

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



The Engine House, White Grit

THE GRIT AND LADYWELL
DESIGNATED OCTOBER 1995

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREA) ACT, 1990

THE GRIT AND LADYWELL CONSERVATION AREA

STATEMENT

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1. PLAN OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

**PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT, 1990
THE GRIT AND LADYWELL CONSERVATION AREA**

1.0 THE EXTENT OF THE GRIT AND LADYWELL CONSERVATION AREA.

- 1.1 The Grit and Ladywell Conservation Area is illustrated in The Grit and Ladywell Conservation Area Plan.

2.0 THE DESIGNATION OF THE GRIT AND LADYWELL CONSERVATION AREA

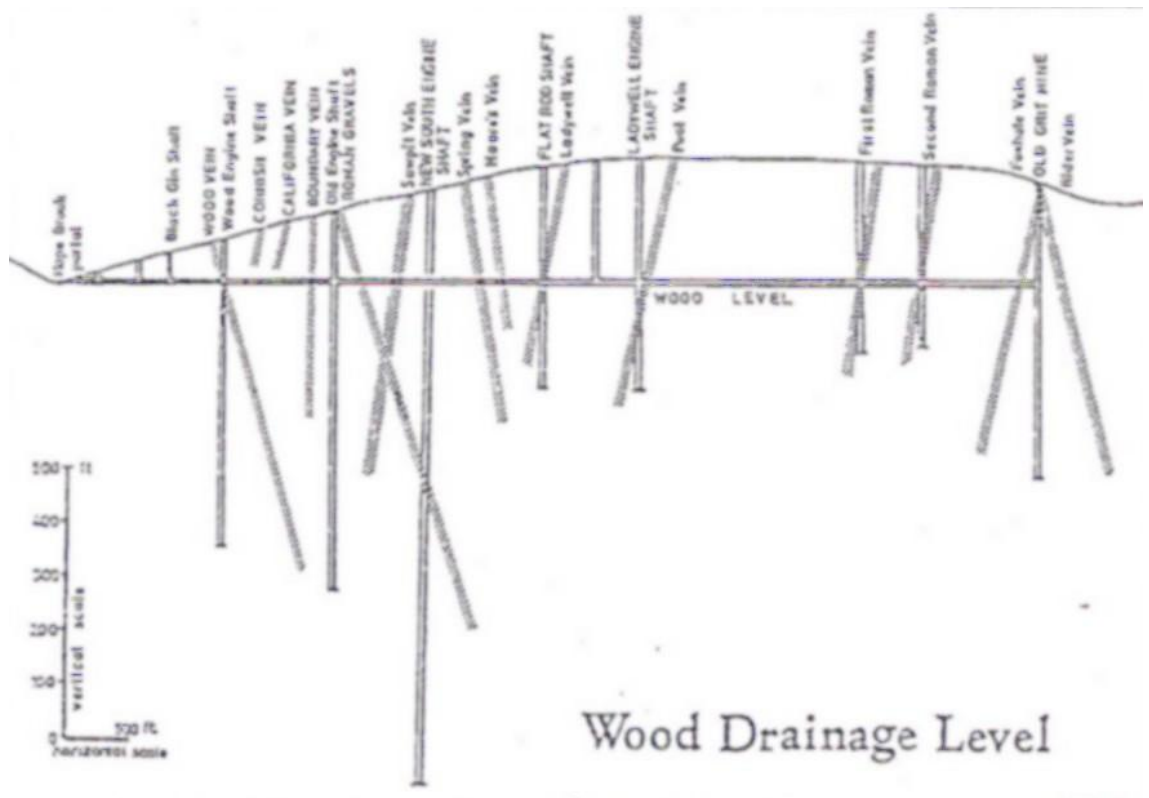
- 2.1 The Grit and Ladywell Conservation Area was designated as a conservation area by South Shropshire Council in accordance with the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.



