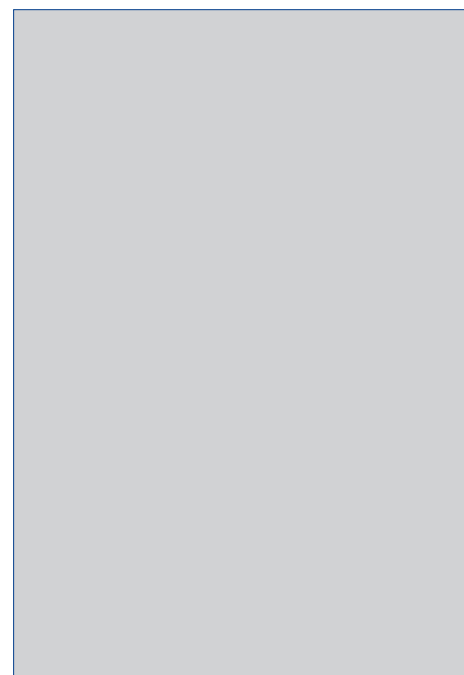
Planning permission is always required for any outbuilding (such as sheds, shelters, greenhouses, garages, kennels and summer houses) to be located in front of the principal elevation of a dwelling. Within Conservation Areas, planning permission is also required if they are to be located to the side of the dwelling.

The main points to consider are:

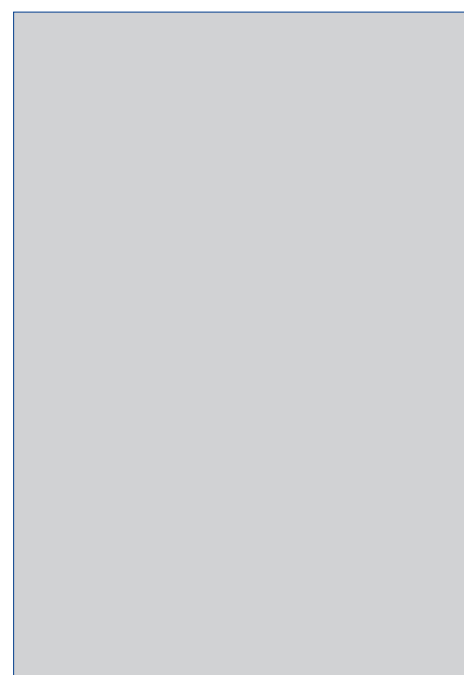
- Height – less than 4 metres (2.5m to the eaves) where having a pitched roof, 3 metres for a flat roof or where within 2 metres of any boundary, less than 2.5 metres.
- Area covered – no more than half (50%) the area of the land around the house. You must include all other buildings, structures and extensions before calculating the area.
- Use – must be ancillary to the use of the house, i.e. it cannot be a separate self-contained dwelling.
- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms (a platform must not exceed 0.3 metres in height)

The design of any outbuildings to the front or side of a dwelling should be carefully considered, in terms of the least visually obtrusive and sustainable option.

The optimal location will both be convenient to access, while not detracting from the house in design or scale, or dominating the street. Ideally it would be located to the side of the plot, against any party wall or fence. Any store should only be positioned against the front boundary if it can be suitably hidden by the boundary treatment. It is also preferable to construct stores on existing paving or hard standing, so any areas of soft-landscaping and planting are not lost. (see section on Boundary Treatments and Landscaping).



