



Conservation Information Leaflet

Conservation Areas

What are Conservation Areas?

The statutory definition of a conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The majority of the conservation areas in East Wiltshire, (the former Kennet District), consist of the historic parts of our towns and villages, but some include other special places, such as the canal corridor at Wilcot, or Lockeridge Dene which in addition to its thatched stone cottages contains landscape of geological and nature conservation importance.

Conservation areas usually have a concentration of historic buildings, many of which are listed, but even in the most built-up areas their character and attraction will comprise more than the individual buildings and structures alone. It is important to recognise the whole environment - which will also encompass the uses they are put to and the spaces around them. Careful and sensitive action by a large variety of owners and agencies is therefore required if the distinctive local character or the spirit of the place is to be protected from harm and positively reinforced by change.

At the time of writing 75 Conservation Areas have been designated in the East Wiltshire, usually after public demand or when local development plans have been reviewed. Public opinion has been generally proved to be in favour of protecting the familiar and valued local scene. These designations have been successful in giving confidence to residents and property owners who can see that the importance of the locality is widely recognised. Development controls aimed at maintaining the character of the conservation area will often help to sustain or enhance the value of property within it and lead to long-term certainty that encourages investment in the maintenance of properties. The high number of conservation areas reflects the importance of East Wiltshire's heritage, much of which is recognised at national and international levels.



The Council is under obligation to keep these areas and their boundaries under review. The general locations of existing designations are identified in the following list.

Aldbourne	Easton Royal	Oxenwood
All Cannings	Enford	Pewsey
Alton	Erlestoke	Pewsey Wilcot Road
Avebury	Etchilhampton	Potterne
Axford	Fittleton and Haxton	Poulshot
Baydon	Froxfield	Ramsbury
Bishops Cannings	Fyfield (nr. Pewsey)	Sandy Lane ‡
Bowden Hill ‡	Great Bedwyn	Seend
Broad Hinton	Great Cheverell	Shalbourne
Bromham	Ham	Stert
Brunton	Hilcott	Tidcombe
Burbage	Little Bedwyn	Upavon
Charlton	Little Cheverell	Upper Chute
Chilton Foliat	Lockeridge	Urchfont
Chirton	Ludgershall	Wedhampton
Chisbury	Manton	West Kennett
Chute Cadley/Lower Chute	Marden	West Lavington/ Littleton Panell
Collingbourne Ducis	Market Lavington	Wilcot
Collingbourne Kingston	Marlborough	Wilsford
Devizes	Marston	Wilton
Devizes Victoria	Mildenhall	Woodborough
Road Quarter	Milton Lilbourne	Wootton Rivers
East Chisenbury	Netheravon	Worton
Eastcourt	Oare	
Easterton	Ogbourne St.Andrew	
East Grafton	Ogbourne St.George	‡ shared with Wiltshire Council's north hub.
East Kennett		

How can I find out if my property is in a Conservation Area?

You can check by following the link to the map based information service on the Council's website www.wiltshire.gov.uk or alternatively by contacting the Council at the address noted below.

How might designation affect me?

Planning controls are more restrictive within conservation areas. This means that it may be necessary to apply for planning permission for some building works that would in normal cases be considered as permitted development. This includes restrictions on the following items:

- the size of some extensions & garden buildings;
- additions & alterations to roofs, including dormers;
- cladding the outside of buildings;
- satellite dishes in prominent positions;
- most hoardings;
- illuminated advertisements

The exact rules, however, are complicated and it is therefore always best to seek detailed advice from the Council's Development Management section.

Are there any controls over demolition?

Conservation area consent will be required to demolish most buildings and structures such as boundary walls. There are some exceptions so again it is best to seek detailed advice from the Council before commencing demolition, even where the intention may be to rebuild with a replica of the existing structure. Application forms for conservation area consent are available from the Council's Development Management section. *Please note that demolition, where consent is required and has not been obtained, is a criminal offence and liable to prosecution.*

Are there any controls over minor alterations?

