

CONSERVATION AREAS IN THANET



CONSERVATION AREAS MANAGEMENT PLAN

March 2008



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INTRODUCTION

This plan sets out the local authority's approach to the management of Conservation Areas in Thanet. It is based on national guidance, adopted planning policies affecting the area, and the other local authority services in the area.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Guidance on Conservation Areas stems from the "Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and associated Regulations, together with Planning Policy Guidance Note No 15 "Planning and the Historic Environment", issued in September 1994.

POLICY

This Management Plan indicates how relevant national, regional, county and locally adopted policies figure in the management of the Conservation Areas. However it is not a planning document.

The following documents have an influence on the Conservation Area Management Plan.

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East is currently set out in "RPG9", issued in 2001 and updated in 2004. This is due to be replaced by the emerging "South East Plan" being prepared by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA). This new Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2006 and has been through an Examination in Public. Adoption is anticipated in 2008. In RPG9 Thanet lies in a "Priority Area for Economic Regeneration" suffering from significant deprivation. Part of the strategy is to focus development in urban areas and to ensure that the economy, society and the environment develop in harmony. The emerging South East Plan includes policies seeking to promote the sustainable development of communities, addressing intra regional disparities and protecting and enhancing key environmental, cultural and heritage assets. The Plan has policies on Management for an Urban Renaissance and the Management of the Historic Environment.

The "Kent and Medway Structure Plan" was adopted in July 2006 and contains policies for development affecting Conservation Areas. There are specific policies for conservation areas, archaeological sites, buildings of architectural and historic importance and historic landscape features in Chapter 5 "Promoting quality of life in town and country".

The Thanet Local Plan was adopted in June 2006 and contains a significant range of specific policies for Conservation Areas,

Listed buildings and archaeological sites in Chapter 7 “Heritage.” These policies are aligned with national and strategic policies and seek to ensure that new development preserves or enhances the important heritage of Thanet.

The Local Development Framework will comprise a number of documents, which will, in due course, replace the Thanet Local Plan as the key planning policy guidance for the area. This work is at an early stage but a Core Strategy is under development and this is programmed to be adopted in 2010.

A number of supplementary planning guidance documents provide more detailed guidance on how policies should be applied. The Kent Design Guide 2005 has been formerly adopted by the Council (SPG5) and advocates high quality design for new development and provides detailed guidance on the principals and consideration addressed in Policy QL1 of the “Kent and Medway Structure Plan.” The Council has also prepared a number of other guidance leaflets relating to Conservation Areas as follows: -

- i) Shopfront Design
- ii) Shopfront Security Shutters
- iii) Conservation Areas
- iv) Conversion of Shops to residential accommodation

The Council has adopted a Statement of Community Involvement, which sets out the council’s commitment to community involvement in all aspects of town planning, including matters pertaining to Thanet Conservation Areas.

1. CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

There are 20 Conservation Areas in Thanet, which are governed by the statutory regulations of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Act, 1990*. The Council maintains its responsibilities in the Act to “preserve and enhance” the character of the Conservation Areas. The council also aims to undertake regular reviews of the areas to monitor the quality of development and the effectiveness of its policies and guidance.

2. CHARACTER APPRAISALS

The Council is in the process of producing character appraisals or updating appraisals of each of the districts Conservation Areas of which this Management Plan is an integral part.

The appraisals are being compiled to describe and evaluate the special architectural and historic interest of the different Conservation Areas.

The statement of the character provides a basis for the making of development control decisions and to frame design guidance. The appraisals are the basis for individual Management Plans and Action Plans, identifying the elements of special interest of each of the Conservation Areas. They also provide a valuable resource for the defence of Appeals against refusal of planning permission. In the absence of an appraisal document for each of the Conservation Areas this document will provide an interim generic Management Plan for the Conservation Areas in Thanet.

3. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

As a result of the demand for development, the character of the Conservation Areas are under constant threat posed by unsympathetic, poorly designed and executed new buildings, extensions and alterations. Therefore the role of Development Control is critical in managing future changes in the Conservation Areas

3.1 PRINCIPALS FOR DEVELOPMENT SERVICES.

1. The Council will apply the principals, guidance and regulations outlined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990 and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15.)
2. The Council will apply the polices set out in Regional Planning Guidance the Kent and Medway Structure Plan, the adopted Thanet Local Plan and successive documents as appropriate.
3. The Council will require any development proposal in a Conservation Area to display high quality design, materials and execution.
4. The Council will require all planning applications in Conservation Areas to be supported by a Design and Access Statement.
5. Clear indications of the materials to be used and architectural detailing must accompany applications for work in Conservation Areas.
6. The drawings through which the proposals are submitted should clearly demonstrate the intentions of the development.
7. Where possible the Council recommends pre-application consultation.

4. PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Proposals for the enhancement of the character and appearance of a Conservation Area should be aimed at re-enforcing those qualities, which provide the special interest which warrants designation. Each Conservation Area has a strong identity in terms of character and use.

Thanet Conservation Areas require a Management Plan

- To instill the sympathetic redevelopment of sites.
- Devise pro- active proposals for the management of the landscape.
- Form a scheme for the restoration of distinctive architectural features.
- Promote the reinstatement of historic surfaces.
- Encourage the reduction of traffic intrusion and a rationalisation of street signage.

4.1 MAINTAINING QUALITY

The Council's attention to quality in all of the Thanet Conservation Areas will be maintained through its contribution to the following elements of development and alteration.

4.1.1 NEW DEVELOPMENT

New development in Conservation Areas should aspire to quality of design and execution, related to its context.

“In areas of special or predominant architectural or historic character there is a strong need for the design for new buildings to enhance, or at least maintain, this special character by understanding and reflecting the positive design attributes.”

Therefore each new proposal should have site-specific design guidance, to encourage new development that complements the established urban grain or settlement pattern, whilst representing the time in which it was built and the culture it accommodates.

Proposals for new developments should be scrutinised for the appropriateness of the overall mass of the building, its scale and its relationship to its context. A new building should be in harmony with or complementary to its neighbours.

4.1.2 LISTED AND HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Special statutory protection is given to certain buildings of particular merit or interest in terms of architecture, history or close historical associations. Listed buildings refer to structure which occur on the Statutory List of buildings of special architectural or historic interest compiled by the Secretary of State following consultation with experts in the field of historic buildings (e.g. English Heritage).

4.1.2.1 REPAIRS NOTICES

Local Authorities under section 54 of the Listed Buildings Act are given power carry out urgent works for the preservation of any listed building in their area and recover the cost of them from the buildings owner.

4.1.2.2 ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS.

For major alterations and extensions to buildings, the main principle is the character of the building and surroundings must be maintained or improved by the works done. A sympathetic approach is required; any minor alteration can be damaging to an individual building or group. Historic features are often important elements of character. However there is scope for new additions or alterations to old buildings to be innovative if they remain sensitive to the original design and do not overwhelm it.

4.1.3. GROUND SURFACES

Paving and surface materials can help define the built environment, the plinth on which the buildings are set. In order to help achieve this ground surfaces need to relate to their surrounding streetscape context. Simple surface materials chosen to complement surrounding architecture and responding to the scale of the street or space as well as local traditions are advisable. When repairing surfaces it is desirable to repair surfaces like for like to avoid piecemeal surfacing. It is also important to repair surfaces at first sign of damage.

4.1.4 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Many problems in Conservation Areas can arise from or be associated with the measures required for traffic safety, control and calming and pedestrianisation. The need for increased road markings and signage as well as for physical constraints such as barriers and safety rails, introduces alien elements and visual clutter, none of which tends to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area.

4.1.4.1 TRAFFIC SIGNS

It is desirable to restrict signs to those, which convey essential information only, reducing signs to a minimum size and number will decrease clutter aided by the removal of redundant signage. It is advisable to locate signs onto existing lampposts or buildings. The use of dark or receding colours for posts and the back of signs further reduces the visual impact of the signage.

4.1.4.2 STREET SIGNS AND NAMEPLATES

Street signs and nameplates are fundamental to the understanding and character of a place. Local variations in design, materials and lettering add richness and variety to the street scene. It is desirable to retain older signs to reinforce the local character. Where new signs are warranted it is important they are consistent in form through the area. Again the removal of superfluous and redundant signs is advisable as is the location of signs on buildings or at the back edge of pavements. By avoiding the placing of signs on new posts, will also help to reduce visual clutter.