Example of unsympathetic outbuilding



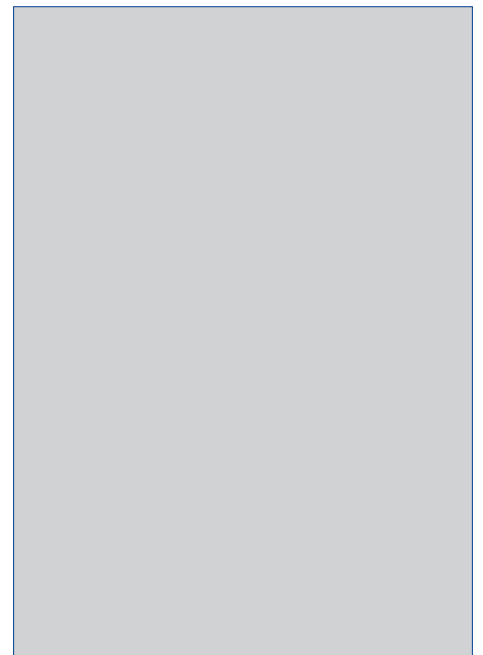
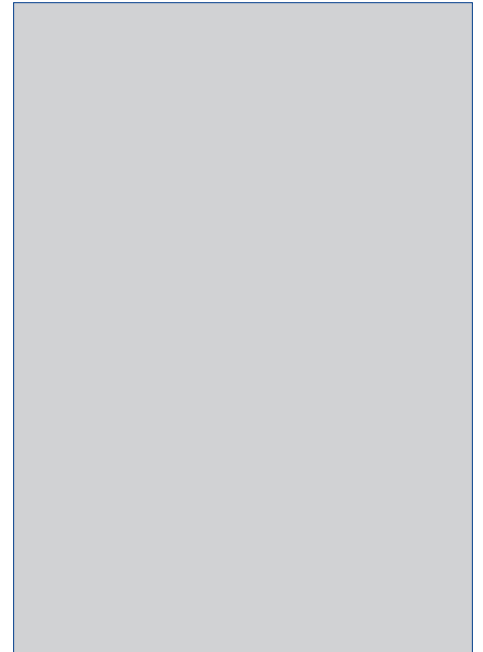
Example of sympathetic outbuilding

7.5.2 Development to the rear of a property

The historic pattern of urban or suburban development, the position of buildings within a plot, the spaces between buildings and landscape character are all important development considerations.

Major development to the rear of a property is unlikely to be considered acceptable without clear and convincing justification, due to the erosion of character and historic layouts.

Rear landscaped gardens also contribute to the ecological value of an area.



Examples of backland development

7.6 Demolition

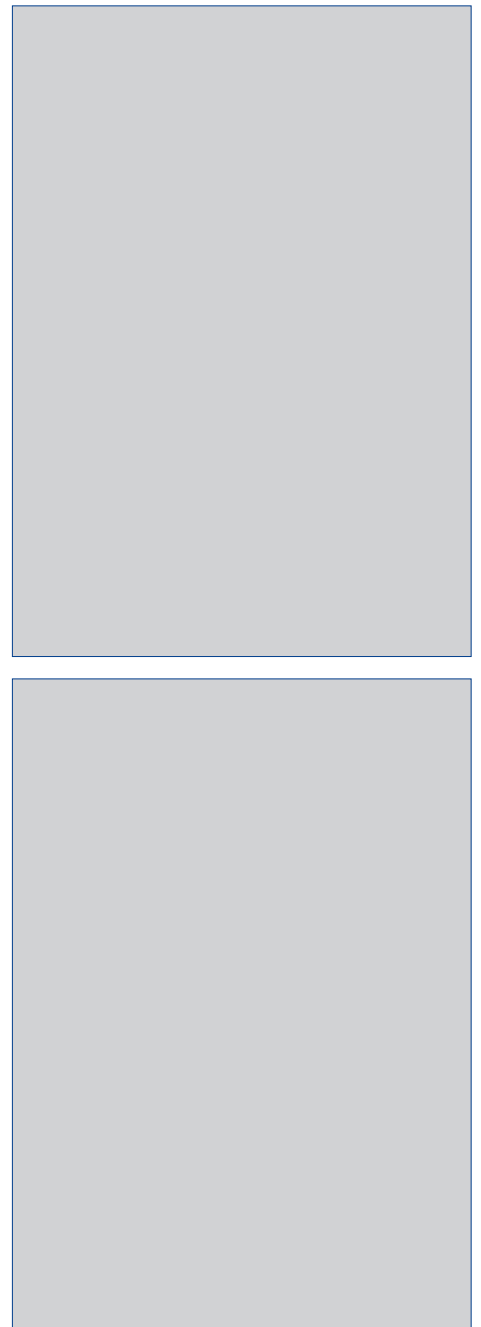
A Conservation Area's special character is often defined by the collective group value of buildings, as well as individual designs. Historic buildings have heritage interests that may not be possible to replicate.

