



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

CONSERVATION AREAS: GUIDANCE AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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CONSERVATION AREAS: OVERVIEW

What is a conservation area?

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance (Section 69 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

Why is a conservation area designated?

Conservation area designation recognises the unique quality of an area as a whole. It is not just the contribution of individual buildings and structures, but also that of features such as topography, layout of roads, pathways, street furniture, open spaces and hard and soft landscaping which assist in defining the character and appearance of an area. Conservation areas identify the familiar and cherished local scene that creates a sense of place, community, distinctiveness and environment. Research has found that people value living in conservation areas, with properties located within them often having higher prices and greater price appreciation. Most people welcome the fact that their property is in a conservation area, and very often the reason they have chosen to live in such an area is because of its unique character and history.

Do I live in a conservation area?

There are currently 28 conservation areas in the borough. To establish whether you live in a conservation area, please view the 'conservation areas in the borough' section on the [council's website](#) or locate it [here](#).

Conservation area appraisals and management plans

For each conservation area within the borough there is an accompanying appraisal and management plan. The council is committed to periodically reviewing each conservation area and updating the appraisal and management plan, based upon the latest published guidance from [Historic England](#).

The purpose of each appraisal is to define and record the special interest of the conservation area with the preparation of a management plan which sets out suggested actions to preserve and enhance the special character of the area.

The appraisal includes a description of the historical development of the settlement and a spatial and townscape analysis to identify the important features of the conservation area that define its special interest. Important features normally include:

- Listed buildings
- Key unlisted buildings
- The use of traditional building materials
- Views and vistas
- Open and green spaces
- Important trees
- Boundary walls and features

The management plan indicates the planning guidance and policies which apply to development in the area and sets out suggested actions to preserve and enhance the special character of the area through a management strategy. An accompanying photographic survey is used as a mechanism for monitoring future change in the designated area.

LIVING IN A CONSERVATION AREA

The role of residents, property owners and the local authority in conservation

The success of a conservation area depends on the joint commitment of the local authorities and those living and working in the conservation area working to preserve and enhance its character.

Some change must occur in conservation areas to allow them to accommodate vital, thriving communities. It is important that conservation areas are able to respond to changing economic, social and cultural conditions without losing their special, often unique historic and architectural qualities.

Residents and property owners living within conservation areas can help to protect its character when considering carrying out works to their properties. Small incremental changes to properties such as the replacement of original windows or doors or the use of inappropriate building materials can have a cumulative effect on the character and appearance of individual buildings and upon the areas as a whole. Equally, poorly conceived new development or insensitive extensions to older properties can detract from the character of a conservation area.

Not all buildings located within a conservation area will be historic, but following the general principles and guidance contained within this document when carrying out works will ensure the character of the area is preserved and enhanced.

General principles of altering an older property

[Historic England](#) provides an introduction to working on older buildings including some general principles to follow before starting and during works. These principles include doing some research into your property before you start work to help understand its important and historic features, recommending that works are capable of being reversed and taking every opportunity to record any historic material or features of interest discovered during such works.

Energy Performance

Many of the common works listed within this document can be taken as an opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of your property. This can be done sympathetically and without compromising its historic character. Achieving such improvements on a historic building, however, does require a thorough understanding of how they were designed to breathe, and that inappropriate or ill-advised works may threaten this performance and cause long-term problems.

[Historic England](#) provides guidance on saving energy, including information on the energy performance of older buildings, practical advice on how to save energy in older buildings, information on the consent and regulations for energy improvements to older buildings, and outlining some of the renewable technology options available to owners of older buildings.

Building Regulations set standards for how buildings must be constructed to achieve a minimum level of acceptable performance. They typically cover health and safety, accessibility requirements, and energy performance. Part L of the Building Regulations seeks to improve the energy efficiency of all buildings. Certain works and changes to buildings can trigger the need to comply, and in such cases the [Historic England](#) guidance on energy efficiency and historic buildings will help prevent conflicts between the requirements of Part L and the conservation of historic and traditionally constructed buildings.

PERMISSIONS AND POLICIES

Is planning permission required?

Conservation areas are given special protection within planning law to ensure that the character of the area is preserved or enhanced. Their character may be affected by direct physical change or by changes within their setting, therefore additional planning controls exist to protect buildings, features and trees from adverse change.

Within conservation areas, permitted development rights are restricted. This means that applications for planning permission are required for certain types of work that would not normally need consent. In addition, permitted development rights which apply to many common projects for houses do not apply to flats, maisonettes or other buildings. The legislation on permitted development is contained within the [General Permitted Development Order 2015](#).

Before commencing any work within a conservation area, property owners, occupiers and other interested parties should determine whether planning permission is required for a proposal. For further information please utilise the council's [Self-Assessment Forms](#), the [Planning Portal](#), or contact the council's Conservation Officer.

Permitted development rights can also be removed by an Article 4 direction or via a planning condition (these are common on recent developments in a conservation area). The council currently has made no Article 4 directions on any building or area within the borough, but permitted development rights have been removed by condition on a number of properties within conservation areas. To ascertain whether your permitted development rights have been removed via a planning condition please utilise the council's [enquiry form](#) or contact the council's Conservation Officer.

Each conservation area is likely to include a number of statutorily listed buildings. If you own or live in a listed building, consent will be required if you want to demolish the building or alter or extend the building in a manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. You may also need consent for any works to separate buildings within the grounds of a listed building. For further information please view the 'listed buildings' section on the [council's website](#), or contact the council's Conservation Officer.