4.1.4.3 RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEMES

Many of Thanet's historic buildings have no provision for off street parking. The character of the Conservation Area can be quickly eroded in some areas by the removal of boundary walling and the introduction of hard standing for parking. It is desirable that survey is undertaken to record all areas, which could be affected in this way and the possible introduction of Residents Parking Permits.

4.1.5. OUTDOOR Advertisements

Outdoor advertising is essential to commercial activity. All outdoor advertising affects the appearance of the building or the place it is displayed. Signage needs to reflect the character and appearance of the area and the design, material and scale and its relationship to its context.

External illumination should be non-fluorescent or halo lit. Signage lettering needs to be individually applied and hanging signage may not be acceptable above fascia level.

It is advisable that a policy should be in place that in terms of repair and maintenance of signage sympathetic signage should be encouraged and that once major refurbishment is required the above guidelines should be adhered to. Guidance documents of advertisements and associated publicity on illegal fly posting is desirable. Provision could be made for appropriate legal sites for advertising such as glazed notice boards.

4.1.6. LANDSCAPING

The land, trees and hedges, which make up part of the Conservation Areas, need to be taken fully into account in all schemes and need to be considered with, regard their potential for enhancement. Adjustments could be made to maintenance regimes to tackle poorly maintained and degraded landscaped areas and parks.

It is advisable to design a landscape strategy to reduce the management costs and enhance the bio-diversity / amenity of the Conservation Areas. A survey to record all trees and establishes their condition and amenity value. This will inform tree policy across Thanet including possible TPO designation in the future.

4.1.7. OPEN SPACE/ WOODLAND

The present condition of some of Thanet's Conservation Areas open space is under used and somewhat neglected. The Council regards it as important to secure measures for the improvement of the amenity use and proper maintenance of these valuable areas of town and villagescape.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Council will review its Appraisals as part of a 5 year programme of regular review and monitoring as recommended in policy reflecting the obligations imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990.

6. ENFORCEMENT

Breaches of planning regulation are dealt with by Enforcement Officers from TDC.

All matters are investigated in accordance with the Planning Enforcement Protocol (available to view on the TDC web site or in hard copy "Planning Enforcement in Thanet" from TDC Development Services) which sets out the manner and timescales in which issues will be investigated.

7. USEFUL INFORMATION

Strategic Planning, Thanet District Council, PO Box 9, Cecil Street, Margate Kent
CT9 1XZ

Direct Line 01843 577000

Direct Fax: 01843 298610

DX 30555 (Margate)

planning.services@thanet.gov.uk

conservation-&-listed-buildings@thanet.gov.uk

www.thanet.gov.uk

www.thanet.gov.uk/planning

www.ukplanning.com for planning applications

Conservation Areas in Thanet: Designations (Des) and Extensions (Ext)

Acol	Conservation Area 1	Des. 27.01.88
Birchington	Conservation Area 2	Des. 02.02.76
Broadstairs	Conservation Area 3	Des 05.06.70 Ext. 21.10.86
Kingsgate	Conservation Area 4	Des 13.04.73
Margate	Conservation Area 5	Des 07.02.78 Ext 07.07.94
Margate Seafront	Conservation Area 6	Des 29.01.97
Minster	Conservation Area 7	Des 28.01.72 Ext 23.8.00
Monkton	Conservation Area 8	Des 22.08.78
Northdown	Conservation Area 9	Des 20.08.85
Pegwell	Conservation Area 10	Des 29.06.76 Ext 27.9.89
Ramsgate	Conservation Area 11	Des 16.01.70 Ext 23.01.80 27.01.88 22.08.90 12.07.00
Ramsgate Montefiore	Conservation Area 12	Des 22.02.07
Ramsgate, Royal Esplanade	Conservation Area 13	Des 11.05.06
Reading Street	Conservation Area 14	Des 13.04.73
St Nicholas at Wade	Conservation Area 15	Des 28.01.72
St Peter's	Conservation Area 16	Des 13.04.73
Sarre	Conservation Area 17	Des 26.11.71
Westgate on Sea	Conservation Area 18	Des 11.03.98 Ext 14.12.06
Westgate on Sea South	Conservation Area 19	Des 14.12.06
Westgate on Sea East	Conservation Area 20	Des 14.12.06

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Thanet Local Plan 2006
Council

Thanet District

Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas
/Planning Advisory Service

English Heritage

Streets for All, South East

English Heritage

The Kent Design Guide

Kent County Council