FOLKESTONE CONSERVATION AREA: CHARACTER AREA 4 – THE OLD TOWN

CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Consultation Document Dated 16th April 2013
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1. **Introduction**

**Need for a management plan**

1.1 Local authorities have a duty to designate as conservation areas any parts of their district that have *special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*.¹

1.2 The special interest of conservation areas can take many different forms related, for instance, to traditional buildings, the development of settlement patterns, industrial history or historic landscapes. It is important, therefore, that the reasons for designation are explained and justified. Best practice, recommended by English Heritage, is that this should be achieved through a conservation area appraisal which defines the special interest that gives rise to the designation.²

1.3 While there are immediate consequences from the designation of conservation areas, such as control over the demolition of buildings or the felling of trees, the expectation is for active management. Indeed, planning legislation places a further duty on local authorities to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas.³

1.4 A management plan can fulfil that statutory duty and explain the steps that should be taken to maintain the special interest of the area. However, conservation areas are not necessarily preservation areas and, in most places, change is inevitable. The challenge, therefore, is to manage change in a manner that does not lose sight of the qualities that make a place special.

1.5 Effective management needs the participation of all sectors, so the plan should set out the expectations of residents and businesses, as well as the Council. The purpose of the plan, therefore, is to show how each can play a part in making Folkestone a better place to live in, to invest in, to work in and to visit.

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¹ Section 69 – Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
² English Heritage – *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* – 2011
³ Section 71 – Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990


**Relationship with the Conservation Area Appraisal**

1.6 The Folkestone Conservation Area was first designated in January 1972, although it has been reviewed and extended four times since then. This has resulted in a sizeable designation that reflects the different roles the town has enjoyed over time – a mediaeval town centre, a commercial harbour, a seaside resort, Edwardian suburbs.

1.7 In response to this diversity, the conservation area has been divided into five character areas each with its distinctive qualities:

1. The Leas
2. The West End
3. The Harbour
4. The Old Town
5. The fringes of the Old Town

1.8 Area 5 and most of Area 3 have yet to be designated. The overall boundary of the conservation area and its sub-division into character areas is shown in Map 1 – Folkestone Character Area 4.

1.9 The intention is that a character appraisal will be published for each area in turn. This phased approach started in 2011 with the publication of an appraisal of Character Area 4 – The Old Town. This is publically available on the Council’s website.

1.10 The appraisal describes the range of elements which, together, make up the character of the Old Town. It then identifies a number of issues that have a bearing on the conservation area character, both positively and negatively. It is not, however, the purpose of the appraisal to offer solutions.

1.11 It is the role of the conservation area management plan to take forward the issues raised by the appraisal. It will consider them in the context of legislation, policy and community interest in order to develop a plan of action.

**Aims and objectives**

1.12 This Conservation Area Management Plan must be read in the context of:

- The National Planning Policy Framework – 2012
- Conservation Area Appraisal (Folkestone) – Character Area 4 – 2011
- The Shepway Local Plan – 2006
- The Kent Design Guide – 2005/6
1.13 The overall aim of the management plan is to provide a framework for maintaining the special interest of the conservation area so that it will become self-sustaining into the future.

1.14 The more immediate aim, however, is to support the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) for Character Area 4: The Old Town. The THI will make significant investments on behalf of the Heritage Lottery Fund and other funding partners. This provides a valuable opportunity to secure added value for Folkestone. Equally, it is important that the effect of the investment is not undermined by less sensitive actions.

1.15 The objectives for achieving the necessary managerial approach include:

- Ensuring that there is general understanding of what matters and why
- Establishing a quality agenda for all development proposals taking full account of the special interest of Folkestone
- Making full use of the planning powers available
- Encouraging community interest in both the maintenance and the enjoyment of local heritage
- Developing corporate commitment to the conservation of the historic environment across all local authority departments and their partners

2. Character and significance

2.1 There has clearly been human activity in the Folkestone area from very early times. Evidence of settlement in the 1st century BC has been found at Cheriton and on the East Cliff. It then seems there may have been a Roman villa on the route between the ports of Dover and Lympne.

2.2 The town itself developed to serve the nunnery founded in 635 by Eanswythe, a daughter of King Ethelbert, and it was certainly well established when it was recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086. Folkestone grew with an economy based on fishing and stone quarrying. However, as John Newman notes in the Buildings of England series, Daniel Defoe was able to dismiss it as ‘a miserable fishing town’ as late as the early 18th century.

2.3 Thus until the 19th century, the extent of the town was largely confined to what is now known as the Old Town. This all changed with the rapid expansion that followed the establishment of a railway connection with London in 1843. Accessibility enabled the town to develop first as a cross-Channel port and second as a fashionable resort.

2.4 The town expanded westwards with stuccoed villas, terraces and crescents as the Earl of Radnor, advised by the architects Sydney Smirke and Decimus Burton, developed his Folkestone estate. It is a measure of the town’s changing centre of gravity that the suburban railway station at Radnor Park was renamed in 1895 as Folkestone Central.

2.5 By the end of the 19th century, the western part of Folkestone had become a highly fashionable seaside resort with two metropolitan-scale hotels and the hydraulic Leas Lift giving access to the beach. Meanwhile, as the harbour developed its cross-channel connection to Boulogne, the Old Town was effectively bypassed by the steep railway branch line and the Tram Road alongside it. At the same time, the commercial focus had moved to Sandgate Road.

2.6 The Old Town played an important part as an embarkation point for World War I but the commercial port never really recovered and it was overtaken by the ascendancy of Dover.