Even if it is determined that the proposed works are permitted development and a planning application is not required you should make sure that any changes you make to your property through repairs, maintenance or alterations, are in keeping with the character of the building and the area. You should take care to match original materials and methods of construction and avoid damaging or removing features of historic or architectural value. Unsympathetic alterations may not only spoil the appearance of the conservation area, but may also significantly reduce the value of your property.

Planning Policy

There are a wide range of national and local planning policies that seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment. Planning applications for development will only receive support if they are in conformity with these policies.

National planning policy

Section 12 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) provides the Government's planning policies related to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Local planning policy

The council's planning policies relating to conservation areas are contained within the Core Strategy (2009), Local Plan (2001) and Local Plan (2006 – 2026). Careful consideration must also be given to all elements identified within the conservation area appraisals and management plans as these are planning guidance documents.

Core Strategy

The [Core Strategy](#) identifies that the borough's conservation areas are valuable assets that need to be safeguarded. They form an attractive environment and proposals that enhance the identity and distinctiveness of this environment will be supported.

Local Plan (2001)

The [Local Plan \(2001\)](#) identifies that the borough's heritage of buildings and historic areas is a resource that needs to be retained and enhanced. The following saved Local Plan policies are applicable to conservation areas within the borough:

Development in Conservation Areas (Local Plan Policy BE7)

The primary planning policy will be the preservation or enhancement of the special character of the conservation area (including buildings, related spaces, views in and out of the area, topography and vegetation) or appearance. Planning permission for proposals which harm that special character will not be granted. Within the conservation area and its setting, the council will require the siting and design of new development, including alterations and extensions, to preserve or enhance the character or appearance and be in sympathy with the merits of neighbouring development. The following considerations will be taken into account when determining applications for development:

- The siting of proposals in relation to existing urban spaces and existing building lines;
- Their overall scale, design and proportions which should be sympathetic to characteristic form in the area and compatible with adjacent buildings and spaces;
- The desirability of retaining features of historic or characteristic value including street pattern, boundary walls and street furniture; and
- The use and application of building materials and finishes which should respect local traditional materials and techniques.

Demolitions in Conservation Areas (Local Plan Policy BE8)

Applications for the demolition of buildings within the conservation area will be refused except where it can be demonstrated:

- That the loss of the building will not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the conservation area; and
- That there are proposals for its replacement which would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Conditions will be imposed to ensure demolition does not occur until immediately prior to the redevelopment or remediation.

Shop fronts in Conservation Areas (Local Plan Policy BE9)

Shop fronts within conservation areas that are attractive, of historic importance or architectural interest, or which contribute to the general character of the area, should be retained.

Permission will only be granted for the repair or restoration of these shop fronts or their component features. Where replacement is unavoidable, only authentic and carefully detailed traditionally styled shop fronts will be permitted.

Proposals for new shop fronts or the replacement or alteration of existing shop fronts which are of insufficient quality to warrant their retention will be permitted, provided that the design is of a high quality, appropriate to the character of the building, the street scene and the wider landscape.

Shop security in Conservation Areas (Local Plan Policy BE10)

In conservation areas and on listed buildings, permission will be granted for the installation of security fittings where this does not have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of a listed building or conservation area.

Advertisements in Conservation Areas (Local Plan Policy BE11)

Where existing advertisements, signs and fascias make a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area, they should be retained. Replacement advertisements, signs, and fascias should be traditionally styled and carefully detailed.

Proposals for new advertisements, signs and fascias or the replacement of existing features which are of insufficient quality to warrant their retention will be permitted, provided that the design of the replacement is of a high quality, appropriate to the character of the building, the street scene and the wider townscape.

Any new residential development, house extensions and conversion of rural buildings within the conservation area should satisfy the council's [Supplementary Planning Guidance](#).

Local Plan (2006 - 2026)

The submission version of the [Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document](#) (DPD) contains planning policies to ensure that the council will protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment of the borough including conservation areas.

CARRYING OUT WORKS IN A CONSERVATION AREA

This section contains a list of common works that property owners are likely to wish to complete accompanied with some good practice guidelines for each type of work. Common works include:

- Replacing and altering windows
- Replacing and altering doors
- Altering the roof and roof space
- Extending your property
- Erecting an outbuilding
- Works to exterior walls
- Installing flues, soil and vent pipes
- Installing satellite dishes
- Demolition
- Erecting an advertisement
- Alterations to shop fronts
- Works to trees

Replacing and altering windows

Windows do more than keep the weather out. They are eye-catching features that give your property character and tell its story. They could be original, or may have been altered or replaced in response to decay or changing fashion. If you live in a conservation area and wish to alter your windows it is recommended you follow the guidance provided in this section and by [Historic England](#).

Why should I retain historic windows?

It is important to understand your windows before deciding on work to them. Window glass was an expensive, hand-made product until the mid-1800s, when new processes made larger, thicker sheets possible. The thinness and imperfections of old glass make it attractive, but also fragile. Much has been broken and replaced over the centuries, and surviving panes are rare and valued.

Detailing around window frames has changed over time. This can help to date the window and the house. Frames can contribute to a building's overall appearance either as part of the original design or as deliberate later changes. Historic windows were hand-made by craftsmen, often from better timber than we have today. The thinner, lighter glass meant that frames and glazing bars could be slender. Victorian and later cast glass is heavier and required thicker, stronger frames, so that sash windows were often made with 'horns' – where the side rails of the frame stick out a little way below the bottom rail – to make a firmer joint.