It should also be noted that well meant small 'improvements', such as replacement windows or stained hardwood doors, which may not require formal approval in the case of unlisted domestic buildings, can easily spoil the character of an historic street. Where unlisted buildings play a critical role in defining the character of a conservation area the Council will consider making an Article 4(2) Direction, which will have the effect of bringing some forms of 'permitted development' under planning control. It is always worth checking whether consent is required with the Council's Development Management or Conservation Sections.

Are there any controls over works to trees?

Yes, additional regulations apply to most trees growing within conservation areas. Anyone who wants to fell or prune the roots or branches of a tree, or carry out other work which might damage a tree in a conservation area must inform the Council at least six weeks in advance. This is to give the Council time to inspect the tree, consult the Town or Parish Council, and if necessary to consider serving a Tree Preservation Order.



How are planning applications dealt with in Conservation Areas?

Government legislation, reinforced by Planning Policy Guidance & Statements, requires local authorities to give "special attention" to conservation areas and their enhancement. The Council will therefore apply special criteria when assessing planning applications in such areas – set out in policies in the Kennet Local Plan 2011.

All planning applications affecting conservation areas will be advertised so that the local community can comment on new development applications. Where large-scale development is proposed a wide range of consultations will be undertaken including notification of English Heritage.

In all but the simplest cases the Council will require applications to be accompanied by detailed drawings of the development and outline planning applications will not normally be accepted. It is important that applications show how proposed works relate to neighbouring buildings, so that the Council can judge how proposals will appear alongside the main features of the existing environment.

Whilst in many of the village Conservation Areas only minimal amounts of new building may be envisaged it will rarely be the aim to prevent all change. Rather, the intention is to control and manage it to preserve what is special about the particular area and, where possible, to improve it. Proposals for new buildings, extensions or alterations to existing buildings and changes of use will, however, be given very careful consideration and will be expected to meet a high standard of design. The general objective will be to ensure that any proposed change to an area reinforces its established character and appearance.

The Council will also have regard to any published Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Proposals for the locality.

What are Conservation Area Appraisals?

These are prepared and kept up to date by the Council in consultation with local communities. Their intention is to provide a clear definition and record of an area's special architectural or historic interest. They set out how the area or place has evolved and identify the key features and elements of its character that have helped to justify its designation as a conservation area.

The definition of an area's 'specialness' provided by the appraisals is important for providing a sound basis, defensible on appeal, for local policies and development control decisions and also in helping to reduce uncertainty for owners and others when investment or development in the area is being considered.

Copies of the Council's Conservation Area Appraisals are available to view on the Council's web-site and at the Council Offices. Hard copies can be purchased by contacting the address below.



How will Conservation Areas be managed?

The Council is also required to draw up and review Management Proposals for conservation areas. These will be based on the understanding of the area and the value of its special features gained during the formulation of the conservation area appraisals which should allow the development of a robust policy framework for their future management.

In the majority of Conservation Areas within the East Wiltshire the preferred policy of conservation will lie with the preservation of the established 'status quo' rather than definite proposals for change but, in any case, it would probably be unrealistic to expect significant dedicated funding to be available for enhancement projects in the future. Where change does occur, therefore, the intention will be to provide a framework to allow this to be monitored effectively and managed in a positive way to reinforce the existing character and appearance of the area. Proposals might include, for example, the use of existing powers (such as those allowing the Council to take enforcement action, to require the repair of listed buildings, or to impose Article 4 directions increasing planning controls for specific issues where these would assist) and encouragement for the sympathetic redevelopment of sites which currently detract from the character or appearance of the area.

Other Wiltshire Council leaflets

This leaflet is one in a series of Conservation Information Leaflets produced by the Council. Copies of this and other leaflets in the range are available on the council website.



If you require further information please contact:

Development Management (East)

Wiltshire Council

Browfort

Bath Road

Devizes

Wiltshire, SN10 2AT

Tel. 0300 456 0100

Email: conserve@wiltshire.gov.uk / Website: www.wiltshire.gov.uk