



London Road & St. Peters Conservation Area Appraisal Development Control Guidance

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Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Consultation	1
3.0	Submission of applications	2
4.0	Demolition	3
5.0	Design of new buildings	4
6.0	Extensions	5
7.0	Changes of use	6
8.0	Shopfronts, signage, blinds and security measures	7
9.0	Car parking	9
10.0	Works to Listed Buildings	10
11.0	Significant Local Buildings	11
12.0	Proposals affecting the setting of the Conservation Area	12

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document has been produced in tandem with the Conservation Area Appraisal written for the Oadby London Road and St Peter's Conservation Area. Its purpose is to provide guidance to prospective developers by clearly setting out the key issues which will influence the Local Planning Authority's decision on any planning or other application submitted in the area.
- 1.2 Conservation Area designation is not intended to 'pickle' an area by preventing all new development. Oadby has evolved over hundreds of years and this guidance therefore seeks to ensure that the area continues to thrive, but without prejudicing the key features which define the character and appearance of the area.
- 1.3 The underlying principle of this guidance is to ensure Oadby continues to develop in a considered way which will retain its essential character. Sustainability should, therefore, be at the heart of any development proposals which should be durable, adaptable and of high quality.
- 1.3 This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Area Appraisal for the area and the supporting policies in the Oadby and Wigston Adopted Local Plan 1999.

2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 This document was subject to public consultation before being considered by the Full Council of the Borough Council on 23 February 2007. Following an appraisal of the Conservation Area, changes were made to the boundary, which come into effect on 12 March 2007.
- 2.2 A 'Report of Consultation' has been produced by the Borough Council which summarises all the representatives received during the public consultation exercise which accompanied the production of this document.

3.0 Submission of applications

3.1 ***Outline planning applications***

Outline applications for development within the Conservation Area will not be accepted unless they contain sufficient supporting information by which the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area can be judged.

3.2 ***Full planning applications for new buildings***

These will need to include sufficient detail by which the full impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the area can be judged. This will need to include consideration of the issues raised in the Conservation Area Appraisal (especially the 'Key Characteristics' Section) and a design statement which clearly sets out how the proposal is felt to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

3.3 ***Listed Building Consent***

This is required for any works which affect the architectural or historic interest of the interior or exterior of any listed building and any building constructed before 1 July 1948 which stands within its curtilage. Applications must include a statement which demonstrates an understanding of the aspects of the building to be affected, describes why the work is needed, explains why any alternative options were discounted and considers how the damage to any historic fabric will be minimised.

3.4 ***Conservation Area Consent***

This is required for the demolition of any unlisted building above 115 cubic metres and for the demolition of walls over 1 metre high fronting the road or other public highways within the Conservation Area. In order to justify the works, a statement will need to be provided which considers the issues in Section 4 of this guidance. Where a building is to be replaced by a new structure, consideration of how the building will contribute to the character and appearance of the area will need to be included in a Design Statement to accompany any planning application.

4.0 Demolition of buildings

- 4.1 Listed Buildings (including their outbuildings and traditional boundaries), Significant Local Buildings and Buildings of Townscape Value which are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal will enjoy a general presumption against demolition.
- 4.2 The demolition of such buildings will only be approved where it can be demonstrated that:-
- The building is structurally unsound and repairs would involve the significant loss or alteration of the original structure and any elements of particular historic interest; or
 - It cannot continue in its current use, and it is not capable of being converted to a suitable new use in its current form; and
 - The building has been offered for sale on the open market at the market price for at least six months and that no reasonable offer has been received; and
 - Any proposed replacement building will make an equal or greater contribution to the character and appearance of the area; and
 - Demolition would not result in a long term cleared site to the detriment of adjacent listed buildings or the Conservation area.
- 4.3 The demolition of other buildings (and boundary walls over 1m high fronting public highways) in the area will be approved provided that:-
- The building(s) is/are identified as making either a negative or insignificant contribution to the character or appearance of the area
 - Any replacement building or feature will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Any application for a replacement building must be accompanied by a design statement which describes how the new building respects the 'Key Characteristics' of the area as defined in the Conservation Area Appraisal.
 - To avoid unsightly gaps in the Conservation Area, a condition will be imposed on any grant of Conservation Area Consent which prevents the demolition taking place until a contract has been let for the redevelopment of the site.