The importance of historic windows, with their wide range of styles and ages can vary. But evidence of craftsmanship, the survival of old and rare material and detailed design are all of value, and can make them of special interest.

Why is repair better than replacement?

Historic windows of interest should be retained wherever possible using careful matching repair. Their complete replacement should be a last resort and is rarely necessary. If repair is beyond the skills of a good craftsman, a like-for-like copy should be made.

In a conservation area, planning permission is likely to be required to replace a historic window or make alterations to the window that will materially affect the external appearance of the building, whereas like-for-like repairs do not usually require permission. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Can I replace non-historic windows?

Some windows do not contribute to the historic interest of your property and may even spoil its appearance. You could consider replacing them with ones that match the historic design of the property or ones that reflect the traditional characteristics and materials of the conservation area. Old photographs, or similar houses nearby, may have examples of earlier windows. The council will support the removal of non-historic windows provided it is clear that they are not of interest and that the new windows are of an appropriate style.

How can I improve the energy efficiency of my windows?

There is no reason why older windows should not be as energy efficient as new ones. Energy is lost through windows in two ways: by heat passing through the glass and by warm air escaping through gaps in and around the frames. They are equally important and both can be tackled in four main ways without detracting from the appearance or heritage value of the windows:

Repair

The benefits of simple repairs should not be underestimated. Freeing windows to open and shut properly, repairing broken glass panes, and closing gaps around casements and sashes are the best place to start with any window improvement.

Draught-proofing

Much of the heat lost through windows is actually through leaks, and the resulting draughts are a disproportionately large source of discomfort. Providing old windows with effective draught stripping therefore yields great benefits. Draught-proofing is one of the most effective and least intrusive ways of improving the comfort of occupants and reducing energy used for heating with little or no change in a building's appearance. However, it is not a DIY job: contact a local carpenter or use a draught-proofing specialist. Further information on draught-proofing is provided by [Historic England](#).

Secondary glazing

Secondary glazing is usually more expensive than overhauling and draught stripping so may not be cost effective on grounds of energy efficiency alone. It can also be visually intrusive, both internally and externally, and if poorly specified can impede the operation of shutters and the use of window ledges. However, secondary glazing does improve sound-proofing (is

more effective than double glazing) and is often chosen for the front of houses facing onto busy roads. Further information on secondary glazing is provided by [Historic England](#).

Secondary protection

Secondary protection, such as shutters, curtains and insulated blinds can be used at night or during the day when the building or room is unoccupied. The benefit of shutters and curtains is often forgotten. During the 20th century the increasing availability of cheap heating meant that people did not feel the need to close internal window shutters at night to keep the warmth in. As a result, the shutters were often painted over or removed altogether. Working shutters can even match the performance of modern double-glazing. They are attractive features which add to the value of the home. Similarly heavy curtains, if drawn at dusk, will also reduce heat loss.

Frequently asked questions

Seeking to replace or alter your windows is often one of the most common types of works undertaken in a conservation area, and therefore there are many frequently asked questions specific to these works, including the following:

Q. I have been told that my windows are beyond repair and need to be replaced. What should I do?

A. Ask an experienced carpenter/joiner who repairs timber windows as it is extremely likely that they can be repaired. More information on finding professional help is provided by [Historic England](#).

Q. My wooden windows have a lot of rot in the frames: should I replace them?

A. The first course of action for windows in poor condition should be repair by an experienced joiner. Repair will not only improve the appearance of the window, it will extend its life and improve its thermal performance. A second option is to consider one of the two-part epoxy resin repair systems that can extend the life of historic windows. If the carpenter/joiner confirms that the window is beyond economic repair then replacement must be considered. In this case reproductions of historic windows can be made that are identical in appearance to those being replaced. Historic glass from the old windows can be reused in the new frames.

Q. Some of the old windows in my house were replaced about 20 years ago with plastic units. Should I take the opportunity to install new wooden replicas of the originals but with double-glazed panes?

A. Be very cautious. Modern double-glazed replacement sash windows cannot replicate the fine detailing and proportions of many traditional windows, as the window frames and glazing bars have to be thicker to house the glass. This may not be important if the windows being replaced are on a separate elevation, but if they are mixed in with originals they could be obvious and visually glaring.

Q. Should I replace the old panes in my windows with thicker glass or slim double-glazing units?

A. Old glass is of interest and is becoming increasingly rare. It is of value not just for its age, but because it has more richness and sparkle than today's flat sheets with their uniform reflections. Where it survives, it should be retained and alternative means of thermal improvement considered. Thicker glass will not make much difference in heat loss. Slim double-glazing units are much heavier than the old panes and this extra weight could distort the old frames.

Q. I know that ventilation is important in old buildings – isn't draught-proofing dangerous?

A. While draught-proofing reduces the air getting in; most old buildings will still have adequate ventilation from other areas of the building for the fabric to continue to breathe satisfactorily. Draught-proofing will not totally exclude all ventilation. Generally it is not advisable to draught-proof windows in bathrooms, kitchens, and utility rooms where lots of water vapour is produced and high levels of ventilation are required.

Q. What is wrong with plastic windows?

A. They seldom look the same as the original windows and many look totally different. Indeed they can mar the appearance of a whole street. They will need maintenance and unlike with timber windows, it can be difficult and sometimes impossible to buy spares.

Q. Isn't it just a matter of taste as to what looks right?

A. Most old windows are deliberately designed to be of similar proportions to the house. Most people find this attractive. If the house is part of a terrace with identical windows then plastic replacements will ruin the appearance of the street.

