



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Conservation Areas: Article 4 Direction Guidance Note

The aim of Article 4 Directions is to encourage retention of the high quality features of buildings in the Conservation Area and to enhance the environment of which they are part. 'Like for like' repairs and replacements of original architectural features are encouraged, as are the removal of previous unsympathetic changes to buildings. Prior to the making of an Article 4 Direction many unsympathetic changes could occur without the need for planning permission. The following guidance note indicates the approach the Council is likely to take in advising owners who propose external works to properties affected by a Direction.

Alterations to elevations

Under the Article 4 Direction material alterations to building elevations require planning permission from the Council. Applications for porches, extensions, the removal or replacement of architectural details (including windows, doors, decorative timber, brick and stonework, rainwater goods etc.), and other works materially affecting the appearance of the building are treated on their merit. The Direction is not meant to cover very minor alterations such as burglar alarms (NB different controls apply to listed buildings). However, if you are in doubt please contact the Council's Conservation Officer or the Planning Service (see contact details below).

Roofs and chimneys

A change of roof materials and features (inc. chimneys, finials, soffits, fascias etc.) will almost certainly require planning permission. If a roof is a pitched roof in a terrace or a group of buildings where traditional roofing materials dominate (eg. clay tiles or natural slate), re-roofing with that material will be called for. The replacement tiles or slates should match the size, colour and texture of those existing and should be gauged to match the existing courses. Where a roof is prominent, manmade (fibrous cement type) tiles or slates are not acceptable as an alternative to clay tiles or natural slate. Generally the retention of natural/traditional roofing materials is sought.

Chimneys are an important feature of many buildings and contribute to the overall skyline. Permission is required to demolish or lower the height of chimneys and will not normally be granted. Original chimney pots should not be removed and replicas should be reinstated wherever possible.

The installation of rooflights is likely to require permission. Rooflights should be discreetly placed so that they are not readily visible, and should be of a 'conservation type' which does not protrude above the plane of the roof.

Applications for dormer windows are only likely to be permitted if they traditionally existed throughout a particular group of buildings. The bulk and design of a dormer should reflect that which previously existed or prevailed in the area, and which is appropriate to the particular building.

Doors and Windows

Under the Article 4 Direction permission is required to remove, replace or alter doors and windows. The original period design of doors and windows are one of the most important features of a property and contribute significantly to the character of the Conservation Area. If original windows and doors survive in a property they should be retained and repaired wherever possible. Removal of original windows and doors and replacement with unsuitable alternatives can severely affect the special character of the building and conservation area as a whole.

The installation of replacement doors and windows in aluminum, in plastic, or in designs other than that which existed on principal elevations, will not receive permission, other than in exceptional circumstances.

Facades

The treatment of facades can have a dramatic effect on the overall appearance of the conservation area.

Original window and door openings are usually carefully placed and proportioned with a view to presenting symmetry of design. Permission will be required for alteration to existing openings and the creation of new wall openings. Careful consideration will be given to the effect of such proposals and permission will not normally be granted where they adversely affect the architectural composition of the building.

The application of render and cladding materials to walls of brick or stone can have an irreversibly detrimental impact on the area and permission for such work will not normally be granted. The painting of brick and stone can have a similarly detrimental impact and will also require permission.

Properties which have a rendered or painted finish at present do not require permission for the repainting of facades in a colour to match the existing.

Boundaries and Front Gardens

Under the Article 4 Direction permission is required to remove or breach boundary walls, fences and railings, and to remove gates. The paving over of gardens to create hardstandings also requires permission and proposals for vehicle hardstandings are likely to be refused unless they can be located or screened to minimise the impact on the surrounding area. Careful attention to paving and landscaping will be required. Permission will also be required

to erect a wall, railings, fence or gate and is only likely to be granted where they would contribute positively to the appearance of the conservation area, particularly where there has been a loss of such features. The Council will seek to control the details and materials of construction to ensure they are in harmony with the conservation area.

New Construction

In the case of porches, curtilage buildings and extensions, planning permission is usually required irrespective of their size. Care should be taken to ensure that such developments are of scale and design that is in keeping with that of the original dwelling. This can usually be achieved by using reclaimed brick and roofing materials to compliment the original building. Brickwork should be laid in courses and to a bonding pattern and with mortar joints and pointing that closely matches the original. Care should be taken in detailing external joinery, such as doors, windows, eaves and gable verge details to harmonise with those of the main building.

Where properties are subject to an Article 4(2) Direction planning permission is required where the proposed development fronts onto, or is visible from, a relevant location. 'Relevant location' means a highway (including footpaths), waterway or open space. Corner plots will normally have at least two, relevant frontages.

Where properties are subject to an Article 4(1) Direction the controls affect all parts of the property and not just those which front a relevant location.

The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney on a dwelling house or on a building within the curtilage of a dwelling house, is likely to require consent, irrespective of its location.

All applications for planning permission should be accompanied by an accurate set of drawings and or photographs and should show all relevant dimensions drawn to metric scale. Further information on householder planning applications can be found on the Council's website www.stockport.gov.uk/planningapplications. Where an application for planning permission is required as a result of an Article 4 Direction, no fee is payable.

The Direction is not intended to cover very minor alterations or 'like for like' repairs or replacements. However, if you are unsure whether any work you propose to carry out to your property requires planning permission or you require any further advice or information please contact the Council's **Conservation Officer** on Tel: (0161) 474 2620 / 4561 or the Council's Planning Services department on Tel: (0161) 474 3896