
Conservation Areas



One of a series of heritage
guidance notes produced by
Wycombe District Council

What is a Conservation Area ?

In 1967 the then Government decided that the individual listing of historic buildings, while a very good protection measure in its own right, was inadequate to protect groups of buildings and their settings.

Many groups of buildings, full of character, interest and history contained buildings which were not of sufficient quality to be listed individually, yet as a group they made a strong contribution to the character of an area. Spaces between buildings, both public and private and

mature trees were also identified as being of importance to the character and ambience of these areas. It was therefore decided to protect whole areas statutorily and to call them conservation areas. The legislation and policies have developed over the intervening years so that today designated conservation areas are covered by more controls than other areas.

There is no standard specification for conservation areas and there are many different types ranging from small rural groups

of buildings to town centres. The one thing that they do all have in common is that their architectural or historic interest and their special character and appearance are worthy of preservation or enhancement.

We currently have 60 designated conservation areas in the District. A full list and map showing their locations are included in this leaflet.

Whenever possible local opinion is sought prior to designation and new suggestions are welcome. Notice of a newly designated conservation area is publicised in the local newspaper and registered in the Local Land Charges Register.



“Stricter planning controls apply in conservation areas in order to preserve their special qualities”.

What About New Development ?

Conservation areas are not meant to be museum pieces and new development frequently takes place. The Council however looks very carefully at the design of such developments and has special policies in the Wycombe District Local Plan to control them. It is not the intention to prevent changes in conservation areas but rather to ensure that new developments or changes do not destroy or detract from its

existing character.

In some cases open spaces or gaps between buildings will be important to the character of a conservation area and their preservation will outweigh any proposal to build on them.

Where planning permission is required new development is always advertised on site before a decision is made so you have a

chance to let the Council know your views.

Initial design advice for development in conservation areas is available from the Council's Planning and Development Department. Planning and Conservation staff will be pleased to help and particularly welcome involvement at an early stage in the design process.

What Special Controls Apply ?

If you own a property or live in a conservation area, you must of course comply with the normal planning and building controls which affect all properties and which are not covered by this guidance note.

Extra controls also apply in your case covering :-

- **Demolition**
- **Building works**
- **Advertisements**
- **Trees**

Demolition - With a few exceptions all demolition within a conservation area requires the consent of the local planning authority, even in some cases demolition of garden walls and chimneys. One of two types of consent is required, **conservation area consent** or **listed building consent** if the building or any part of it to be demolished is listed. Advice on listed buildings is given in a separate guidance note in this series.

Building works - New development, redevelopment and extensions within any part of a conservation area usually require planning permission.

Additionally in conservation areas there are restrictions on minor building works and alterations that elsewhere may not require consent, such as extensions requiring alteration to a roof (including dormers), the cladding of external walls with stone, timber, tiles or other material or the installation of satellite dishes. The above list is not definitive.

Applications for planning permission should be submitted at the same time as any associated applications for demolition, as consent for demolition will not normally be given until it is known what form redevelopment will take. This is to prevent ugly gaps spoiling the appearance of a conservation area.

Advertisements - Advertisement consent is required for almost all illuminated signs in conservation areas and for certain other types of advertisement.