Q. Plastic windows are more energy-efficient aren't they?

A. No. A lot of energy is used in their production and they are no more efficient than timber windows which have been improved by either closing shutters, using insulated blinds or secondary glazing.

Q. Why are timber windows better for the environment?

A. Old timber windows last much longer, many have lasted two hundred years plus and are capable of being repaired. Plastic windows are only expected to last for around 20 years and at present most go to land-fill. Incineration can lead to the production of harmful pollutants and only small amounts of plastic are currently recycled.

Q. If I have to replace sash windows, what should I use instead of plastic?

A. The usual answer is to use good softwood timber and it would be sensible to include draught proofing when the window is installed. This will look virtually identical to the original and will also minimise possible heat loss.

Q. What is wrong with wooden double-glazed windows of the same pattern as the originals?

A. It is virtually impossible to replicate wooden windows in double glazing. This is because two panes of glass set a distance such as 12 mm apart need much thicker timber supports to deal with the heavier weight. Details such as glazing bars are correspondingly bigger. Some slim-line double glazing gets much closer in design to the originals but can be quite obvious because of the double reflection caused by two panes of glass close together, so its use requires careful consideration.

Q. Won't I enhance the value of my house by putting in plastic windows?

A. Evidence shows the reverse is often the case. Estate agents generally make a great play of advertising 'original features' and most confirm that these sell homes much more quickly.

Q. How can you say I should not get plastic windows when the cost of new wooden ones is simply unaffordable? I am told my original windows are rotten and beyond repair and cannot afford new timber ones. Plastic is my only option.

A. Like all products there are high quality windows and poor quality ones, timber or plastic. A reputable and experienced tradesman will tell you if your windows are beyond repair. If not, then they may be capable of being substantially improved. Alternatively ask for a quote to make a facsimile replacement. You might be pleasantly surprised.

Replacing and altering doors

Historic doors, both internal and external, play a key role in your property's character and should be retained wherever possible. If you live in a conservation area and wish to alter your doors it is recommended that you follow the guidance provided in this section and by [Historic England](#).

Your original front door

If you are thinking about replacing the front door, check if it is a historic one. The front door was purpose-made for the front of your property and is usually the most important feature on the principle elevation. It often includes characterful furniture including a knob, knocker and letterbox. The door was specifically made to fit the doorway, which is unlikely to be the same size as standard off-the-peg doors. It is also valuable because it is authentic; it's always been there.

The wood used for old doors is usually of much better quality than timber available today. Even if your door is over 100 years old, it will last many more years if it's well maintained. A good joiner will be able to make repairs and ensure it fits well and keeps out draughts.

Doors are rarely beyond repair, and it will be cheaper to repair one than replace it. You can order a new door made to match the old one exactly, but this should be a last resort.

Finding a style to suit your house

If your front door is not original, you may want to replace it with a door to suit the style of the property. Before you do this, it's worth remembering that very old properties have changed over time, and the door could still be interesting, even if it's not the 'original'.

Replacing an inappropriate modern front door with a historic style will improve the look of the whole property and restore its character. Find out about the style of the original door. Look for old photographs, or copy the style of original doors on neighbouring houses, if they are like yours. The council will support the removal of non-historic doors provided it is clear they are not of interest and that the new doors are of an appropriate style.

There are firms that specialise in making traditional doors to order, or you may find a similar second-hand door that will fit. More information on finding professional help is provided by [Historic England](#).

In a conservation area, planning permission is likely to be required to replace a historic external door or make alterations to the door that will materially affect the external appearance of the building, whereas like-for-like repairs do not usually require permission. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

How can I improve the energy efficiency of my doors?

Most historical external doors will be made of wood, often incorporating a glass pane. Though not up to modern standards the heat lost through the fabric of the door will not be substantial and would certainly not justify replacement of the door. Old doors can, however, be very draughty. Again the first solution will be to repair the door, the frame and any threshold. Draught-proofing can often be added more easily to doors than to windows. Heavy curtains are particularly effective for doors, as are draught excluders. Further information on draught-proofing is provided by [Historic England](#).

Altering the roof and roof space

The roof not only shelters your house from the weather, but is often an important part of its historic significance too. If you live in a conservation area and wish to alter your roof it is recommended that you follow the guidance provided in this section and by [Historic England](#).

Roofs have three main parts: the outer covering; the internal timber structure; and external roof features such as chimneys, finials and rainwater goods. Common works that may affect the character and appearance of a roof include altering the roof covering, enlarging the roof (such as by inserting a dormer window) and converting the loft space.

Roof coverings

The material used to cover old roofs varies widely depending on where you live and the age of your property. The main historic roof coverings in the borough are natural slates from Swithland and Wales, various types of clay tile, and thatch. There may also be some leadwork.

Replacing an old roof covering is disruptive and expensive and can cause damage, so make sure the work is necessary and effective. Damp could be caused by defects in chimneys or lead work, or by slipped slates or tiles. The choice of modern materials for replacement roof covering, such as the use of concrete tiles, will often cause issues with the internal timber structure due to the additional weight of the material.

In some old properties, so-called 'nail sickness' can cause slates or tiles to slip. This corrosion of the nails that hold them does not mean the whole roof covering itself has to be replaced. With care, it's often possible to re-use a high percentage of the covering, making up the difference with matching second-hand or new material.

