

PART 2 THE PROPOSED NORTHDOWN ROAD CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of the Management Plan

Part 1 of this document, the Character Appraisal, has identified the special positive qualities of the proposed Northdown Road Conservation Area which make the Conservation Area unique. Part 2 of this document, the Management Plan, builds upon the positive features and addresses the negative features which have been identified to provide a series of recommendations for improvement and change, most of which are the responsibility of Thanet District Council or Kent County Council.

The involvement and approval of the local community in the formulation and delivery of these documents helps to strengthen their status and will hopefully mean that the various actions identified in the Management Plan will have greater impact and longevity. For Northdown Road, this has been achieved through the current six week public consultation exercise. Any necessary amendments will be made before the final version of the document is completed. The document will be adopted by the Council as a 'material' document for development control purposes.

1.2 Relevant documents

The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework published by English Heritage in Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2011). Both the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Management Plan should be subject to regular monitoring and reviews, as set out in section 3.

Other relevant documents include:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- This Act sets out the legislative background for the control of conservation areas and listed buildings.
- Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5)
- This provides recent (March 2010) government policies which relate to the historic built environment, and is accompanied by detailed guidance on the interpretation of the PPS by English Heritage.
- The Kent Design Guide
- This advocates high quality design for all new development and provides detailed guidance.

Documents produced by Thanet District Council:

- The Thanet local Development Framework (which is incrementally replacing the Thanet Local Plan 2006)
- The Margate Renewal Study (undated but post-2006)
- This document was commissioned by the Margate Renewal Partnership to carry out a study of the drivers of deprivation in Margate Central and Cliftonville West Wards and make recommendations on future regeneration activity to tackle deprivation.
- Conservation Areas in Thanet – Conservation Areas Management Plan (March 2008)

- This document sets out the Council's approach to the management of the conservation areas within Thanet – it draws on both national and local planning policies

Documents produced by Thanet District Council which relate specifically to Cliftonville:

- West Cliftonville Neighbourhood Renewal Area (2006)
- This report produced by Thanet District Council and consultants identifies the need to improve the housing stock in four parts of Thanet including Cliftonville West, and provides some policy guidance.
- The Cliftonville DPD (February 2010)
- This document provides planning policies for the Cliftonville West Renewal Area (in advance of the Core Strategy) to be used to inform development control decisions on the large number of planning applications which are submitted in the area – its main thrust is to enhance the existing building stock in terms of physical condition and use (particularly the reduction in number of poor quality flats and their replacement with family houses), encourage community pride in the area, and support the growth of high quality tourism-related facilities. One of the outcomes of this DPD is the imposition of a surcharge on local landlords which is aimed at encouraging a reduction in the number of small residential units, and an increase in the number of family dwellings within the Cliftonville area.

1.3 The scope of this Management Plan

This Management Plan has been drawn up following detailed survey work of the proposed Esplanade Conservation Area by The Conservation Studio in collaboration with Thanet District Council's conservation staff. Its recommendations relate specifically to the Conservation Area, and it is not intended to include general advice about the control of conservation areas, which is set out in the Council's document Conservation Areas in Thanet – Conservation Areas Management Plan (March 2008 – under revision). This document also includes advice about the quality of new development which will be needed in all of Thanet's conservation areas.

2 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The following recommendations are based on the key negative features and issues identified as part of the Character Appraisal. Some of them may have to remain aspirational for the time being, but it is considered good practice to identify possible actions which could be implemented in the future if the funding becomes available. Other recommendations rely upon the District Council providing sufficient staff resources to ensure that the proposed actions are carried forward. All of the recommendations particularly rely upon a successful partnership between the District Council and the local community, assisted by Kent County Council as appropriate. The potential for grant aid means that other outside agencies, such as English Heritage or the Heritage Lottery Fund, may also be involved in the regeneration of Cliftonville through the provision of grant funding at some stage in the future.

2.1 Northdown Road Enhancement Scheme

Until recently, Thanet District Council's main impetus, in partnership with the Margate Renewal Partnership, has been to regenerate the town centre of Margate. Relevant documents include a Strategic Urban Design Framework, which was produced in 2004, and an Action Plan for Margate, produced in 2005. One of the outcomes has been that buildings in the Old Town have been subject to a variety of grant schemes including a Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme between 2003 and 2006 which provided over one million pounds of funding. A similar scheme has recently (November 2010) been applied for to cover the adjoining Dalby Square Conservation Area. Other initiatives include the recent opening of the Turner Contemporary art gallery, which it is hoped will bring around 130,000 visitors a year to the area. Several key development sites have also been identified, including the Lido and the adjoining car park.