Old Grit Engine House

3.0 THE HISTORY OF THE GRIT AND LADYWELL MINES

- 3.1 Although the area was mined from Roman times, it was most intensively exploited during the late 18th to the 19th Centuries. The area was once one of the most productive in the country.
- 3.2 Deposits of lead ore are generally found in vertical faults in the rock strata. In the Grit area, the mineral deposits are located in one particular stratum of rock, the Mytton Beds, which consist of hard flag stone and grit stone over 1000 feet thick. The veins generally have a southwest to northeast alignment.
- 3.3 The mines of the orefield belonged to the ground landlords. The two most important owners were the Earls of Tankerville and the More family. The Grit mines and Ladywell formed part of the southern and eastern part of the orefield owned by the More family.
- 3.4 The first large scale attempts at mining began in the mid 18th Century on the western most reserves in the Grit area. Initially the mining was confined to the more easily won material involving trenching along the veins which outcropped close to the surface. However, by the late 18th Century deep mining necessitated the removal of water as the shafts were descending below the water table.
- 3.5 In the last years of the 18th Century two large adits were commenced, the Wood level and the Boat level. By the 1830's the Wood level reached Old Grit and was 200 feet below the surface (see diagram below).



Generalised section along the course of Wood Level showing the numerous lead veins intersected. Between Ladywell and Old Grit the level followed the line of a cross-course known as New Britain vein. Other deeper levels were proposed at various times but of these only Leigh Level was carried out.

Diagram 1

Source: The Shropshire Lead Mines. Frank Brook and Martin Allbutt 1973
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- 3.6 The middle years of the 1870's saw the maximum output from the Shropshire orefield and it is largely the buildings built in this period that survive today. By the end of the decade lead ore prices fell. As a result the mines in the Shropshire orefield began to close one by one as they failed to cover their operating costs. By 1893 the Snailbeach mine was the only mine that was being worked on an economic scale.
- 3.7 Although well over 100 years since most of the mines closed, the legacy of the industry is still clearly visible. In this respect the surviving by ruinous engine houses at White Grit, Old Grit, East Grit and Ladywell and their associated mine workings are an important element of the historic environment in this part of South Shropshire. They are significant relics of an extremely arduous and hazardous industry that was once the main form of economic activity in the area.
- 3.8 In particular the 3 mines at White Grit, Old Grit and East Grit portray the early ordination of the industry from surface workings, the clear pattern of horse gins, and the survival at White Grit of one of the oldest Boulton and Watt Engine Houses.

4.0 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GRIT AND LADYWELL CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

- 4.1 Apart from Old Grit which now forms part of a farm complex, the other 3 sites at East Grit, White Grit and Ladywell still consist only of derelict mine buildings and associated shafts.
- 4.2 A character appraisal of the mining area has been carried out and the main findings are set out under the following headings: -

Setting

Archaeological Significance

Architectural and Historic Quality

Materials

Natural Features

Setting

- 4.3 Part of the southwest Shropshire metalliferous mining area centres on Shelve. The orefield was based within a 5 miles radius of Shelve. The Grit Mines and Ladywell Mine are located within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and are a prominent feature of the landscape.

Archaeological Significance

- 4.4 The remains of the 4 sites in this area of the orefield represent a fine example of national significance of the early development of the lead mining activities possibly from the 13th Century and associated with the 18th Century and developed and expanded during the 19th Century. Although scattered throughout the landscape, they are related to one another by means of the Wood level. The Ladywell and the Grit Mines were worked together and were let to the Ladywell Company.
- 4.5 The following are classed as monuments in the Grit and Ladywell Conservation Area: -
- Remains of engine house at Ladywell lead mine (Scheduled Monument and Listed Building)
(Late 19th Century - 1870 AD to 1879 AD)
A rare surviving example of an engine house containing dual purpose pumping and winding gear, the Ladywell lead mine engine house is itself relatively late in date (late 19th Century), but it forms part of an extensive mining landscape containing earlier features. The monument is situated approximately 900m west-north-west of the village of Shelve and includes the ruins, which are Listed Grade II, and buried remains of the engine house at Ladywell lead mine)
 - Ladywell lead mine (Scheduled Monument)
(Early 19th Century to Early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1800 AD to 1913 AD)
Ladywell lead mine operated in the 19th to early 20th Century and forms part of an extensive lead mining landscape. Its engine house is scheduled as a rare survival of a dual-purpose pumping and winding house. The engine house is a rare example in Shropshire of an engine house, which originally housed a dual-purpose rotative engine)