Try to keep existing roof ridges, whether these are clay or stone. If the whole roof covering has to be re-laid, this is a good time to lay a vapour-permeable roofing felt, which lets the roof breathe but keeps out wind-driven rain and snow. It's important to ensure good ventilation in the roof space. Further information on insulating roofs is provided by [Historic England](#).

In a conservation area, planning permission may be required to replace a historic roof covering that will materially affect the external appearance of the building, whereas like-for-like repairs using the same materials do not usually require permission. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Roof structures

The roof structure is the part that supports the covering. In many old properties, this is one of the most important features, even though it's not seen. Many historic roof structures have survived for well over 100 years, and it's not unusual for properties to still have medieval roof timbers. Old timber roofs in oak or elm often have interesting carved details and carpenters' marks. These features, and the method of construction, tell us how old the property is, because carpentry methods changed over time.

The priority should be to keep your existing structure and avoid replacing old roof timbers. The most important are the roof trusses and the purlins (the horizontal side beams that support the rafters). Good joiners can repair historic timbers if they have been damaged by rot. It is usual to put in new battens (the thin horizontals the slates or tiles are fixed to) if the roof covering is being replaced, but it's rarely necessary to replace the rafters. More information on finding professional help is provided by [Historic England](#).

In a conservation area, planning permission is unlikely to be required for any works to the roof structure, however, care should be taken to ensure that any historical elements of the roof structure are retained and repaired. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

External roof features

The external roof features, including chimneys, finials, ridge tiles and rainwater goods are also part of a property's character. Chimneys and pots should be retained even if they are no longer used to help with ventilation. Details such as original clay or stone ridges and decorative finials can be carefully re-fixed if they are becoming loose. Replacement of original cast iron rainwater goods and rise and fall brackets holding up guttering should only be replaced as a last resort. The council will support the reinstating of historical external roof features on properties.

In a conservation area, planning permission is required for the installation of a chimney if it would face onto a public highway and it is on the front or side elevation of the building. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Enlarging or extending the roof

Common works that seek to provide an enlargement or extension to the roof include the insertion of dormer windows. The dormer window was developed as a means of bringing daylight into the attic and roof space of properties. Set on top of side walls, they lit the central part of the roof space not reached by light from gable end casement windows. Historical dormer windows were usually constructed with a timber frame and a continuation of the existing roof covering. Striking local variations in the design of these windows, such as the eyebrow dormer utilised as a feature in the former Gopsall Estate villages, give a particular character to roofscapes within the borough.

Historical dormer windows should be repaired wherever possible, although some modification may be desirable especially where weatherproofing has clearly been a problem. Changes may be required to incorporate insulation. Further information on insulating dormer windows is provided by [Historic England](#).

In a conservation area, planning permission is required for any enlargement or extension to the roof, such as inserting a dormer window. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification. Dormer windows on rear roof slopes may be acceptable as the impact on the amenity of a conservation area may be limited. On front roof slopes, and slopes facing a public highway, they may only be acceptable where dormer windows are an original feature of the property or they are a traditional feature in the conservation area.

Converting the loft

Converting a loft can be a good way to increase space without building an extension, but it will affect the interior of the house, the roof structure and the outside of the roof. In many older properties, the roof is an important part of why it is interesting, incorporating the features described above. If the roof requires the raising of the eaves or ridge levels this should be carefully considered, and it is unlikely to be acceptable if it alters the uniform line of a terrace of properties, for example.

In some old properties the loft was used by servants. Look for clues such as blocked windows or traces of lost staircases. Although you may still need to make some major alterations, this type of attic space is usually easier to convert than a loft that was never meant to be accessible. If your roof has been altered fairly recently or turns out to have little historical significance, a loft conversion may be more straightforward.

If the loft is not already connected to the floor below, you will need a new staircase. In deciding the best place for the staircase, think about the layout on the floor below, bearing in mind the layout or plan of the house as this is a part of its history.

If the loft has no windows, you will need to provide light and ventilation. A well-designed dormer window can work on some roofs, but on others, it may be better to use small roof lights. To decide what is best, assess the shape of the roof, the style and character of the whole house and area and how visible the roof is. Please also refer to the guidance above.

Improving insulation is a major part of converting a loft, but you need to maintain roof ventilation at the same time, which may require additional roofing battens. The aim should be to keep alterations to the outside of the roof to a minimum. Further information on insulating roofs is provided by [Historic England](#).

Inserting a new bathroom in a loft needs particular care as the new pipework, ventilation and other services can be difficult to fit in without damaging the roof structure of the loft floor. Site a new bathroom directly above a bathroom on the floor below, to reduce pipe runs and the risk of water damage. Also refer to the guidance on installing soil and vent pipes within this document.

In a conservation area, planning permission is required for any enlargement or extension to the roof, such as inserting a dormer window. Planning permission may be required for the installation of a roof light if it will materially affect the external appearance of the building. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

On roof slopes in a conservation area it is recommended that the number of roof lights on any slope is limited, especially on a slope facing a public highway, and that a 'conservation' style roof light that fits flush with the roof covering is installed, rather than the standard roof light that extends beyond the roof plane.

Extending your property

Your property may have already been extended over time, or it may have been built in one go. When deciding on an extension it's important to understand how the property has changed in the past, its particular character and how it sits within the garden or surroundings – its 'setting'. If you live in a conservation area and wish to extend your property it is recommended that you follow the guidance provided in this section and by [Historic England](#).

What should my extension look like?

If your property has been altered or extended, permission for a new extension may be possible, so long as it does not overpower what is already there. It may be possible to replace a poorly built and designed extension with a new structure.

