



WOLVERLEY CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN



JULY 2007

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal provides an evaluation of the Area's qualities and significances. The purpose of the Management Plan is to present proposals that, in addition to managing change, will also preserve and enhance the Area. The Character Appraisal and the Management Plan should therefore be read in conjunction with each other.

Local Authorities are required from time to time to prepare and undertake schemes to preserve and enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas, and the District Council will undertake such schemes as resources permit. Individual and joint schemes with landowners, developers and statutory undertakers will be encouraged where feasible and appropriate.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Section 71 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, requires Local Planning Authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are Conservation Areas.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) *Planning and the Historic Environment* gives further guidance on Conservation Areas and clarifies the legal responsibilities of both owners of properties within the Conservation Area, and the Local Authorities.

English Heritage published new guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals and the Management of Conservation Areas in August 2005. This draft Management Plan has been prepared with regard to the guidance.

This document will be the subject of a public consultation, to gauge public opinion on the methods, policies and proposals for enhancement and preservation of the Area. This will involve an open meeting, as well as discussion and consultation with local Historical Societies, Parish Councils, land owners, and other amenity and environment groups with a particular interest in the Area.

The Conservation Area Appraisal and the Management Proposals will be subject to a review, through the rolling programme of Appraisals within the District.

3.0 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

The Area is an important element of the historic fabric of the District, retaining much of its historic character and appearance, with little change in its layout since at least the Georgian period, if not before. Building design and positions reflect the periods of construction within the locality, and in particular with relation to local industry, such as iron working and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. Furthermore, several Special Wildlife Sites lie abutting or in the vicinity of the boundary of the Conservation Area, including the River Stour Flood Plain, the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal corridor, Wolverley Marsh, Gloucester Coppice. Bishops Coppice is a wildlife site within the Area.

The Area requires careful and sensitive management to ensure development proposals, and any alterations to existing buildings, and other elements of the built fabric, do not adversely impact on the special character of the Area and its environmental quality.

3.1 *Buildings/ Structures*

The buildings within the Area all form an essential part of the character, appearance, and history of the Area, whether abutting the Area, or lying within it.

A Buildings at Risk Survey (a survey identifying the condition of Listed Buildings, and their occupancy, to identify buildings that are considered by the Local Authority as being “at risk” through neglect and decay, or vulnerable to becoming so) encompassing part of Wolverley was undertaken during the summer of 2005.

Proposals:

- The District Council will complete the “Buildings at Risk” survey for the remainder of the area. Follow-up action in respect of buildings that are deemed to be “at risk” will be undertaken.
- The buildings/structures identified in the Area Appraisal to be of local interest will be included, where appropriate, onto the Wyre Forest District Council’s ‘Local List’, in due course.

3.2 *Trees, greenery and green spaces*

Trees and hedges play a vitally important part in the setting of the Conservation Area. As well as adding colour variation and interest to the Area throughout the year they assist in maintaining the rural character of the Area. The District Council will seek to preserve such trees and hedgerows, having regard to their health and condition, their effect on buildings or land, the importance of maintaining root systems, and perpetuation through replanting. Importantly, where it is proposed to fell, top or lop a tree not protected by a Tree Preservation Order, in a Conservation Area, six weeks advance notice must be given to the District Council.

Proposal:

- If proposed works to trees not covered by Tree Preservation Orders is deemed by the District Council, as being unjustified or unreasonable, or the Local Authority learns of other potential adverse effects, it will consider making a Tree Preservation Order to protect those trees to be impacted by the proposed works.

3.3 *Setting and Views*

The views into and out of the Area are important in the creation of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and should be protected, and development monitored to ensure that they do not detract from the character of the Area.

Proposal:

- Development which affects the setting of the Conservation Area, or views into or out of the Area, will be scrutinised to ensure that they preserve or enhance, and otherwise harmonise with the special character and appearance of the Area. The Character Appraisal will be used to assist in assessing any such applications.

3.4 *Illumination*

The lack of illumination throughout the majority of the area assists in retaining the character of the Area. Poor quality lighting, whether on development sites, or on highways, has a detrimental impact on the character, setting and appearance of the Area, and should be considered carefully prior to any implementation of lighting schemes. The existing street-lighting is not considered to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Area.

Proposals:

- Within and adjoining the Conservation Area, Wyre Forest District Council will work with Highways partners in enhancing the special character and appearance of the Area through the appropriate use and design of highway street lighting, as and when this is to be replaced.
- Any new developments abutting the Conservation Area, where public lighting is proposed, must consider the impact of lighting on the Area. The District Council will ensure the quality of any such schemes, through the Planning process.

3.5 *Hard landscaping/street furniture*

Both hard landscaping and “street” furniture, such as benches, and litter bins, all have an important part to play in retaining, enhancing and preserving the special character and appearance of the Area. Inappropriate materials and design can have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Area. Some of the existing public realm is in a poor state of repair, and is not considered to be in a style that preserves or enhances that character and appearance of the Area.

Proposals:

- The District Council will work with County Council partners to ensure that highway works, abutting the Area, preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the Area.
- Where new proposals for hard landscaping, and the replacement of “street” furniture within the Area are proposed, the District Council will work with partners to ensure that all such proposals preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the Area.

3.5 *Alien/Negative Features*

Alien and negative features have a detrimental impact on the character, appearance and setting of the Area. Often these cannot be rectified immediately, but through considerate long-term planning, these can often be removed, and be replaced with more sympathetic features.

Proposal:

- Alien and negative features are identified within the Character Appraisal, and consideration will be given to replacing these, where-ever possible, as resources allow, or encouraging their replacement. This may be through the planning process, and particular regard will be given to the existing Character Appraisal when considering the design, detail and principal of such replacements.

3.6 *Nature Conservation*

The surrounding area (the rural elements abutting the Area, including the special wildlife sites and agricultural land) are important resources for indigenous fauna and flora. Furthermore, the village, and its setting, and elements within the Area, such as the sandstone cliffs, are also important for other species. These need to be identified and protected wherever possible.

Proposals:

- Where development which may have an adverse effect on an area considered to be of importance to nature conservation is proposed, this will not be permitted, unless there proposals outweigh the importance and value of the nature conservation of the site, and that there are no other reasonable alternative means of meeting the need for the development. Advice will be sought from, and the District Council will work with, Partners who specialise in such protection, including Worcestershire Wildlife and Natural England.