5.0 Design of new buildings

- 5.1 Within the London Road and St. Peter's Conservation Area, new development or redevelopment schemes should be well related to the context of adjoining buildings and should preserve the mix of uses and range of building styles in order to retain the form and scale of the former village street scene.
- 5.2 The London Road and St Peter's Conservation Area Appraisal describes Oadby's 'grain', i.e. how the existing buildings relate to the street. Section 7 'Key Characteristics' summarises information such as building heights and line, materials, detailing, etc. Paying particular attention to the street in which the new building(s) will sit will establish appropriate design principles and ensure that new buildings will respect Oadby's existing character.
- 5.3 In order to be acceptable, the design of any new building will, therefore, need to:
- Be of an appropriate mass and scale to maintain consistency of, or juxtaposition of, scales and to avoid dominating the small two-storey residential properties
 - Be of an appropriate form to sit comfortably with the mix of residential and commercial styles of the buildings in the area
 - Have pitched roof forms or produce an interesting skyline silhouette
 - Respect the well defined building line and plot position
 - Use materials and detailing which follow on from the design principles which influenced the basic form of the building, i.e. which either reflect those found on traditional buildings in the area or, as part of a very high quality design approach, produce a successful contrast
 - Provide a Design Statement as part of a planning application which sets out the rationale behind the design of the building

6.0 Extensions

6.1 Alterations and extensions should normally be confined to the rear or least important elevations unless the result would sustain or improve the architectural character of the building in its setting. Planning proposals will be granted for proposals that:

- Respect the prominent building line
- Do not interfere with key architectural features of the composition
- Are subordinate and appropriate to the form of the main building and either of the same materials as the main building or provide an appropriate contrast
- Serve to reinstate missing traditional features such as doors, windows, front porches and other decorative features
- Use traditional and, where appropriate, reclaimed or recycled building materials

7.0 Changes of use

- 7.1 Redevelopment and changes of use of existing premises to retail or commercial uses should take into account:
- the appearance of the building which should be maintained and without disfiguring extensions and alterations
 - the survival of any elements of an original or appropriate shopfront which should be retained unless completely beyond repair
 - the effect on the character of the street scene which should not be unduly altered
 - the potential for restoring any important 'lost', altered or dilapidated architectural details
 - satisfactory vehicular access, parking and servicing arrangements being provided to ensure highway safety is not jeopardised
 - the need to ensure that development proposals would not have any detrimental effects on the amenities of any nearby residential properties.
- 7.2 The change of use of retail properties to non retail uses will not normally be permitted, particularly where it would result in an over-representation of non-retail uses in a length of shopping frontage.
- 7.3 Where retail uses remain viable on only the ground floors of properties, 'Living over the Shop' will be actively encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and generate activity at different times of the day. Such uses will be supported provided that:
- Appropriate noise insulation between the living accommodation and the shop below can be provided.
 - Where the living accommodation is to be accessed separately from the shop, an appropriate separate entrance can be provided without damaging the character of the building and any original or appropriately-designed shopfront.
 - Adequate waste storage and car and cycle parking can be provided for the occupants.
- 7.4 Planning permission for proposals, such as restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments or hot food takeaways (Use Classes A3, A4 and A5 respectively) will only be approved when it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity or local environmental quality as a result of smells, noise, increased late-night activity and disturbance, or increased parking and traffic. Adequate parking must be provided and considered as part of the overall design. Unsightly plant such as air conditioning units, ducting, flues, etc. should be appropriately screened.

8.0 Shopfronts, signage, blinds and security measures

8.1 **Introduction**

In keeping with its village origins and continuing character, Oadby has a variety of small shop units along London Road. These fall within the Oadby Secondary Shopping Area and are therefore covered by Shopping Proposal 4 of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan.

8.2 **Shopfronts**

Several good quality late C19 and early C20 shopfronts survive in London Road. Planning Permission will not be approved to remove such shopfronts or any elements of them unless they are beyond repair.

8.3 Where some elements of an original shopfront survive, the existing elements should be retained and used as the basis for the restoration of the original frontage or incorporated into an appropriate new shopfront design. Removal of original features will only be permitted if they are completely beyond repair or are incapable of being successfully incorporated into a new shopfront.

