

# **Uffculme Conservation Area Management Plan**

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## Conservation Area Management Plans

A conservation area management plan draws on the conservation area appraisal to identify ways of ensuring that the special qualities of the conservation area are preserved, to identify opportunities and put forward proposals for the enhancement of the area. It can

- ▶ **make sympathetic proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area's character and appearance, including the identification of development opportunities**
- ▶ **obtain funds and encourage inward investment**

The opportunity was taken to review the conservation area boundary to see if there were areas that should be excluded or areas that should be included. The boundary amendments are referred to in part xii.

### Conservation Areas at Risk

Conservation areas are dynamic. They are made up of a variety of different heritage assets - buildings, landscapes, archaeology - and the spaces in between that form the all-important public realm and streetscape in which people meet and go about their business.

They are also vulnerable to change, some of it for the better but sometimes with the potential to do lasting damage to their special character - and thus to the social and economic life of the communities to which they belong.

English Heritage began in 2009 to ask Local Planning Authorities to carry out a desk top survey of their conservation areas using set of criteria. This work of assessing the relative state of conservation areas will help authorities to identify the priorities for action.



## What puts conservation areas at risk?

One single factor is rarely sufficient to put a conservation area at risk. More frequently it is an accumulation of small problems that collectively begin to erode the character of the area.

Because conservation areas involve many different owners, putting those problems right can take time and patience. Above all it depends on the engagement and commitment of the community itself. Below is a table produced by English Heritage showing the main threats found to so in England

Conservation Area threats	% of areas affected
Plastic windows and door:	83%
Poor roads and pavements:	60%
Street clutter:	45%
Loss of garden walls, fences, hedges:	43%
Unsightly satellite dishes:	38%
Traffic calming measures:	36%
Alterations to front, roofs, chimneys:	34%
Unsympathetic extensions:	31%
Advertisements:	23%
Neglected green spaces:	18%

*English Heritage*



## ii Planning policy framework

The overarching planning policies for the area are included adopted Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2007) The Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) has been approved by the Secretary of State and came into effect in June 2010.

The Core Strategy includes a policy (COR2) on Local Distinctiveness which seeks to 'sustain the distinctive quality, character and diversity of the district's environmental assets'.

The Local Development Framework incorporates Policy ENV 11 and Policy ENV 13 (saved from the Adopted Local Plan) relating to the quality of development in conservation areas and environmental enhancement of conservation area respectively.

The adopted Devon Structure Plan (2004) contains a policy (CO7) on Historic Settlements and Buildings which seeks to conserve and enhance such assets.

In addition to this is central government policy for conservation contained in Planning Policy Guidance PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment. As well as the documents mentioned above, the Management Plan takes account of the wider global, national and regional picture.



## Positive and negative issues identified in the consultation

As part of the preparation of the Conservation Area Appraisal and this Management Plan, an exhibition was held in the village hall in June 2010 to find out what the community felt about the conservation area

The response was exceptionally good. Although many of the responses and comments received fall outside the scope of planning control, or of this document, the main issues raised are addressed below.

### Positive issues

- The strong sense of community in the village
- The cultural/social destinations eg the Post Office, the Square Corner, youth Club Churches, the village shop. Pub, Library, Schools, Coldharbour Mill
- The visual attractiveness of the village with some remarkable buildings
- Views in and out of the village
- Coldharbour Mill as a landmark and a place to visit mill
- The River Culm
- The Old Railway line
- The village Square
- Ayshford Green

### Negative issues

- The unfortunate decline in the number of shops and in the village
- The noise, dust, smells and conflict with pedestrians and other road users from a large number of heavy lorries going through the centre village - mostly emanating from the Lloyd Maunder site
- Speed of buses through the village
- The poor visual state of the Square
- Lack of footpath along Bridge Street from the river bridge (Lloyd Maunder site) to the Square - there is a dangerous corner
- Dog poo
- Poor condition of some buildings



## iv Opportunities identified

The exhibition included a display by Uffculme Parish Council showing outline ideas for the enhancement of the village square. This project is being led by the Parish Council due to the fact that the Parish Council owns this triangle of land. The draft design included the use of part of the open space to the east of Ayshford House and fronting Commercial Road as a car park to compensate for a reduction of car parking space on the Square itself .