- Remains of engine house and gin circle at Old Grit mine
(18th Century - 1700 AD to 1799 AD)
At Old Grit there is evidence of much earlier activity around the engine house and the site of dressing floors at a lower level. There is also a fine gin circle near the engine house)
- Old Grit and East Grit Mines
(Medieval to Early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1066 AD to 1913 AD)
A lead mine of Roman date, a lead mine of medieval to post medieval date
A Roman lead pig was found in 1767 and there are also possible medieval and post medieval workings. Old Grit mine became the centre of mining activity as a number of veins intersected here. The present workings at East Grit date to after 1864. The whole area of the Grit mines shows much ground disturbance, probably from earlier working. The engine house surviving was for winding and pumping. The slot in the north wall housed the flywheel; the winding drum was in a pit on the east side. There are also the remains of a second engine house. Horse Gins were also in use for winding and the tramped circles survive)
- Remains of East Grit engine house approx. 50m northeast of Gritt Farmhouse (Grade II Listing)
(Mid 19th Century to Late 19th Century - 1850 AD to 1899 AD)
The remains of a late 19th Century engine house, constructed in regularly coursed limestone rubble, now roofless)
- Lead Workings
(Early 19th Century to Early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1800 AD to 1913 AD)
Mine workings, east of White Grit Mine (1324), west of Old Grit and East Grit Mines (1323) and south of Foxhole Mine (6951)
- Powder Magazine at White Grit Lead Mine
(Early 19th Century to Late 19th Century - 1800 AD to 1899 AD)
The Powder Magazine at White Grit mine consisting of two concentric circular stonewalls, the design to allow for one-way traffic of miners collecting explosives. The powder magazine is a circular stone structure, 6m in diameter. The remaining walls are a maximum of 2m high and 0.45m thick random stonework. A second concentric wall is constructed inside the outer wall)
- Remains of White Grit Mine engine house, 30m west of A488 (Grade II Listing)
(16th Century to Early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1500 AD to 1913 AD)
The remains of a late 19th Century engine house, constructed in regularly coursed limestone rubble, now roofless. The White Grit mine engine house is the earliest Bolton and Watt engine house known to still exist)
- White Grit Mine
(Medieval to Early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1066 AD to 1913 AD)
Roman - 43 AD to 409 AD
Old Workings were recorded at White Grit in 1678, but the main periods of working were c. 1830-1848 and the mine was abandoned c. 1870)

Source: Shropshire County Council Sites and Monument Records

Architectural and Historic Quality

- 4.6 The remains of the engine houses at each of the four sites form an impressive and evocative reminder of the importance of the lead mining industry in the late 19th Century.
- 4.7 The Engine House at White Grit was first constructed in the late 18th Century (see sketch overleaf). For the most part only 2 walls of the derelict rectangular structure remain. It consists of roughly coursed limestone rubble and has no roof. The Engine house was heightened in the late 1860's by Taylor and Company and the mine worked the Ryder Vein. The depth of the shaft reached 600 feet. In 1783 an engine was installed at the White Grit Mine by Boulton and Watt (see diagram 2). The beam wall was 3.5 feet thick but it was a slow engine with a single acting 30-inch piston. The engine was designed for pumping. The workings at White Grit are also associated with the More Arms as the Inn was used by the mining companies for paying workers.

WHITE GRIT

West View



South View



- 4.8 The engine houses at East Grit and Old Grit Mines also worked the Ryder Vein. These mines reached some 630 feet in depth. The Engine house at East Grit was erected circa 1870 and adjoins a large area of waste ground used as a dressing floors site. The remains of the Engine house consist of regularly coursed limestone rubble and its rectangular structure is without a roof. The mine at Old Grit was first used in the Middle Ages. Only one wall of the Engine house survives. As with the other rectangular Engine house structures it was built of roughly coursed limestone rubble often with red brick openings.