8.4 The replacement of inappropriate shopfronts will be encouraged provided that the replacement respects the character of the building, adjacent buildings if part of a group or terrace or the area as a whole. To be acceptable, new designs should:-

- Have a clear structural logic with a clearly defined frame of pilasters, fascia and, where appropriate, stallrisers.
- Relate to the character and proportions of the original building
- Maintain or improve the ease of access to the building for those with disabilities.
- Be of appropriate materials.
- Not stretch across the frontage of more than one building.
- Provide an appropriately designed separate access where separate living accommodation is to be provided within the upper storeys.

8.5 Where change of use is sought for the conversion of a shop to residential use and elements of a good shopfront survive, these will be retained in any conversion unless they are completely beyond repair.

8.6 **Signage**

Several buildings in Oadby have been disfigured by inappropriate and clumsy signage. In future, to be acceptable, new signage must:-

- Not obliterate, hide or destroy the proportions of the building or any of its architectural features.
- Have lettering of appropriate size, materials and font type for the building.
- Be clear and simple to read and not incorporate garish or unsuitable colours.
- Have only one appropriately designed and located hanging sign for each shop frontage.

8.7 ***Illumination***

Advertisement Consent is required for most forms of illuminated signage in the Conservation Area. Clumsy, internally illuminated 'box' signs will not be permitted. Fascia or hanging signs should be of traditional design and externally illuminated where necessary. To be acceptable, illuminated signs must:-

- Have a discrete light source which does not interfere with the proportions of the building or frontage or damage any architectural features.
- Not affect the amenity of nearby residential uses.
- Have a subdued and consistent light level.

8.8 ***Blinds and canopies***

Blinds and awnings will only be permitted in the Conservation Area when there is a historical precedent and the existing blind box survives, where they can be accommodated without damaging the character of the building or shop frontage and will relate successfully to existing features and detailing of the building. Such blinds or awnings may need the consent of the Local Highways Authority if it overhangs a public footpath.

8.9 ***Shopfront security***

When designing a new shopfront, consider the likely security needs of the occupier. It is much easier to design in suitable security measures at the outset than attempt to add them to existing frontages.

8.10 Solid external shutters will only be permitted in the Conservation Area where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are the only viable means of security to enable the shopkeeper to retain his livelihood. Even if the security need is demonstrated, an open removable mesh shutter should be considered before solid external shutters.

8.11 External shutters, of the solid or grille type, will only be permitted when they respect the features and proportions of the shopfront, do not cover the pilasters and fascia and are of an appropriate colour and finish.

9.0 Car parking

9.1 There are several areas of car parking in Oadby which are poorly landscaped and dominate the setting of the surrounding buildings. The manner in which car parking is arranged has a fundamental affect on the quality of the townscape and its impact should be alleviated with appropriate landscaping. The following should be considered in any landscaping schemes:

- Opportunities to screen vehicles with planting to integrate parking into the urban landscape
- Establishing direct footways connecting with nearby buildings
- Creating shared surface treatments, providing that pedestrian routes are clearly defined
- Dividing up larger areas with tree planting and other soft landscaping

10.0 Works to Listed Buildings

- 10.1 Works which affect the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building require Listed Building Consent. This applies to works to the main building, any outbuildings or boundaries (built before 1 July 1948) and the interior of any building (including the removal of internal doors and fireplaces). The acceptability of works to Listed Buildings is governed by relevant local and national planning policy.

11.0 Significant Local Buildings

- 11.1 The residential buildings identified as Significant Local Buildings in the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan and in the Conservation Area Appraisal make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the areas. In order to protect these properties and their boundaries from unsympathetic alteration, the Borough Council will consider making Directions under Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
- 11.2 'Article 4 Directions' effectively remove householders' permitted developments rights. The types of development which might be controlled would include:
- Painting, cladding or rendering of building façades
 - Insertion or replacement of doors and windows
 - Removal or replacement of boundary walls and fences
 - Alteration of roof profiles and replacement of roofing materials
- 11.3 Non-residential properties do not have permitted development rights and planning permission must be sought for many of the types of development listed above. Development which will adversely affect the building's character / appearance or its setting will not be permitted.

12.0 Proposals affecting the setting of the Conservation Area

- 12.1 Development will not be permitted which, although not within the Conservation Area, will have an adverse effect upon the area's special character or appearance, including intruding into any significant vista or view into, out of, within or across the area which is identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal.