



# this is **your guide to** **Conservation Areas**

Conservation Areas are places with special architectural or historic qualities and usually a combination of both. They have been designated by the Council who have a duty to use their powers to preserve and enhance their special character and appearance for future generations. The Council pays special attention

to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area when making decisions on planning applications, and in its role as landowner and highway authority.

Decisions are guided by planning policies in the Local Development Framework.



Loftus High Street

There are 17 conservation areas in Redcar & Cleveland. They include village and town centres, residential areas and important open spaces. Their character depends not only on the quality of individual buildings but also on the historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries; characteristic building and paving materials; a particular 'mix' of building uses; public and private spaces, such as gardens, parks and greens; and trees and street furniture. All these and more combine to create a unique environment - the cherished local scene and a record of our past.

Every Conservation Area is different and each has a character appraisal setting down the history of its development and its special character, with a plan showing its boundary.

Conservation Area status does not mean that everything should be



### **New house respects Saltburn's Victorian character**

preserved - it is the character of the area that matters. Any development, including new buildings and extensions or other alterations, should be carried out in a way that does not harm the area's special character. This means that it should respect the character, appearance, scale, massing and density of buildings in the particular area. While it should respect the predominant building style in an area, there may be opportunities to use contemporary designs of high quality where no particular style predominates.



Periodically the Council will review Conservation Areas which may have changed over the years. If significant change has occurred or if additional areas of special interest come to light, then Conservation Area boundaries may be changed.

### **Skelton's historic centre**

## What does it mean to own property in a Conservation area?

Although some minor changes to buildings in conservation areas can be made without planning permission there are additional planning controls to help manage their special character and appearance as follows:

- ☞ consent is required to demolish all but very small buildings or parts of them (including walls and fences);
- ☞ permission is needed for minor alterations and additions, including certain types of cladding, inserting dormer windows, and putting up satellite dishes which are visible from the street; and
- ☞ 6 weeks written notice must be given before cutting down, topping or lopping of any tree.



Traditional chimneys punctuate the roofscape



Plain elegant iron railings



Modern Victorian style shop front

Historically authentic panelled wood door with glazed overhead



Some Conservation Areas are subject to stricter controls known as **Article 4 Directions** under which more minor works may require planning permission. These restrictions are in force because the cumulative effect of unsympathetic minor changes can cause significant harm to Conservation

Area character.

You are advised to **contact us** to check whether you will need permission before undertaking any work in a Conservation Area (the council will investigate all reports of unauthorised works in Conservation Areas).

## Caring for your property

The historic details of individual buildings are important in forming the character of a conservation area. If you are proposing to alter, extend or build within a Conservation Area it makes good sense to ensure that your proposals respect the particular characteristics of the area that make it special - this helps maintain the value of property as well as avoiding upsetting the neighbours. Even small changes are important, because cumulatively they can eventually transform a whole area - for better or worse.

Attention should be paid to the form, scale and proportions of buildings, orientation, authentic historic building materials and the detailing of windows, doors, boundary walls, etc. Some alterations can have an adverse effect on the appearance and value of your property and the wider area. The following are a few examples:

✎ painting or rendering over stonework or brickwork;

✎ replacing traditional clay roof tiles or slates with concrete or fibre cement tiles; and

✎ replacement of historically authentic windows and doors with mass produced, inappropriately designed 'facsimiles' made from modern materials such as uPVC, aluminium or hardwoods.



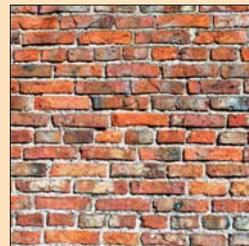
Traditional clay pantiles



Georgian wood sash window



Sandstone masonry wall with traditional patterned dressing



Georgian brickwork with lime mortar joints



### Attractive gardens and open spaces

You can do a great deal to help preserve the character of your area by looking after your property in the following ways:

☞ **Roofs** - if a roof has to be repaired, as many as possible of the original slates or tiles should be re-used and made up with exactly matching new slates or tiles. Chimney stacks are important features and should be kept by repairing or rebuilding.