A new extension should not dominate a historic building, this usually means it should be lower and smaller and be considered subservient to the existing building. Some small buildings such as lodges and cottages can easily be swamped by an extension, unless very carefully designed. There is no rule on the ideal percentage increase in size; it all depends on the size, character and setting of your property. There will still be some cases where a new extension will not be possible. Any new extension should satisfy the council's [Supplementary Planning Guidance on House Extensions](#).

An extension will usually have less effect on your property if it is built onto the back and not seen from the front. This is because the back is usually less important for its architecture

than the front. Side extensions may also work well. Permission for an extension that projects to the front is rarely given as this is usually the most important and most visible part of the property.

In a conservation area, planning permission is required for any two storey extension and any extension that extends beyond the front or side wall of a building. A conservatory is classed as an extension to a building. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Connecting doorways to an extension

When you build an extension, you will need to connect it to a room in the existing property. You may be able to avoid removing any historic walling if there is an existing doorway, but sometimes a new opening will be needed. The decision about where to make the new doorway needs careful thought. In some properties, such as medieval timber-framed buildings, removing part of a wall to form a doorway can cause structural problems.

A new doorway may also spoil the design of a panelled or significantly decorated room. Once old fabric is removed it is lost forever. You also need to think about how the extension will affect windows and daylight in existing rooms. It may be worth keeping old windows where they are, as features.

Choosing the right materials

The exterior needs to be carefully designed. You should expect to use matching or complimentary materials for the walls and roof. However, cleverly chosen contrasting materials in a modern design may work well for some buildings, where the extension can then be clearly identified as different to the old house. However, the effect should not be so different that the extension is more prominent than the main building.

It is important to choose sympathetic styles and for any new doors and windows. The physical detail of the junction between old and new is important, to avoid water getting into the old property, and to disturb the historic wall as little as possible.

Conservatory or extension?

Conservatories are popular as a relatively quick and cheap way of building a light-filled extension onto a property. For all older properties, the location, size, materials and design of a conservatory will need careful thought. If you live in a conservation area and wish to erect a conservatory it is recommended that you follow the guidance provided in this section and by [Historic England](#).

It's a good idea to first think about why you need a conservatory, as a solid-walled extension may be a better way of providing extra space, and could be easier to insulate and heat. It may also fit in better with the character of your old property. Weighing up long-term energy costs is as important as the initial outlay.

What should my conservatory look like?

Choosing the right location is important. A conservatory almost always looks wrong on the front of the house, even if this is the best location for sunlight and internal planning. The side or rear are usually the best locations. Victorian conservatories were often sited in shady places, depending on the types of plants they contained.

As with any extension, look carefully at the scale, character and surroundings of your property. Understanding what is special about it will help you decide the best place for the conservatory, and help with the choices of materials, size and style. It's important that the conservatory does not dominate your property. If your property is very small then any extension, even a conservatory, could spoil its character unless it can be located out of sight.

The style of the conservatory need not copy historical examples, and a contemporary design may work well. A bespoke design is usually the best solution for an old property. Good options include building a plinth in the same material as your property, with a frame for the glazing given a finish in colours to compliment old stone or brick.

Connecting doorways to a conservatory

Think about how the conservatory will connect to the rest of your house. It is usually better to use an existing external doorway than to create a new opening, to avoid removing part of the historic wall of the property. If the conservatory will overlap windows, keep them as features, and avoid plastering the outside wall of the house, inside the conservatory. The old wall surface is part of the history of your property and will give character to your new space.

It's important for a new conservatory to be reversible, meaning it can be removed in the future without damaging the property. The physical junction between old and new needs careful attention, to avoid damp problems, and to avoid damaging the old wall or other features.

Erecting an outbuilding

A common project is to erect an outbuilding within the grounds of your property. Rules governing outbuildings apply to sheds, greenhouses and garages as well as other ancillary garden buildings such as swimming pools, ponds, sauna cabins, kennels, enclosures (including tennis courts) and many other kinds of structure for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the property. Subject to the scale, design and the use of appropriate materials, such works within a conservation area can often be acceptable. For example, the erection of well-designed garage, located sympathetically within its plot and to be constructed of traditional materials may actually enhance the character of a conservation area by reducing the amount of on-street car parking and improving the street scene.

In a conservation area, planning permission is required to erect an outbuilding or enclosure at the side of your property. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Works to exterior walls

Exterior walls are often the most visible part of any building so play a fundamental role in defining the character of a conservation area. The type of material and wall finish chosen for the construction of a building can have many interesting variations. The predominant traditional building material utilised within the borough is a simple red brick laid out in a variety of attractive bonding patterns, with the occasional use of yellow, orange and blue bricks. In the north and east of the borough the use of stone from local quarries is common. Lime based renders and paints were traditionally utilised as finishes which allowed each building to breathe, and lime based products should continue to be used on historic properties.

Recent trends in property maintenance and repairs have led to works being undertaken on the outside of historic buildings believing that such works will improve its thermal performance. Common works include cement rendering and mortaring and the application of modern paints. However, the use of such products is highly likely to trap moisture and prevent the walls from breathing, leading to problems including damp. In addition the cladding and painting of external walls can bring about a radical change in the character of a building and is likely to mean the loss of valuable original features and detailing. If you wish to undertake any works to the exterior of your property you must consider utilising a surface finish appropriate to the age of your property and traditional to the character of the area. The council's Conservation Officer will be able to provide advice on any such works.