- 4.9 Ladywell Mine because of its location is a particularly prominent structure within the landscape (see sketch). Although the mine was reputedly worked in the early 19th Century, the main shaft and engine house were not constructed until the 1870's. In 1874 the shaft had been sunk to the 16-fathom level. The engine house was erected in 1875 and contained a 40-inch engine made by the Sandycroft Foundry and Engine Works Co. Limited of Chester. Large scale operations commenced in that year. The mine was not a large producer and there were few underground workings. Ladywell was an unsuccessful venture that produced only 963 tons of ore between 1871-80. A Captain Arthur Waters managed it. The original 4 walls of the structure remain but as with the other engine houses it has no roof. It consists of local stone and brickwork. At Ladywell the remains of the supporting structure to the winding drum and fly wheel also exist.

Ladywell

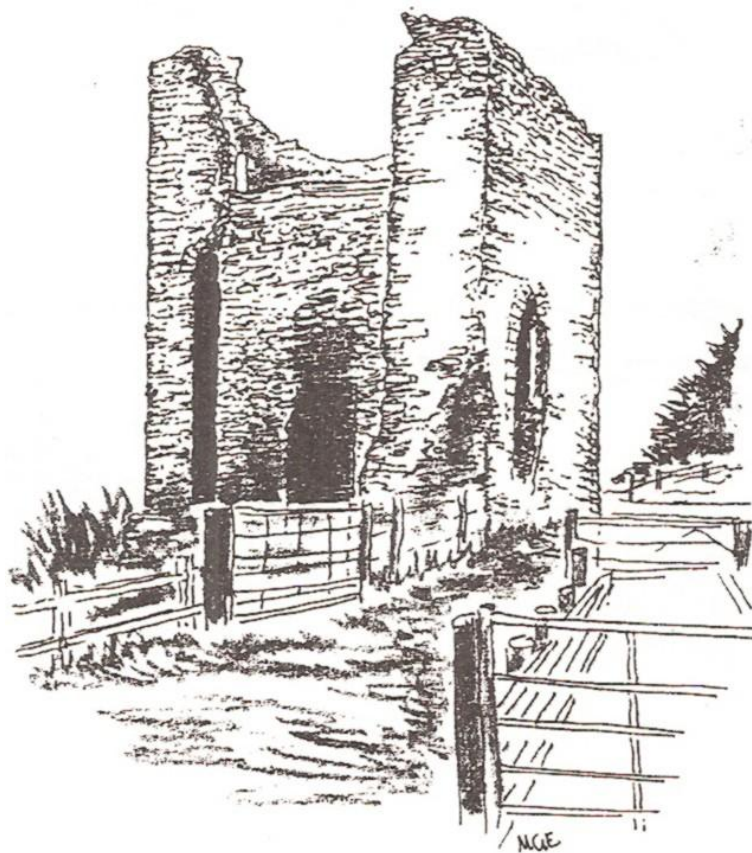
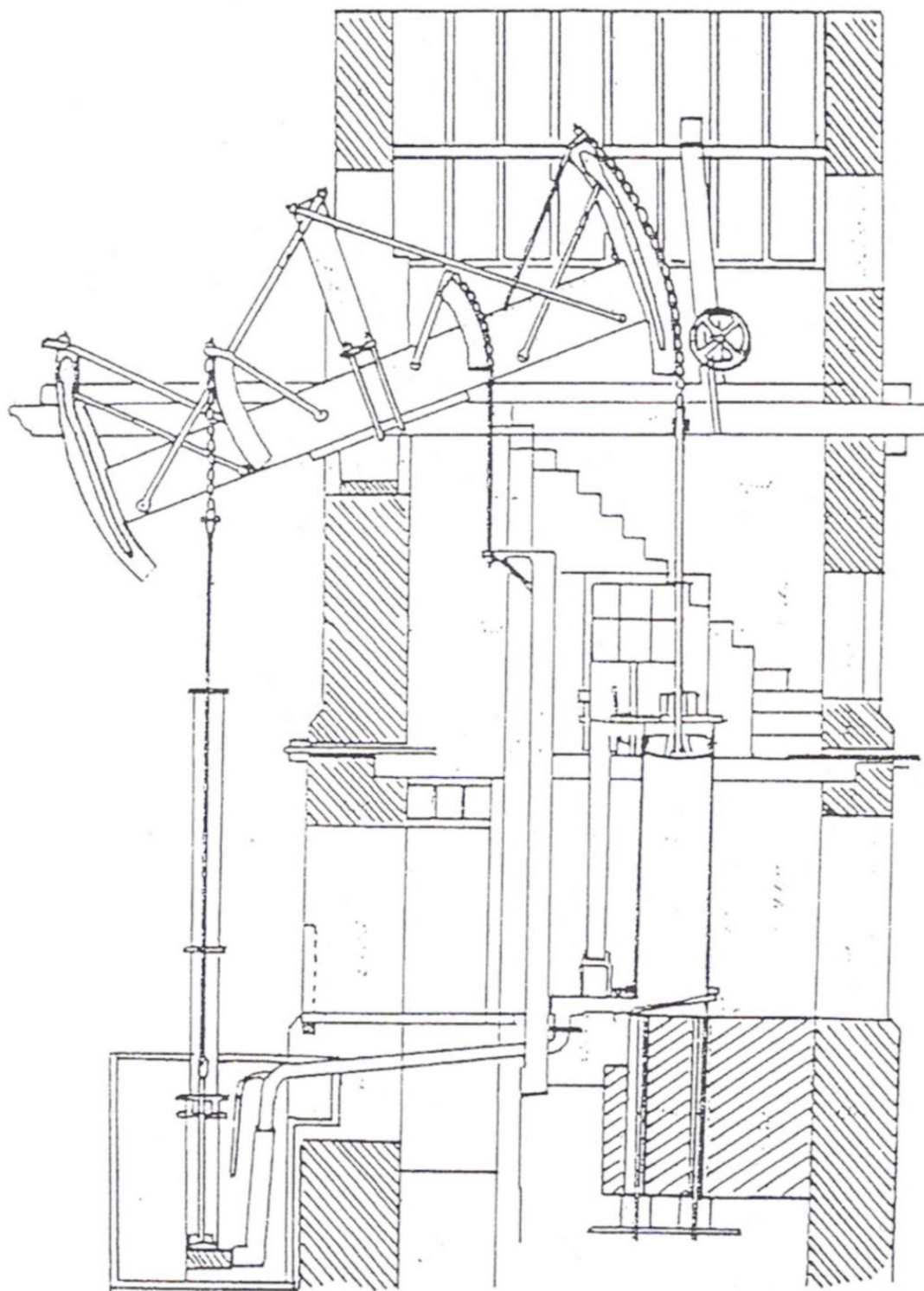