The lack of a footpath between Bridge Street and the Square was identified by many people as being a hazard to pedestrians at a narrow corner and junction where heavy lorries and buses use the highway. The use of traffic calming measures should be explored. Ideally this should be pursued in the context of the current ideas for the enhancement of the square

The Bus shelter at Ayshford Green is in poor condition and requires updating or replacing.

The loss of shops, pubs and other local services in the village is probably an inevitable result of market forces. However Policy C2 of the Local Development Framework seeks to protect the loss of community facilities where this would damage the viability of a settlement.

There are examples of interesting historic floorscape including pebble paths some with geometric patterns, cobbles and yellow paving bricks. There are also several areas of natural stone kerbs and gullies. All these features make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the central part of the conservation area. However in several areas the old surfaces have been covered in whole or in part by tarmac, or disturbed by trenching carried out by the various utilities.

Restoration of these surfaces would improve the appearance of several areas and reinforce the historic character of the centre. It would also be helpful to have an agreed specification for works in the highway where historic surfaces exist, to ensure that these areas are dealt with appropriately by the highway authority and utility companies in future. Where reinstatements are not satisfactory the details should be notified to Devon County Council as Highway Authority to pursue the matter with the relevant companies.

An audit of existing street furniture and signage to identify areas of visual clutter with a view to rationalisation needs to be carried out in consultation with the Highway Authority. Where signs cannot be attached to buildings then opportunities for pole sharing should be explored and any redundant poles removed.

## New development in the Conservation Area

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Where there is a proposal for a new building in the conservation area, the design and quality of construction will always need to be of the highest order in accordance with local planning polices and central Government guidance. This requirement should apply equally to prominent sites where views into or out of the conservation area are affected. The appropriateness of new development will always need to be looked at in detail, taking into account the history of the site, the character of surrounding buildings and its contribution to the townscape. These issues are best explored as and when proposals for development arise rather than providing detailed information in this document.

Any new development proposals will be expected to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Uffculme Conservation Area and to comply with the relevant development plan policies.

Scale, massing and height of all new buildings will be expected to reflect those of the existing built environment of the immediate context or of the wider conservation area context. This does not rule out good quality contemporary design.

For new development within or affecting the setting of the Conservation Area traditional materials will be encouraged to complement the existing built heritage.

The design and finishes of windows and doors should reflect those traditionally found in the area for the particular type of building proposed. Windows should be painted timber and set well back within the opening. Depending on the scale and style of property, windows should be either side hung casements or sliding sashes with glazing bar configurations reflecting those found locally. Doors should be solid painted timber with 4 or 6 panels. Other local detailing includes chimneys and eaves patterning.

Extensions and alterations to existing buildings should be encouraged to follow the scale, proportions, detailing and materials of the existing property.



## vi **Removal of permitted development rights** **Article 4 (2) Direction**

Normally, only a small additional range of works is brought under planning control within a conservation area compared with an undesignated area. In exceptional cases, where certain works are identified as causing a major threat to the historic and architectural character of a conservation area, an Article 4 Direction can be made, which enables the local planning authority to remove certain permitted development rights for dwellinghouses. Such controls should be applied cautiously, otherwise the implications in terms of extra workload for the local planning authority could be excessive.

In the case of Uffclume, the need for an Article 4(2) Direction will be kept under review.

## vii **Buildings at risk**

Fortunately, there are no buildings that are obviously at risk within the Uffculme conservation area.





## Enforcement

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Where works requiring consent have been carried out without planning permission, enforcement action will be taken where harm results. An enforcement audit would enable for accurate recording and assessment of these developments and appropriate action to be taken to remedy the situation.