☞ **Windows and doors** - the alteration or replacement of windows and doors can have a particularly bad effect on the appearance of a building. Repair and draught-proofing is a more sustainable alternative to replacement, but, if windows or doors have to be replaced exact copies of the originals should be made. Secondary double glazing is the preferred alternative to sealed double glazing units.

☞ **Decorative features** - many older houses have historic decorative features in wood, brick, plaster or stone. Plain or ornate chimney stacks, dormers and turrets are other important features to the character of Conservation Areas and are testimonials to craftsmanship. They should be retained and cared for.

☞ **Gardens** - hedges, front boundary walls and fences are important features of the streetscape and should be carefully maintained. Garden walls should not be knocked down or front gardens surfaced for car parking. Plants, trees and shrubs make Conservation Areas more attractive places in which to live and work.



**Victorian sash windows in moulded stone architraves behind historic iron area railings**



**Old and new rows of cottages sit comfortably together**

## **New buildings**

There is a presumption in favour of retaining buildings and other features that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Where consent is given to demolish a building you may be required to carry out an archaeological investigation and to redevelop the site in keeping with the character of the area.

The Council does not wish to see new development slavishly copy the historic designs, although there is always a place for honest replication.



**Alteration can reveal a building's archaeology**

While new buildings should always respect the form, scale and proportions of the historic framework along with massing, plot ratio, density, materials, colours, detailing etc it is still possible to arrive at a modern interpretation that respects and enhances its historic setting. New buildings can look new without being out of place.

Applications for outline planning permission to establish the principle of proposed development are unacceptable. Due to the sensitive appearance of Conservation Areas it is important to make informed decisions on the full impact of proposals on their character. Only fully detailed applications will therefore be acceptable.

You are advised to seek professional assistance when considering any development in a Conservation Area.

## **Trees in Conservation Areas**

With certain exceptions, anyone proposing to fell or cut back a tree in a Conservation Area is required to give 6 weeks notice in writing to the local planning authority. All work to trees of a diameter greater than 75mm (measured at 1.5 metres above the ground) is subject to the notification period.

In the six week notice period an arborist's inspection will inform the Council of the impact the intended



### Trees, hedges and walls make areas more attractive

work will have on the tree(s) and the character of the Conservation Area. In some cases a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) will be issued because of the importance of the tree(s).

Some trees and areas of woodland are already protected by Tree Preservations Orders so any works to these will require permission from the local planning authority.

Felling licence requirements may also apply.



### Coatham's cricket ground provides an open setting for this Victorian terrace

## Enhancement

Local authorities are required to take the lead in the improvement and enhancement of conservation areas.

Improvements might include:

- ❧ preparing development briefs for sites that detract from the character or appearance of the area;
- ❧ ensuring that new buildings respect and complement their neighbours in form, scale, proportions, style and use of architectural detail and materials;
- ❧ reinstating historic paving materials;
- ❧ landscaping and planting;
- ❧ removing unsightly features and tidying up neglected sites;
- ❧ integrating road signs and markings and street furniture to improve the appearance of streets;
- ❧ controlling the position and design of advertisements and shop signs; and
- ❧ ensuring that traffic safety and control measures harmonize with the landscape and townscape.



## Advice

Before you start any work on your property, it is advisable to contact a Development Management Officer or the Conservation Adviser at the Council who will be able to confirm whether you need any type of permission.

We can give informal advice and guidance about the correct construction methods and appropriate materials for your area. For example, we can discuss with you the types of brick and roofing materials that are in keeping with your property.

We also have lists of specialists who carry out this sort of work in the Redcar & Cleveland area and can provide technical guidance on the way in which specialist work should be carried out.

For advice on trees contact the Council's arborist.

Conservation advice is currently offered free of charge, but this will not constitute formal planning permission and will not affect the outcome of a formal application for planning permission/conservation area consent.

Grants are sometimes available towards the cost of repairs but only for very special listed buildings graded I or II\*. Unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area are seldom eligible for grant assistance.

Conservation Area Appraisals can be viewed on the Council's website:  
<http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/conservationareas>

For all contacts and advice telephone:

**01642 774 774**

**Historic paving materials  
give this back lane special  
character**



**this is**

**Redcar & Cleveland**

**[www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)**

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