Diagram 2

Section of White Grit Engine 1783
(Boulton and Watt Collection)



- 4.10 The major concern in recent years was about the structural deterioration of the buildings, especially the engine houses, and the health and safety aspects of the mining structures. Funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and English Heritage grants provided monies to undertake the necessary stabilisation works.

Materials

- 4.11 The engine houses are constructed of locally quarried stone and red brick.

Natural Features

- 4.12 To varying degrees all 4 of the mines and their associated surface workings have been assimilated into the landscape. For the most part these areas have now become overgrown and are viewed as an important and integral part of the historic environment.

5.0 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 Conservation areas are defined by section 69 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as "...areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". This is a strictly applied definition and should not be confused with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or other designated areas.
- 5.2 Conservation areas are designated by Local Planning Authorities, usually after public consultation, although this is not a legal requirement.

The Effect of Conservation Area Status

The consequences of designation as a conservation area are as follows:

- 5.3 The Local Planning Authority is under a duty "from time to time" to publish and consult on proposals to preserve and enhance conservation areas.
- 5.4 In dealing with planning applications in conservation areas, the Local Planning Authority is required to "pay special attention" to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. This means that there is a higher standard of design required in conservation areas than elsewhere.
- 5.5 Outline planning applications will not normally be entertained.
- 5.6 Planning applications in conservation areas must be advertised as prescribed by Regulations.
- 5.7 It is an **offence** to demolish a building or structure in a conservation area without the consent of the Local Planning Authority. There are some exceptions – please ask before taking action.
- 5.8 English Heritage has the power to make grants or loans for preservation or enhancement, although none are currently available.
- 5.9 It is an **offence** to cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or destroy a tree in a conservation area without having given 6 weeks notice to the Local Planning Authority. There are some exceptions – please ask before taking action.