A systematic approach will be essential. However following through with action to deal with identified breaches will have staff implications for development control staff particularly the enforcement team and for the legal section. Whilst a range of measures such as enforcement notices is available, it is likely that most breaches will be resolved through negotiation.

### Section 215 Notices

If sites or buildings are in poor or derelict condition causing damage to amenity an untidy land notice under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 can be used to pursue identified problems.

## Trees and landscape

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The Council must be notified if it is proposed to carry out works to or fell a tree within the conservation area and will consider the need to serve Tree Preservation Orders where trees contribute to the character of the conservation area.

## Archaeology

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There are no Scheduled Monuments within the Conservation area. However, it is potentially an area of archaeological interest. Therefore, any development within or adjacent to the historic core of Uffculme may be the subject to either predetermination archaeological investigation or PPG16 planning condition. The level of archaeological mitigation will depend upon the nature, extent and location of the development as well as previous disturbance to the site.



## **xi Sustainability in the conservation area**

Sometimes there is perceived to be a conflict between historic and environmental conservation, for example the improvement of heat insulation in historic buildings; nearly always there is a solution, however, and the Council's Conservation team will always be happy to provide advice on how best to reconcile the two. Planning policy Statement No 5 Planning for the Historic Environment contains advice which seeks to address these issues.

## **xii Changes to the conservation area boundary**

The conservation area boundary was reviewed in the context of the preparation of the Conservation Area Management Plan. The following areas were considered and the conclusions endorsed by the Planning Committee in February 2011:-

The modern bungalow at 2 Orchard Close has been developed since the Conservation Area was designated in 1973. It is of no special architectural quality and does not contribute positively to the character of the Mill Street cottages that lie opposite. The dwelling and its grounds should be removed from the Conservation Area.

Adjacent to 2 Orchard Close, along Mill Street lies a care home. The building, whilst of some age has been much altered and has lost its vernacular qualities and now blights the otherwise views of Mill Street. It should be removed from the Conservation Area.

The property at 6 Bridge Street, whilst unsympathetically altered with uPVC windows still retains architectural quality with its decorative brick work and arched ground floor window. The building should be added to the Conservation Area boundary.

The property called 'Marblina' (to the north of No 7 East Street) is a modern dwelling and does not contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area. This dwelling and its grounds should be removed from the Conservation Area.



# Funding and partnerships

### Devon County Council

Possible sources of finance include Local Transport Plan monies for public realm enhancement ie The Square

### Uffculme Parish Council

Through the precept the Parish Council could provide some funding towards the enhancement of the Square.

### Big Lottery Fund

In conjunction with various voluntary organisations in the town such as Devon Gateway Development Trust applications could be made for sources of funding from the Big Lottery Fund for projects that complement and support the regeneration of the town centre.

### Landfill Communities Fund

Could be accessed by bodies other than a Local Authority for example to assist with improvements to parks and public open spaces



Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Historic core largely unaltered in layout	Volume of heavy vehicle traffic to feed mill	Remove on-street parking at The Square, Fore Street and Coldharbour	Insentitive development within and adjoining Conservation Area
Several large, prominent buildings of historic architectural interest and architectural merit	Large number of vehicles parked on the road	Imposition of an Article 4 (2) direction to control future development	Intensification of use of feed mill
Grantlands - provides highly distinctive sub-area	Smells emanating from the feed mill	Development/conversion of the brewery building on High Street	Replacement of remaining original windows with uPVC alternatives
Railway path and footpath along river linking two sides of the village through open countryside	Proliferation of uPVC windows	Redevelopment of Markers, Markers Road	Installation of further satellite dishes on road facing elevations
The sense of enclosure of The Square with Shambles as a central focus point	The former George Inn lying empty	Restoration of shop front at 10 Commercial Road	
Long distance views over toward Slow Jack's and Gaddon Woods obtainable from many		Enforcement action requiring the removal of unauthorised satellite dishes	
		Enhancement of riverside path between Mill Street and Denners Way	
		Restoration of setts along Bridge Street including into the cartway at 11 Bridge Street	