In general, demolition works, including part of a gate, wall or fence or other means of enclosure, will require planning permission. Undertaking this work without the permission of the local planning authority is a criminal offence; if certainty on whether planning permission is required is needed, an application for a lawful development certificate is advised.

Proposals that involve the demolition of buildings or structures are carefully reviewed in terms of whether the proposal as a whole will conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, or whether there is harm to significance.

7.6.1 Demolition of individual heritage assets

Heritage assets, such as Listed and Locally Listed Buildings, within Conservation Areas are likely to make highly positive contributions to the significance of a Conservation Area, as their individual heritage value has been recognised separately to their inclusion in the Conservation Area. Any proposals for their demolition will be assessed both in terms of the harm to the Conservation Area, as well as the loss of the individual heritage assets concerned.



Examples of demolished heritage assets

7.6.2 Demolition of unlisted buildings and structures that make a positive contribution

While not recognised individually as heritage assets, many unlisted buildings and structures will make positive contributions to the significance of a Conservation Area, through their age, appearance or historic associations. Table 1 of pg. 21 of Historic England Advice Note 1: [Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management](#), (2nd ed, 2019) includes a checklist of criteria to identify these Positive Contributors.

The council recognises the local importance of buildings and features that are 'Positive Contributors.' Positive Contributors may be identified in a Conservation Area Appraisal, or through the planning process. Some Positive Contributors may also be identified as non-designated heritage assets through the planning process.

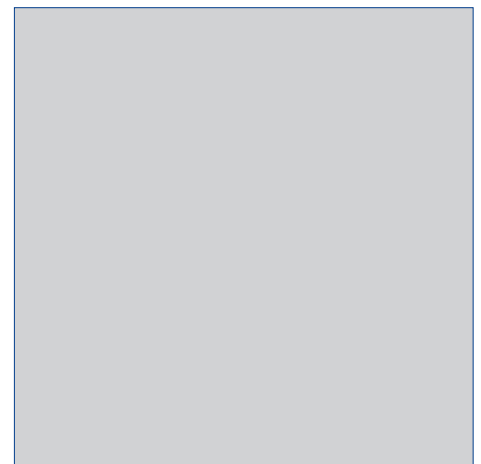
Following the NPPF, if a proposal includes the demolition of any Positive Contributors, this will be treated as harmful; unless it can be fully demonstrated that any proposed redevelopment will not result in overall harm to the significance of the whole Conservation Area.⁸

7.6.3 Demolition of unlisted buildings that make a neutral or no contribution

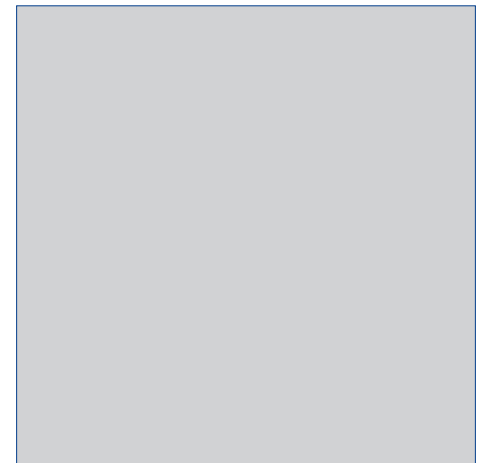
Unlisted buildings that do not make a positive contribution (i.e. are neutral or negative contributors) to the significance of a Conservation Area, may offer redevelopment opportunities to enhance that significance. Refer to Section [7.7](#).

