St Peters Conservation Area

The Council has statutory powers to designate conservation areas. The definition of **a conservation area is ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character** or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

St Peters Conservation Area was formally designated on 28 April 1988 following a period of public consultation. A conservation area appraisal for the Conservation Area was prepared and published in 2009. The appraisal has now been reviewed by the local community (led by the Caversham and District Residents Association) with assistance from the Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee, Historic England and Reading Borough Council.

A copy of the new updated St Peters Conservation Area Appraisal can be found on the Council’s website along with other information (including this sheet).

As a result of the review and update of the appraisal, the Council is considering the designation of extensions to the existing Conservation Area.

It is proposed that the existing St Peters Conservation Area be extended by including Caversham Bridge, Bridge Street, and the area around the Church Road, Church Street and Bridge Road Junction. Other minor extensions are proposed in 2 places along Church Road.

What is the purpose of designating a conservation area?

The designation of a conservation area means that the character of that area is safeguarded by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The legislation controls the demolition of buildings as well as ensure a closer control over new development within the area. Sadly, many areas of special architectural or historic interest lose their character as a result of unsympathetic additions and alterations taking place that do not always need planning permission, and therefore remain out of the control of the Council.

New developments and alterations in a conservation area have to take into account the area’s special architectural and visual qualities and are required to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

As well as protecting the character of the area concerned, a conservation area is to help enhance the area to include improvements to the existing street scene and the enhancement of the quality of existing buildings. Trees within a conservation area are also given some protection as anyone proposing to lop, top, uproot or fell any tree in a conservation area must first give the council notification.

How will I be affected if the extension to the conservation area is designated?

If you live or own a property within a conservation area, you must of course comply with planning regulations but also with the additional controls under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

In brief, you will require consent from the Council for the following:

• for the demolition or partial demolition of buildings larger than 115 cubic metres in volume and including some walls and chimney stacks;

• for additions and alterations to the roof of a house;

• for cladding the outside of a house;

• for the installation of satellite dishes to the front of a building;

• for the cutting down, lopping or topping of most trees.

You should also note that regulations concerning house extensions or garden buildings are different in conservation areas, as well as for some boundary walls and fences.

You should also note that were planning proposals within or adjoining conservation areas are considered there are additional tests, related to the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, are required in determining planning applications.

What Next?

Relevant information is provided via the consultation page on the Council’s website. Copies of the Updated St Peters Conservation Area Appraisal along with the information sheet and plan are also available to view at Caversham Library and the Reading Borough Council Officers in Bridge Street. Information about this consultation is also available via Facebook and Twitter.

CADRA will be hosting a stand at the St Peters Garden Fete at Caversham Court, Church Road Caversham on Saturday 14th July from 1.00 where the consultation documentation will be available to view and members will be available to discuss the proposals and the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal.

If you have any comments on the proposed extensions to the boundaries of the conservation area, either in support of or against the proposal, the Council would like to hear your thoughts. Your thoughts or comments on the Draft Updated Appraisal are also welcome and will be taken into account in the final version of the appraisal.

Please submit your comments to the Planning Section no later than 14th September 2018. Your comments will be considered in detail and amendments made to the proposed extension to the conservation area as appropriate, before the final proposal is presented to committee members for adoption in November 2018.