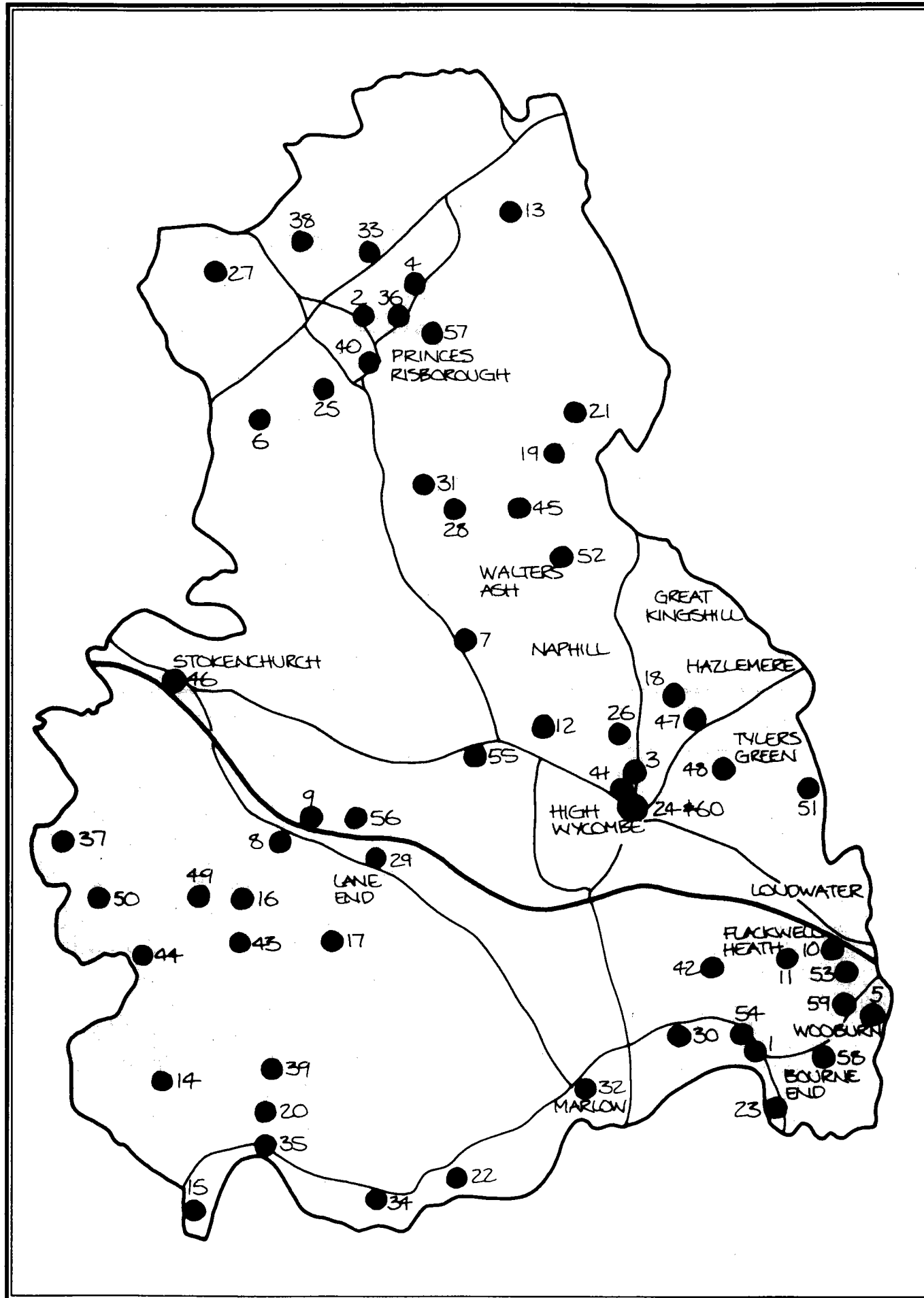
Works to Trees - Trees often make a significant contribution to the environment of a conservation area and the setting of its buildings. In conservation areas trees are protected from unnecessary works or destruction. Trees may not be felled, uprooted or have their branches cut without giving the Council six weeks prior written notice. An exception to this requirement is if the tree is dead, dying or dangerous, but this should be verified by a qualified tree surgeon or arboriculturalist such as the Council's own Arboricultural Officer.



All the necessary forms relating to demolition, building works, advertisements and trees are available from the Planning and Development Department. There is no application fee for Conservation Area Consent, Listed Building Consent or Notification of Works to Trees.

If you are in doubt as to whether the demolition, alteration, advertisement, building or other works you propose require permission, please consult the Planning and Development Department who will be pleased to help.

