

# Interim Planning Guidance

## Living in a Conservation Area

## **INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE**

As part of the Local Plan process, supplementary planning guidance was prepared to supplement policies and proposals in the Local Plan. The Borough Council consulted the public on the guidance at the draft deposit and revised draft deposit stages of the Local Plan preparation process. Some of the comments on the Draft Deposit Guidance were taken into account in formulating the Revised Draft Guidance.

It was not appropriate for the Borough Council to adopt the guidance as supplementary planning guidance because this can only supplement an adopted local plan and the Tamworth Local Plan 2001-2011 will not be adopted until 2006. Furthermore, under the new development plan system, supplementary planning guidance has been replaced with supplementary planning documents.

This guidance was approved as interim planning guidance by the Borough Council's Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005. Appropriate guidance will be replaced with supplementary planning documents in due course. This is in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme that came into effect in March 2005.

August 2005



### **What is a Conservation Area?**

A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is important to preserve and enhance. Several areas of Tamworth Borough with a distinctive architectural and historic character have been designated as conservation areas, and to protect their special characteristics stricter controls over certain works apply. These controls are not intended as a hindrance to change but as a safeguard to the character of the area as a whole

### **Why have Conservation Areas?**

Tamworth Borough is fortunate to have many fine buildings and areas that create an attractive environment, the product of development over several different eras. These areas often contain 'listed buildings' but it is not always enough to protect these buildings in isolation. Their surroundings and general environment are often of equal importance and conservation areas are intended to protect that environment. The designation of a conservation area is also a constraint against demolition of buildings and felling trees.

The Council has powers to control main changes concerning conservation areas, which relate specifically to:

- Demolition
- Advertisements

- Building works
- Trees

### **Demolition**

Conservation Area Consent is needed for the demolition of whole or part of most buildings and structures including walls and outbuildings that are within a conservation area. If demolition is being considered the Conservation Officer should be consulted to determine exactly what permissions are needed.

### **Advertisements**

Unsympathetic advertisements and those out of scale can be detrimental to the appearance of the area. Advertisement Consent is needed for almost all illuminated signs in conservation areas and for certain other types of advertisements. There are specific policies in the Development Control Interim Planning Guidance relating to such advertisements and these policies should be consulted before considering any type of advertisement.

### **Building Works**

New development, redevelopment and extensions within conservation areas usually need permission, although certain permitted development rights may still apply to single dwelling houses. With new development, the Council can require additional information to show how the proposal relates to the conservation area. With minor alterations and extensions the

Conservation Officer should be consulted to see what permissions are needed.

It is important to remember that in some areas, for example a street of similarly designed properties, minor alterations and changes such as porches and dormer windows can greatly disrupt the appearance of the conservation area.

### **Works to Trees**

Trees often make a significant contribution to the environment of conservation areas and the setting of its buildings. To protect this character trees in conservation areas may not be felled, uprooted, or have their branches cut without giving the Council six weeks prior written notice. During this period the Council consider whether a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) should be made.

Where trees are already covered by a TPO you must have the Council's consent before any works can be undertaken.

### **How can you help?**

If you live, work or own property in a conservation area there are many ways you can help preserve and enhance its special character.

- Take care with the design of extensions and alterations to your property. Minor alterations such as changing windows can often have a detrimental effect on the overall appearance of the Conservation area.
- When considering extensions and alterations follow the scale, size and

materials of the existing building, and also think about how your proposal relates to other buildings and spaces within the conservation area.

- Development proposals should be designed to a high standard and be in sympathy with the general character of the area. Remember the spaces are often an important feature of the conservation area.
- Use the services of a professional architect for designs for new development and alterations. Professional architects should be able to suggest a design that enhances the character of the area.
- It is important to have regard to the maintenance of your property, particularly original features such as windows and doors.

### **Conservation Grant Scheme**

Tamworth Borough Council operates a conservation grant scheme designed to improve the condition of the historic buildings and areas within its boundary. Where possible it aims to restore historic features such as original style windows and doors. Eligible works are generally limited to external repairs of the historic fabric although repairs which ensure the building's structural integrity may be considered.

Details of the scheme can be obtained  
from:

The Conservation Officer  
Strategic Partnerships  
Tamworth Borough Council  
Marmion House  
Lichfield Street  
Tamworth  
B79 7BZ

Tel: 01827 709278