In a conservation area, planning permission is required to clad any part of the outside of a building with materials such as stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles. This includes the application of exterior wall insulation. Like-for-like repairs to existing walls using the same materials do not usually require permission. The painting of the exterior of any building does not require planning permission, unless the painting is for the purpose of advertisement, announcement or direction. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Installing flues, soil and vent pipes

Internal changes to your property, such as the installation of a log burning fire or stove, or putting in a new bathroom or kitchen, are likely to require the installation of external features to take the associate waste products away from the property. If you live in a conservation area and wish to put in a [new bathroom](#) or [update your kitchen](#) it is recommended that you follow the guidance provided in this section and by Historic England.

Installing new pipes or extra equipment within existing bathrooms and kitchens could affect the historic fabric of the property, and it's important to avoid cutting into beams or removing historic timber floors and plaster ceilings. You may need to improve ventilation to deal with condensation, so make sure the room window opens. Try to avoid cutting a new hole in an old wall for a vent, and make sure the vent does not spoil the outside of the house. If a new hole is necessary, make sure that it is drilled from the outside, to avoid unintended damage to the visible wall.

Flues, soil and waste pipes can be intrusive on the front of your property, therefore hidden rear or side elevations are the best place for these features. The choice of materials and colour should be sympathetic to the property.

In a conservation area, planning permission is required for the installation of a flue, soil pipe or vent pipe if it would face onto a public highway and it is on the front or side elevation of the building. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Installing satellite dishes

With the growth in satellite television, the installation of satellite dishes has increased. In a conservation area, planning permission is required for the installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite dish on a chimney, wall or roof slope which faces onto and is visible from a public highway. Permission is also required if the height of your property exceeds 15 metres. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

When installing a satellite dish, property owners should seek to minimise its impact on the external appearance of the building, and to remove it when it is no longer needed. Its impact can be minimised in a number of ways:

- Use the minimum size of dish available. As technology has improved, satellite dishes now come in a range of styles and sizes
- Generally, satellite dishes if possible, should be sited to the rear of properties and be as inconspicuous as possible
- Select a dish that blends in with its background, e.g. the type of wall on which it is to be sited. A white dish may blend in with a white background but would be conspicuous against a darker background. Satellite dishes are available in a range of styles. Mesh or transparent dishes are often popular for these reasons
- A small dish hidden behind a parapet wall, or the rear of a chimney stack, on a lower roof of an extension or garage or in a garden may be less conspicuous than one of the walls of the property
- The performance of the dish is not affected by whether it is high up or low down on a building as long as its line of sight with the satellite is not affected, so bear this in mind when selecting the most subtle location for the dish

Demolition

Buildings

They are often a large and varied number of buildings and structures within a conservation area that make a positive contribution to its character. Planning permission is required for the demolition of any building in a conservation area (for the purposes of demolition this is known as 'conservation area consent'). It is a criminal offence to fail to obtain such consent, and it is quite separate from any necessary planning permission for development.

If the building to be demolished in a conservation area is a listed building, schedule monument or a building subject to ecclesiastical exemption, then planning permission is not required. Other consent such as listed building consent or scheduled monument consent will, however, be required.

Conservation area consent is only required for demolition. What constitutes demolition for these purposes has been decided by the courts in a case known as 'Shimizu'. The difference between works of alteration and works of demolition is an issue of fact in each case, but demolition must amount to the removal of the whole building, not just part of it. That said, the removal of the building except the facade would amount to demolition, as would the removal of an entire front garden wall.

Removal of architectural details, making holes in walls to create new windows, or demolishing one wall to allow an extension would not amount to demolition and so would not require conservation area consent. Planning permission may still be required for such works, though.

If you are unsure as to whether you require permission for any demolition it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification. All applications which include the demolition of buildings within a conservation area must propose an adequate replacement which enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area. Planning conditions will be imposed to ensure demolition does not occur until immediately prior to the redevelopment or remediation.

Walls and boundaries features

Boundary features and structures, such as gates, fences, walls and other means of enclosure can be as old as your property. Original or historic means of enclosure may utilise traditional materials and can provide as much character to a conservation area as any building. They often provide a clear distinction between public and private space and maintain physical evidence of the division between historical plots of land. If you live in a conservation area and wish to demolish all or any part of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure it is recommended that you follow the guidance provided in this section and by [Historic England](#).

Repair of a wall or boundary feature is usually better than replacement, and keeping old gates, fences and walls will conserve the character of your house, garden and the street. In a conservation area, planning permission will be required to demolish all, and in some cases part, of any building, gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure, whereas like-for-like repairs using the same materials do not usually require permission. The council will support the reinstatement of means of enclosure utilising traditional materials and construction techniques. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Erecting an advertisement

An advertisement is "any word, letter, model, sign, placard, board, notice, awning, blind, device or representation, whether illuminated or not, in the nature of, and employed wholly or partly for the purposes of advertisement, announcement or direction". The definition includes

not just the sign but also any hoarding or similar structure used or designed or adapted for use for the display of advertisements. It does not, therefore, just cover commercial adverts.