7.6.4 Demolition of unlisted buildings adjacent to Conservation Areas

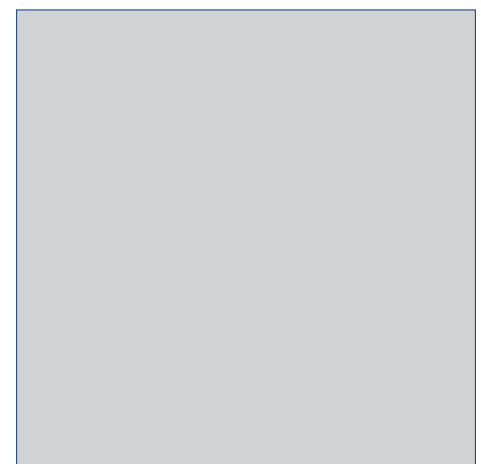
The setting of a Conservation Area may contribute to its significance. While the demolition of unlisted buildings outside of a Conservation Area may be possible under Permitted Development Rights, proposals to demolish and redevelop sites adjacent to a Conservation Area should preserve, and where possible enhance, the aspects of the setting that offer a positive contribution.



Example of a 'positive contributor'



Example of a 'neutral contributor'



Example of a 'negative contributor'

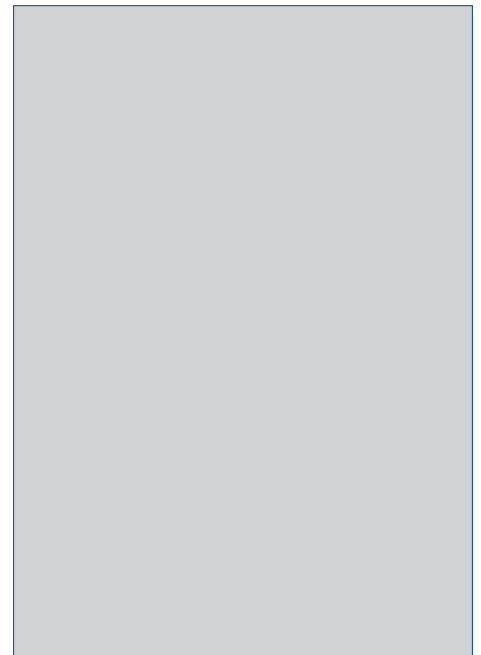
⁸ NPPF, para 207

7.6.5 Partial demolition

The partial demolition of buildings will only be considered acceptable when it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the architectural integrity of the building, and the character and appearance of the wider area. It will also have to be demonstrated how the demolition can be carried out without unacceptable risk to the parts of the building to be retained, and how any new development integrates with the remaining historic fabric. A report of any structural implications may need to be submitted.

In general, proposals to retain the only facade of the building will not be supported without clear justification.

However, the Council will support proposals that seek to remove unsympathetic additions to buildings in Conservation Areas. For example, a later side or rear extension that was not designed with careful consideration of the original building design.



Examples of partial demolition

7.7 New development

New development, where appropriate, can enhance a Conservation Area's overall character and appearance. However, the Council expects design proposals to be of the highest quality. Particular attention will be paid to how the design understands, respects, complements, interprets and enhances the Conservation Area's special architectural and historic interest. An appropriate level of townscape and character analysis will be needed to show how any new development integrates with the Conservation Area's wider local character.

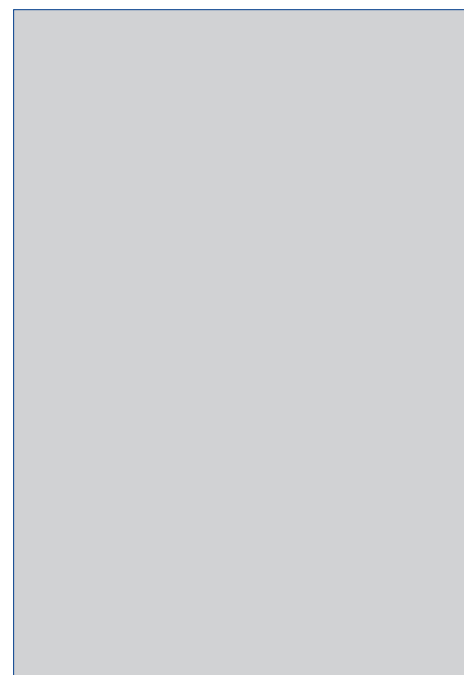
The [National Design Guide](#) sets out general guidance on the importance of understanding the context and identity of a place, whether in or out of a Conservation Area. Historic England has also collated further guidance and case studies on [Design in the Historic Environment](#).

The design of any new building must integrate appropriately and sensitively with the historic environment. This need not necessarily include 'copies' of traditional features; however, careful consideration of key aspects, such as those listed below, will need to be clearly demonstrated in a Design and Access Statement:

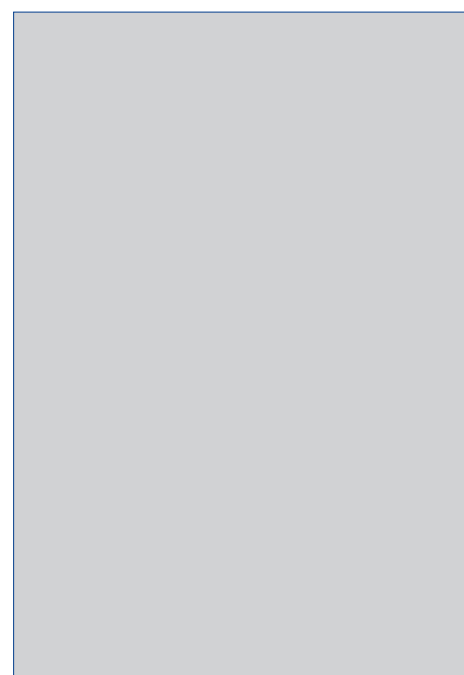
- scale, height, bulk and massing
- the relationship to established building lines
- historic plot widths
- horizontal and vertical emphases
- proportions
- high-quality materials
- careful detailing

The council requests that information on more detailed elements and materials are included with a planning application as early as possible. This will also expedite the planning timeline, as this information will otherwise be conditioned as part of any permission.

The council strongly recommends applicants seek advice from architects with experience of designing within a historic setting.



Example of new development



Example of new development

7.8 Boundary treatments and landscaping

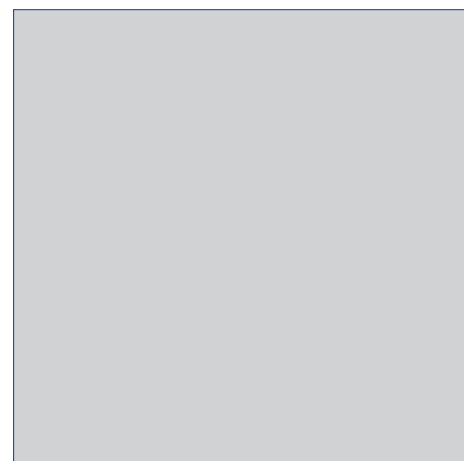
The presence of front gardens and landscape features such as trees, hedges, ponds and banks make an important contribution to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. The retention and regular maintenance of front gardens and, where appropriate, the planting of trees and greenery on private land is strongly encouraged.

Front boundary treatments, including railings, walls and planting, define the boundary between the public and private realm and have a significant impact on the quality of the streetscene. Existing and historic high-quality boundary treatments that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area should be retained as part of all development proposals. If retention is not possible, or the replacement of low-quality boundary treatment is considered necessary, replacement boundary treatments should be of a high-quality design and materials, and be appropriate for its context.

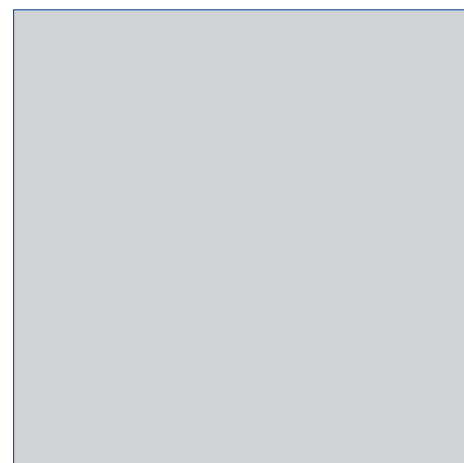
Both the removal of any boundary wall, fence, railing or gate, and the installation of a new one, are likely to require planning permission.⁹

All development proposals should include suitable boundary treatments and landscape design proposals for front gardens, including adequate and well-screened refuse facilities. For householders intending to install impermeable driveways that do not provide for the water to run to a permeable area, planning permission is required if the surface to be covered is greater than five square metres.

