

CONSERVATION AREAS: A GUIDE FOR PROPERTY OWNERS



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There are a number of Conservation Areas in Gwynedd. This document explains the effect of designation, as well as suggesting how we can work towards ensuring that an area's special character and appearance is maintained or enhanced.

What is a Conservation Area?

It is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Quality of place is the prime consideration in identifying Conservation Areas. What makes an area special may be the result of the combination of street patterns, relationship with buildings and spaces, building styles and characteristics, open spaces, landscape and topographical features.

Designation as a Conservation Area gives statutory recognition to such areas. Their designation places a duty on the Council to ensure that any new development which is otherwise acceptable preserves or enhances the special character of the area.

Advice

Some buildings in a Conservation Area may be 'listed'. If your property is a Listed Building, then specific guidance must be followed. Before you can alter (internally or externally), extend or demolish it you may require Listed Building Consent. A register of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Importance is held by the Planning Section.

The additional control relating specifically to Conservation Areas is as follows:

- **Restrictions over works which would otherwise not require an application for planning permission to dwellings and various other premises. For instance, planning permission is likely to be required to:**
 - 1) Provide external cladding with stone, artificial stone, wood, plastic or tiles
 - 2) Include additions or alterations to the roof, including dormer windows
 - 3) Erect buildings within a dwelling's curtilage
 - 4) Erect a satellite antenna
 - 5) Erect extensions to dwellings

- 6) Erect extensions to industrial property and warehouses
 - 7) Install, alter or replace a microwave antenna
 - 8) Erect a telecommunications mast and housing
 - 9) Erect buildings near a school, college, university or hospital.
- **Wider control in conservation areas**
 - **Wider protection of trees** – it is an offence to chop, uproot, lop or damage any tree
 - **Signs and advertisements** – express consent is required for illuminated signs and for certain types of other signs and advertisements.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ANYONE WHO IS CONSIDERING UNDERTAKING ANY WORK IN A CONSERVATION AREA CONSULTS WITH THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY AT THE OUTSET IN ORDER TO FIND OUT WHETHER FORMAL CONSENT IS REQUIRED FROM THE COUNCIL.

The Aims of the Planning Service

The Planning Service is keen to ensure that areas are alive and prosperous whilst ensuring that new development is sympathetic to the area's special architectural and historic interest. By working in partnership with the public and others it can use planning controls in a positive way:

- Encourage high quality design in new developments and alterations to existing buildings
- Encouraging the appropriate use or re-use of neglected buildings
- Avoiding inappropriate new development
- Removing or improving elements that currently detract from the area's character and appearance
- Providing advice and information

How Can You Help?

- By taking an interest in what is going on around you
- Contacting the Planning Service to discuss proposed changes – however small they may be.

Planning Policies and national planning guidance

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 3.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales emphasise that applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless other material planning considerations state otherwise. You should read the policies of the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance (available on the website) and national planning guidance, prior to submitting an application.

Furthermore, if you intend to submit an application we advise prospective applicants to use the pre-application advice service provided by the Planning Service. You need to comply with the requirements of the Guidance Note: Pre-application advice service (on this website) prior to arranging an appointment to meet a Planning Officer.