View along Northdown Road

So far, little of this has impacted on Cliftonville where the Council has been focusing its efforts on the various social and economic problems of the area. The Cliftonville DPD (February 2010) provides planning policies for the Cliftonville West Renewal Area (in advance of the Core Strategy), which encompasses part of the proposed Cliftonville Cliff Top Conservation Area from the Lido to Third Avenue. Its 'vision' for Cliftonville includes the provision of a range of high quality varied family housing, the enhancement of the historic buildings in the area, and the provision of higher quality tourist accommodation. It also confirms its aim to

provide high quality public green spaces in the Cliftonville area, but no further details are given.

The designation of six new conservation areas in Cliftonville (in addition to the recently designated Dalby Square Conservation Area) provides an opportunity to revisit the advantages provided by heritage-led regeneration. Because of its open spaces, many of which are owned and controlled by the District Council, the Cliftonville Cliff Top Conservation Area provides the greatest opportunities within Cliftonville to rebrand the area and upgrade the 'offer' for visitors (further details are provided in the Cliftonville Cliff Top Conservation Area Management Plan). However, this work needs to be undertaken in collaboration with a similar strategy for the Northdown Road Conservation Area.

A 'Northdown Road Enhancement Scheme' could provide the following:

- The agreement of priorities and a clear vision of what improvements need to be achieved, in the form of a detailed Action Plan
- This could be used as a basis for applications for grant aid from organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage
- The integration of proposed works with other initiatives in Margate, particularly with proposed improvements to the Cliftonville Cliff Top Conservation Area
- The provision of a Public Realm Strategy (see below)
- The provision of shopfront guidance and possible grant aid to encourage shop owners or lessees to improve their shopfronts
- The provision of a car parking and traffic management strategy (in association with other similar initiatives in Cliftonville)
- Actions to achieve a reduction of housing densities, as recommended in the Cliftonville DPD
- Site specific guidance, including the provision of Development Briefs and Feasibility Studies
- Suggestions and funding for the possible 'branding' of the area, using new street name plates, new street lighting, new street trees and other enhancements which will provide some focus to the local community and give the area a greater 'sense of place'.
- A methodology for engaging the local community, particularly business owners
- A framework for the production of educational and publicity material, designed to encourage civic pride and a sense of place

Recommendation 1:

- Once the Northdown Road Conservation Area is designated, the District Council will consider the production of a Northdown Road Enhancement Scheme.

2.2 The condition of the buildings

A consistent problem within the proposed Conservation Area is the poor standard of maintenance in many properties. This has resulted in:

- Clear evidence of the need for repairs to roofs and front and back elevations;
- The loss of architectural features such as decorative stucco work, railings, and boundary walls;
- The replacement of original features with inappropriate modern fittings such as front

- doors, windows, and boundary treatments;
- Inappropriate and unsympathetic additions to existing properties, such as front extensions.



Grant aid would help preserve these historic buildings for future generations

The District Council has recently (November 2010) applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for funding for a new grant scheme to cover the recently designated Dalby Square Conservation Area. It is possible that this scheme could be extended, or a new scheme applied for the Northdown Road Conservation Area at some stage in the future. Other funding agencies, apart from the HLF, include English Heritage, Thanet District Council, Kent County Council and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

Recommendation 2:

- The District Council will consider providing guidance on the use of traditional materials and details, which will be circulated to all property owners in the Conservation Area;
- The District Council will consider apply for a grant scheme to assist property owners in the Northdown Road Conservation Area.

2.3 Public realm improvements

A new public realm strategy would be beneficial, ideally in partnership with a new grant scheme, to improve the public realm in the Conservation Area and, ideally, in the whole of Cliftonville. The public realm includes all of the space between the buildings in the Northdown Road Conservation Area which is not privately owned, such as the roads, pavements, street lighting, street name plates, and street furniture (litter bins, seats, and other features). Whilst a small part of Northdown Road has already been improved, with widened pavements and some new paving, the work was carried out some time ago and further enhancements are needed. Grant aid for some of this work from either English heritage or the Heritage Lottery Fund might be available for some of this work.

It might be possible to include a section in the proposed Northdown Road Enhancement Strategy on the public realm, setting out goals, funding, and design criteria (in the form of a 'Public Realm Strategy'). The identification of specific sites for improvement, and the specification of outline proposals for their enhancement, would also be welcome and could be

brought forward as and when funding became available.



Further improvements to the public realm are needed in Northdown Road

The most urgent matters to be addressed include:

- The provision of a list of sites for possible action;
- Agreement between the District and County Council on the choice of materials and details for street lighting, street furniture, and paving materials;
- The use of a common palette of colours for these elements would provide a recognisable 'branding' of the area, although this would need to be very carefully controlled in the future with regular maintenance and repainting;
- Copying some of the wall-mounted historic street name plates which can be seen in the Conservation Area – these are rectangular with recessed corner details and white lettering on black (it might be necessary to adjust the design so the new plates can be positioned on poles rather than fixed to individual buildings, due to problems with their future maintenance);
- The provision of more street trees, carefully sited, would be welcome, and the removal of redundant planters.

Recommendation 3:

- As and when funding permits, the District Council and Kent County Council will consider carrying out improvements to the public realm in the Conservation Area;
- All new work must be sensitive to the historic environment and designed using high quality materials and details;
- A strategy and funding for future maintenance must be provided.

2.4 The control of new development

There are very limited opportunities for completely new development in the Northdown Road Conservation Area due to the high density of frontage buildings. However, the occasional infill site may come forward, and on a more day to day basis, incremental extensions to the backs of many of the buildings will take place.

A more immediate threat is posed by the number of poor quality alterations to the existing

buildings, most of which are considered to be 'positive' and therefore of sufficient architectural and historic interest to merit special treatment. Many but not all of the changes listed below would usually require planning permission:

- Badly designed extensions, particularly to the front elevations
- The loss of architectural details such as cornicing or balconies
- The insertion of unsympathetic modern windows or front doors, usually in uPVC
- The occasional loss of front boundaries

In general, all new development in the proposed Conservation Area must be of the highest possible standard and should adhere to guidance provided within the following documents:

- The Kent Design Guide
- Thanet District Council's Conservation Areas in Thanet – Conservation Areas Management Plan (March 2008)

In line with government guidance, all applications will need to include a Design and Access Statement which should, as a minimum, describe the type of development proposed and how it relates to its immediate context. Detailed drawings showing this relationship to neighbouring buildings may be required and must be accurate. The applicant must set out clearly the types of materials to be used and the detailed design of all elements of the new or extended building. Detailed drawings showing all elevations must be provided, along with large scale drawings showing architectural details. Property owners or their agents are also encouraged to contact the Council's planning department before submitting their application so that informal advice on the acceptability of their proposals can be provided at any early stage. Further information is available from the Council's website: www.thanet.gov.uk

Recommendation 4:

- The District Council will ensure that all new development in the proposed Northdown Road Conservation Area is of the highest possible standard and adheres to national policies and to guidance provided in the Kent Design Guide and within Thanet District Council's own policy framework .

2.5 The control of unlisted buildings (Article 4 Directions)

The District Council is required by law to both 'preserve and enhance' the character of the Conservation Area, and one increasingly common method of achieving this is to serve an Article 4 Direction. This brings under planning control a number of changes to family dwelling houses which would otherwise be considered 'permitted development'.

The classes of development which can be controlled by an Article 4 Direction include:

- Changing roof materials, installing rooflights, and works to chimneys
- Painting previously unpainted stonework or render
- Installing new windows or doors
- The addition of a porch
- Changes to the front boundary (where they are not already controlled by existing planning constraints)
- The creation of a vehicular hardstanding in the front garden
- Satellite dishes

The District Council can either serve an Article 4 Direction which will cover the whole Conservation Area, or can identify individual buildings or groups of buildings where it is considered that additional controls are required. For the Northdown Road Conservation Area, this could include the family houses in Wyndham Avenue, Lyndhurst Avenue, Crawford Gardens and Price's Avenue.



Houses in Crawford Gardens

This targeted approach is considered to be the most relevant in the Northdown Road Conservation Area as many of the residential properties are not in use as family dwellings (i.e. as a single unit) but have been divided into flats or HMOs. Even more buildings are in mixed uses i.e. retail to the ground floor, and possibly BI (offices) or residential above. For these buildings, permitted development rights are already much lower, so, for instance, planning permission would normally be needed to insert new plastic windows or to change the roof material. For these buildings, an Article 4 Direction could still be used to control front boundaries, the creation of car parking spaces, and external redecoration.

Recommendation 5:

- The District Council will consider serving an Article 4 Direction to bring under planning control the items listed above;
- The District Council will provide local property owners with written guidance about the Article 4 Direction;
- The District Council will consider providing grant aid to property owners to help with the additional costs of traditional materials.

2.6 Advertising and shopfronts

The Northdown Road Conservation Area contains a very high number of shopfronts, many of them of poor quality. It is accepted that even with the provision of detailed design guidance, the possible impetus for improvements which are provided by grant aid, and the imposition of a rigorous enforcement regime, it will take a long time to achieve any noticeable improvements. However, in the long term the economic viability of the shopping area will be enhanced by these incremental improvements and will encourage private owners to invest in their properties. Future initiatives could include:



Historic shopfronts in Northdown Road

- The provision of detailed shopfront and advertisement guidance;
- The provision of grant aid, to provide new, higher quality shopfronts;
- The possible provision of an 'exemplar' new shopfront, possibly for use in connection with any grant scheme, to focus efforts

Recommendation 6:

- The District Council will explore ways of improving the economic activity and appearance of the shops in the Northdown Road area.

2.7 Local List review

There is currently no Local List for Cliftonville although criteria for the selection of suitable buildings have been agreed by the District Council. With the publication of PPS5 in March 2010, locally listed buildings have become an important 'heritage asset' of particular significance where they also lie within a designated conservation area. The preparation of a Local List for the whole of Cliftonville must therefore be seen as a priority, but meanwhile, this document includes recommendations for new locally listed buildings as follows:

The Gospel Northumberland Hall, No. 39 Northdown Road – this building is first shown on the 1907 map and probably dates to c1900. The symmetrical gabled frontage is built from red brick with classical details including a pediment over an arched first floor window.

St Michael and St Bishoy's Church (formerly St Stephen's Wesleyan Methodist Church) Northdown Road – this was built in ragstone in 1876-8 to the designs of Drewe and Bower (who also designed the Margate Royal School for Deaf Children) in the early French Gothic style. The building sits on a slight curve of the road and its tall spire is a notable landmark. It is described by Nikolaus Pevsner in his Buildings of England series as without doubt the finest 19th century building in Margate, so it should possibly be also put forward for statutory listing.



St Michael and St Bishoy's Church, Northdown Road

- Nos. 214/216 even Northdown Road, western corner of Northdown Road and Cliftonville Avenue – a red brick corner building, possibly built as a bank but now empty, and the adjoining three bay neo-Classical building, with three curved timber columns (there were originally four) supported the canted first floor.
- The former Snooker Hall, built as Bobby's Department Store in 1913, on the eastern corner Northdown Road and Cliftonville Avenue – a substantial, white tiled building with Neo-Classical details. The corner cupola is a local landmark. Ground floor shopfronts of no interest.
- Nos. 242-250 and 256-268 even Northdown Road – this three storey terrace is built from red brick with first floor canted oriel bay windows, some of which retain their original leaded lights and decorative plasterwork – they date to c1910.
- Nos. 1-6 consec. Crawford Gardens – this group of six paired houses is dated 1906 and provides relatively unaltered facades with Arts and Crafts details.

Recommendation 7:

- The District Council will work with the local community to produce a new Local List for Cliftonville.

2.8 Site specific improvements

A number of sites, all in private ownership, would benefit from either improvements or total redevelopment. These could be identified in the Northdown Road Enhancement Strategy and site specific guidance provided for potential redevelopment or improvement. One obvious site where enhancements would be welcome is the car valetting business on the corner of Athelstan Road. The public open space in front of St Paul's Church would also benefit from enhancing, including the provision of new planting, seating and lighting.

Recommendation 8:

- The District Council will encourage the repair and reuse, or the potential redevelopment, of the four sites detailed above, but only to the highest possible standards.