Conservation Areas in Wycombe District



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|----|--|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | Abbotsbrook | 31 | Loosely Row |
| 2 | Alscot | 32 | Marlow |
| 3 | Amersham Hill HW | 33 | Meadle |
| 4 | Askett | 34 | Medmenham |
| 5 | Berghers Hill | 35 | Mill End |
| 6 | Bledlow | 36 | Monks Risborough |
| 7 | Bradenham | 37 | North End |
| 8 | Cadmore End | 38 | Owlswick |
| 9 | Cadmore End Common | 39 | Pheasant's Hill |
| 10 | Clapton Mill | 40 | Princes Risborough |
| 11 | The Common Flackwell Heath | 41 | Priory Avenue HW |
| 12 | Downley Common | 42 | Sheepridge |
| 13 | Ellesborough | 43 | Skirmett |
| 14 | Fawley | 44 | South End Common |
| 15 | Fawley Court | 45 | Speen |
| 16 | Fingest | 46 | Stokenchurch |
| 17 | Frieth | 47 | Terriers HW |
| 18 | Four Ashes | 48 | Totteridge HW |
| 19 | Great Hampden | 49 | Turville |
| 20 | Hambleden | 50 | Turville Heath |
| 21 | Hampden House | 51 | Tylers Green |
| 22 | Harleyford & Wittington | 52 | Upper North Dean |
| 23 | Hedsor Road | 53 | Watery Lane, Wooburn Moor |
| 24 | High Wycombe Town Centre
including Frogmoor & Saffron Platt | 54 | Well End |
| 25 | Horseden | 55 | West Wycombe |
| 26 | Hughenden Manor | 56 | Wheeler End Common |
| 27 | Ilmer | 57 | Whiteleaf |
| 28 | Lacey Green | 58 | Wooburn |
| 29 | Lane End | 59 | Wooburn Green |
| 30 | Little Marlow | 60 | Wycombe Abbey |

If you wish to discuss a development proposal with officers at the Planning and Development Department it would be helpful if you could arrange a prior appointment either at the office or by telephoning on: High Wycombe (0494) 421586 or 421592. These telephone numbers will connect you to the administration staff who will pass you on to the officer dealing with your area or specific enquiries.

When making an enquiry, the more information you can provide, such as sketch schemes, photographs or location maps, the better we will be able to assist you.

Wycombe District Council, Planning and Development Department,
Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP11 1BB

Conservation Area Enhancement

The best way of maintaining the character and appearance of conservation areas is by promoting pride in them and awareness of their value. The Council is committed to positive improvements to conservation areas and has carried out a number of enhancement schemes both large and small. It is intended that these works should continue. It is hoped that residents will similarly want to preserve and enhance our common heritage.

If you live, work or own property in a conservation area there are many ways in which you can help to preserve and enhance its special character:-

- Take care over the design of extensions and alterations. Use an architect who has proven experience in dealing with historic buildings and areas.
- Minor works such as changing windows and doors or displaying unsympathetic signs can often have a detrimental effect on the overall appearance of a conservation area.
- Pay particular regard to the maintenance and up-keep of your property.
- Spaces both around and between buildings are often important features in a conservation area and the need to protect them may preclude new building.
- Identify possible improvement schemes and inform the Council of your ideas.



Grants

In order to encourage and assist the up-keep and repair of land and buildings within conservation areas grant aid may be available from Wycombe District Council.

Conservation Area Enhancement

Works which would significantly contribute to the appearance of a conservation area may be considered for financial assistance. The Council runs two grant schemes for enhancement:-

- Aid to Parish Councils and local voluntary groups for improvements to the natural environment, such as bulb planting or restoration of important features such as hedges and footpaths. Grants are usually 100% of costs up to a maximum of £2000.

- Assistance with schemes (principally over £2000) as a part of the Council's own improvement programme.

Please contact the Principal Environmental Projects Officer on High Wycombe (0494) 421551.

Historic Buildings Grants

Grants may be offered by the Council for repairs to the historic fabric of listed and unlisted buildings in conservation areas. Please contact the Conservation Officer on High Wycombe (0494) 421578.

Shopfront Grant

To encourage the repair and replacement of traditional shopfronts in the District's conservation areas the Council can offer up to £4000. Please contact the Principal Planning Officer, Implementation, on High Wycombe (0494) 421546.