There are sixteen classes of advertisements that have either deemed or express consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007, with no planning application required subject to compliance with standard conditions. Any advertisements not falling within these classes will require advertisement consent. When considering planning applications for advertisements that require consent, the local planning authority will consider amenity and public safety. Amenity is generally considered to be the visual appearance and pleasance of the environment, including the general characteristics of the locality and any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. If the proposed advertisement is located within a conservation area, the council must also pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

To determine whether permission is required for an advertisement on your property it is recommended that you follow the [Government guidance document](#). In addition to following the guidance document, within a conservation area advertisement consent will be required for the following:

- The display of an illuminated advertisement (Class 4)
- The display of flag advertisements, subject to a number of rules (Class 7)
- The display of advertisements on hoardings around temporary construction sites (Class 8)
- The display of captive balloon advertisements (Class 15)
- The display of an advertisement on telephone kiosks (Class 16)

If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Alterations to shop fronts

Shops form a dominant visual feature in town and village centres, many of which are conservation areas. They have considerable impact on the centre's general appearance, affecting perceptions of their overall attractiveness both as a place to shop and invest. Care and sensitivity is therefore needed in all proposals for new shop fronts, particularly in conservation areas.

Through the control of the design of shop fronts, the council seeks to ensure that proposals for the alteration or construction of new shop fronts do not harm the character or appearance of a conservation area and that the shop fronts themselves make a positive contribution to the street scene. The council will generally seek to resist the replacement of traditional or modern shop fronts which contribute to the character of a conservation area with inappropriate designs. The safeguarding of well-designed and traditional existing shop fronts in sensitive locations should promote new shop front design that is appropriate to its location. New or altered shop fronts may also provide an opportunity to design suitable access to the building for disabled people.

The council recognises that security is a major concern of shopkeepers and owners of commercial premises. The unsympathetic installation and design of security measures can have an adverse impact on the appearance of the frontage particularly in sensitive locations including conservation areas. The council will support the installation of security fittings where this does not have an adverse effect in the character of a conservation area. Shop front security can often be effectively improved through good design, security glazing including toughened, laminated or sub-divided glazing, and physical barriers including internal or externally mounted removable grilles, all of which are likely to be acceptable solutions within a conservation area. The use of external roller shutters is an undesirable solution due to their prominent and bulky character.

Further guidance on the shop fronts and shop security in conservation areas is provided in the council's [Shopping and Shop Fronts Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#).

Within a conservation area planning permission is required if the change of shop front will materially alter the appearance of the building. This is a matter of fact and degree, so each case must be examined on its own individual merits. Therefore it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification.

Works to trees

Trees form an integral part of the built and natural environment, making a valuable contribution to the character of an area. Their longevity, often spanning many centuries, provides continuity and focus within local communities contributing to our history and culture. As design elements in both the urban and rural environments they give scale, texture and colour to landscapes, complementing or screening buildings. However, trees are sensitive to environmental change and can be irreparably damaged by inappropriate management both above and below ground level.

Trees may be specifically protected by [Tree Preservation Orders \(TPOs\)](#) or more generally if they are within a conservation area. Within a conservation area, any tree with stem diameters of 75 millimetres or greater, measured at 1.5 metres above ground is protected. If you wish to carry out works to a tree in a conservation area, notice must be given in writing to the council six weeks in advance. This gives the council an opportunity to consider whether a TPO should be made to protect the tree. If you are unsure as to whether you require permission it is recommended that you contact the council's Conservation Officer before commencing any such works to provide clarification. If you proceed with the works without consent you could be prosecuted, fined, and have to place a replacement tree.

If you are worried that a tree is endangering your house, a professional arboriculturalist or tree surgeon can assess the tree's condition, or check that the roots are not a problem. Unless there is an immediate risk of serious harm, anyone proposing to carry out works on a tree in a conservation area on the grounds that it is dead must give the council five days' notice before carrying out the proposed work. Where such a tree requires urgent work to remove an immediate risk of serious harm, written notice is required as soon as practicable after the work becomes necessary.

Also think about wildlife and avoid works to trees and hedges in the nesting season. Some animals are protected, and you will need advice if bats are going to be affected.

FUNDING

The council's Environmental Improvement Programme will be used to offer grants for works identified in conservation area management plans, with the aim of enhancing the character of conservation areas within the borough. Common works identified include repairing and replacing boundary features, replacing inappropriate roof coverings with natural materials and replacing traditional roof features.

The council will support and assist where practicable groups or individuals seeking grant funding from alternative sources to carry out necessary works to buildings within conservation areas. [Historic England](#), [the Heritage Alliance](#), and [Funds for Historic Buildings](#) identify sources of grant funding that may be applicable to your property.

CONTACT DETAILS AND USEFUL LINKS

Conservation contact details

Conservation Officer
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
Hinckley Hub
Rugby Road
Hinckley
Leicestershire
LE10 0FR

Telephone: 01455 238141

Email: conservation@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk

Useful links

Funds for Historic Buildings: <http://www.ffhb.org.uk/>

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council: <http://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/>

Historic England: <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team (including the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER)):

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/leisure_tourism/local_history/archaeology/historic_environment_record.htm

National Planning Policy Framework:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Planning Portal:

http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/wps/portal/portalhome/unauthenticatedhome!/ut/p/c5/04_S B8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gjtXBnJydDRwMLbzdLA09nSw_zsKBAIwN3U_1wkA6ze_HMXS4gKd29TRwNPI0s3b2e_AGMDAwOlVAEO4Gig7-eRn5uqX5CdneboqKglAGUwqho!/dl3/d3/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/

Planning Practice Guidance: <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), provide an extensive range of technical advice: <http://www.spab.org.uk/advice/technical-q-as/>

The Heritage Alliance:

<http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/fundingdirectory/main/fundinghome.php>

There is also a range of **local interest groups**, **civic societies** and other **amenity societies** who will be able to provide advice depending on the locality and age and type of property. For more information on these groups and societies please contact the council's Conservation Officer.