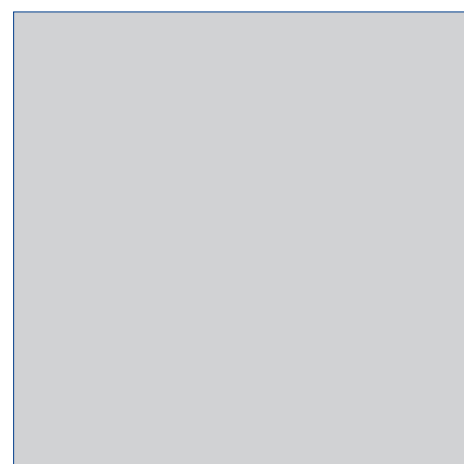
The hard-scaping of open spaces for parking, or loss of grass verges or boundary treatments (such as low walling to provide vehicular crossovers) will not normally be accepted, due to the detrimental impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area. The introduction of hard surfacing also results in a loss of biodiversity and surface-water drainage, and contributes to the 'heat island effect'.



Low boundary wall with planting



Railings



Removal of boundary wall for parking

⁹ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2

7.9 Public realm

Public spaces, such as streets, squares and public parks, are often integral to the character of a Conservation Area.

Their surface treatments, trees, landscaping, street furniture, signage, lampposts, bollards, boundary treatments should all be carefully considered in terms of the contribution to the character and appearance of the area, and should be thought about holistically. Historic features, and those which contribute positively to the significance of the Conservation Area, should be retained and maintained wherever possible. The removal or replacement of unsympathetic additions would be encouraged.

In particular, clutter should be avoided, both in terms of visual impact and impairment to accessibility.

Similar considerations should also be given to private spaces adjacent to, or visible from, public spaces, such as forecourts, front gardens, and private car parks.

Further advice can be found in Historic England guidance on [*Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places*](#) (April 2018)

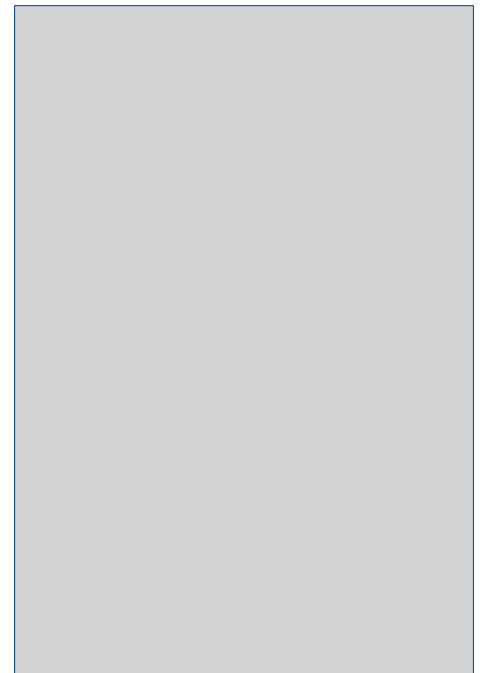


7.10 Trees

Trees make an important contribution to the streetscape of a Conservation Area, through the definition of boundaries between the public and private areas and the softening of the transition between open spaces and buildings. They are particularly integral to Kingston's suburban Conservation Areas.

Trees are vulnerable to damage during construction works on nearby buildings. An accurate and up to date Arboricultural Report or survey, together with a Tree Protection Plan and an Arboricultural Method Statement, will be required in order to demonstrate how the works will be undertaken in such a way as to protect them from any proposed development.

Anyone proposing to cut down or carry out work to a tree over 7.5cm in diameter above 1.5m in height in a Conservation Area is required to give the Council six weeks prior written notice. Refer to Section [4.5](#) for further information.