2.9 Education and publicity

There is currently little evidence of civic pride in the Cliftonville area as a whole although there are several active residents' groups which each relate particularly to one small area. Some of these have already been involved in the public consultation exercise which was undertaken in October 2010 to gauge public reaction to the designation of conservation areas in Cliftonville. However, there is no such group in the Northdown Road Conservation Area, but the formation of such a group (with representatives from both commercial businesses and private householders) should be encouraged and nurtured by the District Council.

Recommendation 9:

- The District Council, working in partnership with Kent County Council and other stakeholders, will continue to encourage greater civic pride in the Cliftonville area through the use of its statutory powers and possible grant aid;
- The production of publicity material about the Conservation Area to all local residents via the Council's website is advisable.

2.10 Monitoring and enforcement

Local authorities are required by law to periodically review their conservation areas and the preparation of Character Appraisals and Management Plans is part of this obligation. Indeed, in the past keeping Character Appraisals and Management Plans up to date has been a Key Performance Indicator in the Best Value assessment of local authorities, and as a result, a five year review cycle is now considered to be best practice.

Over the next five years the District Council should therefore be expected to regularly review the content of this document, to carefully monitor change within the Northdown Road Conservation Area, and to involve the community in any proposals for enhancement (subject of course to the funding being available).

Recommendation 10:

The District Council should therefore:

- Carry out periodic reviews of the effectiveness with which the service addresses pressures for change.

3 ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan sets out a list of priorities for future actions, most of which will be the responsibility of Thanet District Council or Kent County Council.

Immediate Actions (next six months)

- Designate the Northdown Road Conservation Area
- Adopt the Northdown Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan as a material document for development control purposes

Medium term actions (six month to one year)

- Prepare the Northdown Road Enhancement scheme and consider grant bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund and England Heritage
- Produce a short publicity leaflet about the Character Appraisal and Management Plan for the Council's website
- Undertake a detailed photographic survey of the buildings in the Conservation Area to assist in monitoring change in the area
- Approve additions to a new Local List for Cliftonville

Longer term actions (one to three years)

- Review and update the Northdown Road Conservation Area Management Plan
- Update the baseline photographic survey of the Northdown Road Conservation Area
- Consider public realm improvements and agree standards with Kent County Council

Far future actions (three to five years)

- Review the Northdown Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal

4 CONTACT DETAILS

For all enquiries relating to conservation areas and historic buildings, please contact:

Planning Services
Thanet District Council
P O Box 9
Cecil Street
Margate
Kent CT9 1XZ

Tel: 01843 577150

Email: planning.services@thanet.gov.uk

For information about archaeology in Thanet, contact:

The Trust for Thanet Archaeology
The Antoinette Centre
Quex Park
Birchington
Kent CT7 0BH

Tel: 01843 843088

www.thanetarch.co.uk

For information about the history of Thanet, contact:

The Centre for Kentish Studies
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XX

Tel: 01622 694379

Email: mailto:archives@kent.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Map 1 Townscape Appraisal Map

Appendix 2 Historic shopfronts in the Northdown Road Conservation Area

Surveyed March 2011

Northdown Road: South side

Nos. 278/280 (Reflections – 1920s/1930s – slightly altered on right)

No. 262 (Pottons Taylors – building dated 1910)

Nos. 238/238a (S T Jewellers – c1900/1910 – curved glass)

No. 202 Northdown Road (Cash Makers) is a purpose-built shop with an almost fully glazed first floor with curved window heads – No. 204 next door has similar though not so impressive details

No. 180 (A H Mortley – 1930s – green framework and decorative glass frieze)

No. 178 (Sandy-Wiches – closed and for sale – probably 1930s)

No. 176 (Thompson Lettings – recessed entrance – blue 1920's shopfront)

No. 160 (National Westminster Bank – 1920s neo-Georgian)

No. 122 (Milton Ashbury c1910 – painted purple)

Nos. 48/50 (vacant – to let)

Northdown Road: north side

No. 101 (Arrow Taxes – part only c1900)

No. 119 (Talk Shop c1900 – recessed front door)

Nos. 147/149 (Cooke and Son – prominent corner site – curved glass c1920s)

No. 209 (John Bello – 1930s with brick stallriser)

No. 233 (Pet Rescue Centre – green – 1920s/30s)