- 5.10 Permitted development and the right to display advertisements are more limited than elsewhere.
- 5.11 Telecommunications operators have more onerous obligations placed on them.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 5

PPS5 is the current policy guidance on protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

Development proposals in conservation areas will need to take into account the requirements of PPS5 and in particular the extracts below.

6.1 Planning Policy Statement 5 Planning for the Historic Environment

HE10.1 Special regard should be given to such matters as scale, height, form, massing, respect for the traditional pattern of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, and detailed design (e.g. the scale and spacing of window openings, and the nature and quality of materials)

HE10.2 Whilst the character and appearance of conservation areas should always be given full weight in planning decisions, the objective of preservation can be achieved either by development, which makes a positive contribution to an areas character or appearance, or by development which leaves character and appearance unharmed.

- 6.2 In determining applications for proposals to which this policy guidance applies, the Council will have regard to:

Any conservation area statement or village design statement;

The quality of the design and the appropriateness of the proposed use;

The appropriateness of materials and building techniques

Reasons

- a) To ensure new development in a conservation area preserves or enhances its character and appearance and conserves its distinctive qualities;
- b) To ensure that the character or appearance of a conservation area is not adversely affected by the demolition of buildings;
- c) To conform to Policy QE5 of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy;
- d) To conform to PPS5

7.0 Guidance on the policy criteria

7.1 **Special regard given to the scale, design and materials** means that new developments must blend in with the character of the area, not that individuals building styles must be copied.

- 7.2 The requirement for **demolition of buildings in conservation areas** to be part of the scheme of redevelopment is to avoid unsightly gaps occurring in street frontages.

- 7.3 There is specific **Supplementary Planning Guidance:**

- Conservation Area statements for most conservation areas
- A variety of Town and Village Design Statements

7.4 **Quality and appropriateness of design, materials and use** is required for all proposals in conservation areas. In considering applications for new development in Conservation Areas, the Council will generally have regard to the following criteria:

- The siting of the development must conform to the general pattern of development in the area and not dominate existing buildings or occupy part of their curtilages.
- The scale of the proposal must be in conformity with the scale of existing buildings within that part of the Conservation Area.
- The use should be one, which is appropriate to the area and will give rise to development of an appropriate scale.
- The proportions of the building and its fenestration must be in keeping with the characteristics of existing buildings in the area.
- The alignment of the proposal along its highway frontage must conform to the pattern of development in the area.
- The proposal must maintain the characteristics of the roofline of the street as regards height, shape and pitch of roof and is not be of a height, which would intrude onto the skyline from any viewpoint.
- The proposal should conform to the existing pattern of door and window openings and their detailing prevailing within the area.
- The proposal should be constructed in materials traditionally used in the Conservation Area matching exactly the colour and texture of that material.
- The proposal should retain, restore or add traditional boundary walls in stone or brick in accordance with the tradition in the Conservation Area.
- The proposal should retain existing trees and provide for the planting of new specimen trees where possible.
- The proposal should retain, and take account of traditional burgage plot layouts or other historic plot and layout forms and ancillary buildings and boundary treatments.

8.0 OTHER CRITERIA

8.1 As far as possible the Council aims to conserve **traditional shopfronts** by preventing their removal and discouraging unsuitable alterations. Proposals for **new shopfronts and fascias** within conservation areas will be permitted provided: -

- they complement both the architectural character and detail of the building onto which they are to be fitted.
- they do not result in the removal of any existing separate access to upper storeys or preclude the restoration of such an access if already removed.

8.2 Where appropriate the Council, in consultation with the Highway Authority, will seek to introduce schemes to **rationalise traffic and pedestrian signs and other street furniture** in conservation areas in the interests of the amenity. It is recognised that obstructive traffic signs and other street furniture can create 'clutter' and form a visual intrusion that detracts from the appearance and character of the District's conservation areas. The intention of this guidance is to minimise such impacts.

- 8.3 Through the control of new development and Enhancement Schemes carried out in conjunction with the Highway Authority, the Council will ensure that **traditional paved areas** are conserved and maintained. Considerable investment has been made on many listed and non listed buildings in the conservation areas throughout the County. The purpose of this advice is to ensure that similar attention is paid to the space between the buildings in particular the traditional paved areas.

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