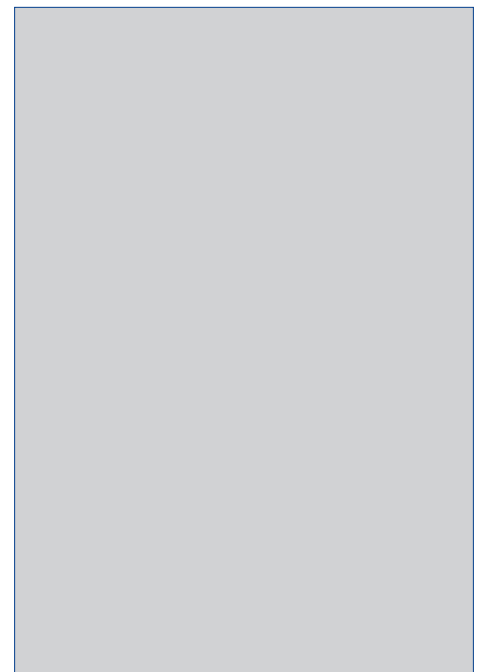
Trees integral to character

7.11 Open spaces and views

The open spaces in Conservation Areas, from large public parks to small gaps between buildings, contribute to their character to varying degrees.

Views across both private and public spaces should conserve or enhance the contribution of a prominent building or feature, or any other scene that has evolved as part of a valued and familiar landscape.

Some views across, from and towards Conservation Areas have been identified as important, highly important or very highly important to the borough as a whole, in terms of heritage and townscape. Further details can be found in the Council's [Views Study](#) (2018).



View

8. CARE & REPAIR

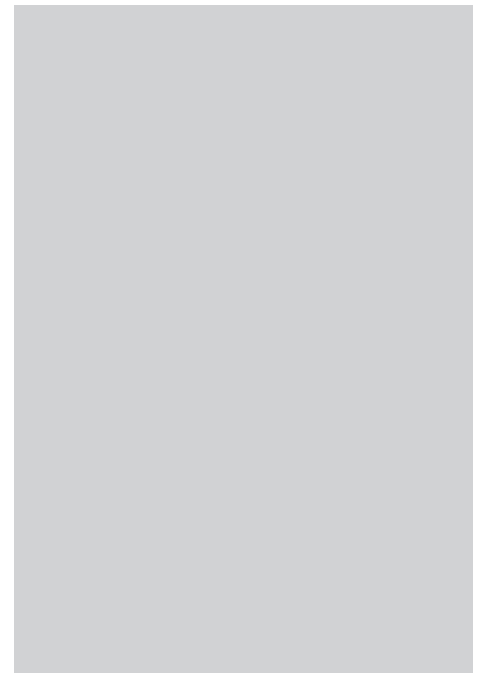
8. CARE & REPAIR

The Council recommends that all buildings, but particularly those with a recognised heritage value or positive contribution to a Conservation Area, should be well cared for. Regular, sensitive maintenance should be undertaken to prevent unnecessary decay and damage, and resultant problems and cost. Historic England has a [maintenance checklist](#), which provides a useful starting point.

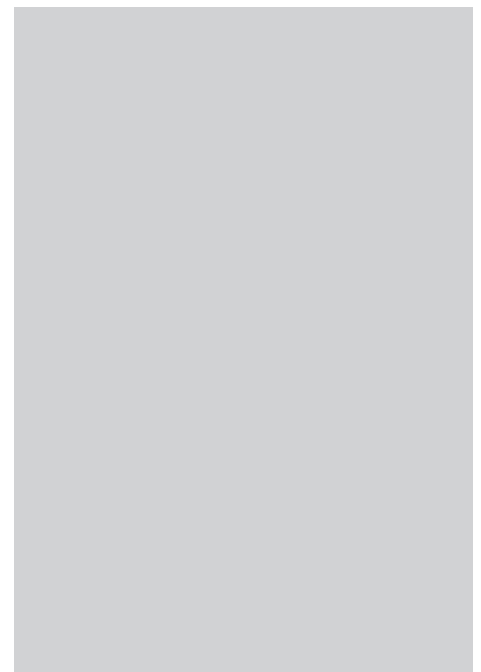
As outlined in Section [7](#), many traditional building elements can be usefully repaired in the first instance, due to the method of construction and material. Retaining and looking after these historic features not only has a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a building and Conservation Area, but is far more sustainable than replacing them with new products of an often lower-quality.

Minor maintenance works, such as the regular clearing of debris in gutters and rainwater pipes, the pruning of vegetation near to buildings, the re-fixing of loose roof tiles or slates, and the regular ‘like-for-like’ repainting of woodwork and timber do not require planning permission. If these minor works are left unattended they may develop into more complex and expensive works that also require planning permission.

If a building or garden falls into a poor state of repair that results in an adverse impact on the amenity of the area, then the Council may explore enforcement action to remedy this harmful impact. However, the deteriorated state of a heritage asset will not necessarily be taken into account in the planning process, i.e. to prevent cases of ‘managed decline’.



Gutter cleaning



Slipped tiles

9. BUILDING REGULATIONS

9. BUILDING REGULATIONS

Building Regulations are construction standards that apply to most new buildings and alterations to existing buildings in England and Wales. Any building work must seek approval from Building Control, to ensure that it complies with Building Regulations to ensure that the minimum standards of health and safety, fire safety, structural stability, access, sound and thermal insulation and energy efficiency are achieved.

Building Regulations do not cover repair, 'like-for-like' replacement, or the painting of existing features. For example the replacement of an individual sash window on a 'like-for-like' basis, or the repair of a glass or wood panel to a door, would not constitute building work that needs to comply.

However, it is important to note that certain types of work that would often be considered as repairs, such as re-roofing or the re-plastering of external walls, are required to comply with the Regulations. However, patch repairs would not necessarily be covered.

Please refer to the [council's website](#) for further information on Building Regulations, when Building Control approval is required, and for details of the authorisation process.

10. HERITAGE TERMINOLOGY

10.1 Key heritage terms

10.2 Heritage glossary

10. HERITAGE TERMINOLOGY

10.1 Key heritage terms

10.1.1 'historic environment'

The 'historic environment' is defined in the NPPF as 'all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora'.¹

Although it is a general term, it refers to the environment around us that has some heritage value or interest.

10.1.3 'heritage asset'

A 'heritage asset' is defined in the NPPF as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)'.² These are identified on the council's [interactive Heritage Map](#).

Heritage assets make positive contributions to the area in which they are situated, and the people that experience them.

10.1.2 'significance', 'heritage interest', 'heritage value'

'Significance' is defined in the NPPF as 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.³ Heritage value is another way of describing heritage interest. It captures what makes a place special, from a heritage point of view.

1 NPPF, Annex 2: Glossary

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

10.1.4 'designated heritage asset'

The NPPF uses the term 'designated heritage assets' to refer to heritage places that have been selected under a range of relevant legislation or criteria for formal recognition of their heritage value and significance.

Designated heritage assets include:

Designated by The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (advised by Historic England):

- Listed buildings
- Scheduled monument
- Protected wreck site

Designated by Historic England:

- Registered park or garden
- Registered battlefield

Inscribed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO):

- World heritage site

In most cases, designated by Local Planning Authorities:

- Conservation area

10.1.5 'non-designated heritage asset'

The PPG defines 'non-designated assets' as 'buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.' While they may not meet the criteria for national designation, they have been identified as assets which are of local importance, and therefore should be valued in terms of their contribution to local heritage interests, and the character of the borough.⁴

There are a number of processes through which non-designated heritage assets may be identified, including the local and neighbourhood plan-making processes and conservation area appraisals and reviews. Some non-designated heritage assets might be identified through the planning process.

In the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, non-designated heritage assets currently include:

- Locally listed buildings
- Local Areas of Special Character

4 National Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 039, Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723

10.2 Heritage definitions

Refer to Historic England's [Heritage Definitions](#) for more terms used in relation to heritage legislation and policy.

11. FURTHER GUIDANCE

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To follow

