



Powys County Council

Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance

SUMMARY

The Conservation Areas SPG should be used by those who are involved in development proposals within or adjacent to Conservation Areas

This SPG is aimed at applicants, agents, members of the public, elected Members, and Council Officers who are involved in development proposals within or adjacent to Conservation Areas. It provides generic guidance on how to assess character and how to design development that is appropriate to this character.

There is a need to ensure that development protects and enhances our Conservation Areas as these areas are important parts of the historic environment in Powys

The Council's Corporate Improvement Plan 'Vision 2025' states that by protecting the historic environment, this supports business growth and tourism. The Powys Local Development Plan (LDP) recognises that Conservation Areas are important assets that contribute towards the economic, environmental and social well-being of Powys.

National legislation and policy requires special consideration to be given to preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of Conservation Areas

The Local Planning Authority is required, by law, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas when making planning policies and making decisions on planning applications. Policy and guidance at a national level set out how planning applications for development within or affecting Conservation Areas should be considered. For a summary of the relevant legislation, policy and guidance, **see Section 4** of the SPG.

There are also local planning policies relating to Conservation Areas that need to be referred to

The Powys Local Development Plan (LDP) contains a policy that safeguards Conservation Areas as strategic assets (Policy SP7). It also contains a policy that requires developments in, or affecting the setting or significant views of a Conservation Area to be designed in accordance with appraisals, management plans, assessments or guidance adopted by the Council (Policy DM13 criterion 3). For a summary of the relevant LDP policies, **see Section 5** of the SPG.

Many of the towns and large villages of the Powys LDP area have designated Conservation Areas

There are **55** Conservation Areas in the Powys LDP area. The location of each Conservation Area is shown on the LDP's proposals maps. These areas tend to retain their special character, however some have seen development that is out of keeping with the character of the area. Good quality and sensitively designed development can preserve and enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

The Council is intending to work with local communities to carry out Conservation Area Character Appraisals to improve the understanding of the significance of Conservation Areas

A better understanding of the character of Conservation Areas is needed. The Council has not yet progressed with any Conservation Area Character Appraisals for individual Conservation Areas, however it intends to work with local communities in order to produce these appraisals. These documents will be accompanied by Conservation Area Management Plans, which set out how the issues raised within the appraisals can be addressed, and will require the cooperation of local business and other interest groups. For further information, **see Section 4** of the SPG.

The guidance within the SPG is intended to be used in those situations where a Conservation Area Character Appraisal has not been carried out for a particular Conservation Area

Where there are no Conservation Area Character Appraisals in place for a particular Conservation Area, the generic guidance within this SPG should be used when designing and assessing developments or other proposals within or adjacent to Conservation Areas. All such applications will need to demonstrate that the character of the area has been assessed and how this assessment has been used to inform the design of the development.

Designation as a Conservation Area does not prevent change, however change must be managed in order to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

There are additional restrictions within Conservation Areas, which mean that consent will be required from the Local Planning Authority for certain types of development or works. This includes works involving demolition, alterations to dwellinghouses (that otherwise may fall within permitted development), and works to trees. There are also further restrictions in the Conservation Areas of Llandrindod Wells, Llanidloes, Knighton, Machynlleth and Presteigne. Where permission is required, careful consideration will need to be given to designing the development, which is also relevant to applications for advertisements. For an explanation of the restrictions within a Conservation Area, **see Section 4** of the SPG.

Further information about Conservation Areas can be found using a range of different sources

This SPG provides an overview of the type of information available on Conservation Areas. This includes national web-based information on historic sites, records, and landscapes, Council information on the character of some towns, characterisation work carried out by Cadw and CPAT, and work carried out by local history and civic societies. For details of these resources, **see Section 4** of the SPG.

This SPG sets out the key stages that need to be followed when planning a development within or adjacent to a Conservation Area

Applicants should follow the key stages explained within Section 6 of this SPG, which sets out the work involved at the pre-application stage in order to ensure that a proposal has been carefully planned and is ready for submission. The process involved in following key stages is illustrated in Section 8 Figure 6. The process begins with the need to explain the objectives of the proposal and consider the available options towards meeting this objective. The importance of obtaining pre-planning application advice from the Council at an early stage is also emphasised. For detailed guidance, **see Section 6 Stage 1** of the process.

A character appraisal will need to be carried out in order to identify the important features and characteristics of the site and the area

The second stage of the process involves carrying out a character appraisal. This involves looking at the site and its context by visiting the site to record any visible features or characteristics, together with undertaking background research relating to the area. The appraisal should provide a brief summary of the character and special interest of the Conservation Area before focusing on the site and its immediate context. The extent of the survey required will depend on where the site is visible from and the scale of the work involved. For detailed guidance, **see Section 6 Stage 2 and Section 7** of the SPG.

Consideration will then need to be given to how the development can be sited and designed in a way that responds to the important features and characteristics of the Area

The information regarding the important features and characteristics of the area gathered during stage 2 should then be used to inform the siting and design of the development at stage 3 of the process. Particular attention should be given to layout, form, scale, proportions, materials and visual appearance, rather than focusing simply on replicating architectural detailing. For detailed guidance, **see Section 6 Stage 3** of the SPG.

This SPG contains detailed guidance on certain types of development or proposals in Conservation Areas

Appendix 2 of this SPG sets out key design issues that need to be considered when designing certain developments or proposals in Conservation Areas. The Appendix covers a range of typical development types, including demolition, replacement doors and windows, residential extensions, dormer windows, rooflights, painting, chimneys, solar panels, advertisements, shopfronts and tree work. For detailed guidance, **see Appendix 2** of this SPG.

The impact of a development on the character, appearance and special interest of the Conservation Area will need to be assessed

All proposals will be required to assess the impact of the development on the character, appearance and special interest of the Conservation Area. The impact of a development on a Conservation Area will also need to be considered for sites located outside but near to the boundary, as the development may impact on the setting of the Conservation Area. For detailed guidance, **see Section 6 Stage 3** of the SPG.

The siting and design of the proposal may need to be re-visited to avoid or reduce any harmful impacts

The assessment of the impact of the development will help to decide whether there is a need to revisit the siting and design of the proposal. If the siting or design of the proposal is considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, it will be necessary to consider how this impact could be mitigated. Any harmful impacts will need to be balanced against any benefits, which may make the development acceptable. The outcome of the assessment may mean that the development needs to be re-sited or re-designed.

The assessment will need to be summarised in either a Heritage Impact Statement, Design and Access Statement, or a Planning Statement

Appendix 1 of this SPG sets out whether a Heritage Impact Statement, Design and Access Statement, or Planning Statement will be required to be submitted with an application. For detailed guidance on each of these types of statement, **see Section 6 Stage 3** of the SPG.

The planning application will need to be accompanied by detailed supporting information

The Local Planning Authority requires sufficient information to be included with the planning application in order to properly assess the proposal against relevant planning policies. For detailed guidance on the type of information required to be submitted with the planning application, **see Section 6 Stage 4** of the SPG.