2.7 The effect of this history is that, despite the bombing of World War II, the Old Town retains much of its past having avoided the worst excesses of 20th century redevelopment. The mediaeval street pattern survives with a wide variety of historical architecture. The conservation area appraisal notes the qualities that arise from the topography and building styles contrasting, for instance, the winding descent of Rendezvous Street and Old High Street with the classical detailing of Tontine Street.

2.8 The appraisal also records key buildings, local details, building materials, opportunities for development and enhancement, key spaces and views. Some of these elements are shown here on the Townscape Appraisal Map.
Folkestone Conservation Area Management Plan: Character Area 4 – The Old Town

Shepway District Council

Folkestone Conservation Area

Townscape Appraisal Map

Character Area No 4.

The Old Town

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3. Issues and threats

3.1 The preparation of the conservation area appraisal, including consultation with stakeholders, identified the special interest that justifies designation. However, it also lists a series of negative factors, neutral areas and key buildings/areas for development or enhancement. These factors are also recorded on the Townscape Appraisal Map.

3.2 In 2011, the Folkestone Town Centre Spatial Strategy was prepared in order to inform the evidence base of the emerging Core Strategy. The objectives were concerned with highways, accessibility, the enhancement of character and the public realm. While the strategy saw grand Victorian architecture and the picturesque charm of the Old Town as particular strengths of the town centre, it also identified weaknesses in the quality of new development, insensitive alterations and the poor condition of historic buildings.

3.3 Current assessment, informed by these sources, suggests that the challenges faced by the historic environment of the Old Town area of Folkestone can be summarised as:

Historical buildings:
- Poor building condition
- Loss of detail
- InSensitive alteration and extension
- Use of non-traditional materials and detailing
- Use and vacancy
- Deterioration of shopfronts

New development:
- Development opportunities not being taken up
- Buildings that do not respond to their historical context

Public realm:
- Enhancement opportunities
- Limited maintenance
- Traffic management including the effect of parking and of one-way streets

Overall:
- A lack of confidence and a consequent reluctance to make long-term investments leading to
- Short-term ‘quick fix’ solutions
4. Planning policy

National context

4.1 Government planning policy on conservation areas is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that the purpose of planning is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It sees three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and the latter includes ‘… contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment’ (para.7).

4.2 The core planning principles contained within the NPPF (para.17) state that planning should achieve a high quality of design, take account of the different roles and character of different areas, encourage the reuse of existing resources and conserve heritage assets. Local planning authorities are expected to include a positive strategy for the historic environment in their Local Plan (para.126).

4.3 The NPPF addresses designated heritage assets whether they are scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens or conservation areas. Legislation already requires local authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing a conservation area when considering development proposals and the NPPF echoes this by stressing that ‘… great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation’ (para.132).

4.4 The NPPF does, however, invite local authorities to seek opportunities for new development in conservation areas where this would ‘… enhance or better reveal their significance’ (para.137). For the consideration of development proposals, the NPPF introduces the need to balance any harm to the significance of an asset against any public benefits that would result.

Development plan

4.5 This currently consists of the saved policies from the Shepway District Local Plan Review 2006. Policy SD1 recognises the role that conserving the historic environment has in achieving sustainability.

4.6 Chapter 8 of the Local Plan Review sets out policies for the built environment. Saved policies BE3 and BE4 (conservation areas), BE5 (listed buildings), BE6 (other buildings of special character) and BE9 (shopfronts) are particularly relevant to the historic environment.

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Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
4.7 The Kent Design Guide 2005/06 was adopted as a supplementary planning document by the District Council in 2007. It provides further guidance on a wide range of design issues and principles and is a material consideration in decision taking.

4.8 The Shepway Core Strategy is now at an advanced stage in its preparation with the Examination in Public (EiP) hearing sessions concluding in early March and the Planning Inspector’s Final Report anticipated in late April/early May of this year. Adoption of the Core Strategy is expected to occur in the latter part of 2013 and will form a key part of the Local Plan for Shepway.

4.9 Following the adoption of the Core Strategy, the Local Plan Review policies cited above will remain part of the development plan in the short term. However, other Local Plan Review policies (i.e. the site specific policy for Payers Park, FTC2) will be deleted and new policies including CSD6: Central Folkestone Strategy will form part of the statutory development plan.

4.10 Furthermore, although clause CSD6 in the Core Strategy relates to Heritage, once it has been adopted, the Council will begin formally preparing a Land Allocations and Development Management Local Plan Document. The plan will allocate sites for various uses and it will also include a new suite of policies for development management, which will replace all of the remaining Local Plan Review policies. This will include an up-to-date set of policies for the historic environment and a positive strategy for its conservation and enjoyment, consistent with the NPPF (para. 126).

4.11 This THI is perfectly timed to coincide with, inform and be supported by the development of the Land Allocations and Development Management Local Plan, which will carry forward measures to conserve Shepway’s heritage assets. It will be adopted in 2015, in the second year of the Delivery Stage.

4.12 The relevant current local policies are set out in Appendix 2. It is intended that future revision of the Council’s website will provide information about these policies and explain how they apply to properties in the conservation area.
5. **Designations**

**Conservation area boundary review**

5.1 Local authorities are obliged to re-consider the boundaries of conservation areas ‘from time to time’. Further to its designation in 1972, the Folkestone Conservation Area was reviewed and extended in 1975, 1985, 1988 and 2005. Boundaries were considered again in 2008 in the course of the work that led to the identification of character areas and the appraisal of The Old Town. Suggestions were made but no further designation was made.

5.2 The current boundary of Character Area 4 is robust because, to the south it is abutted by parts of existing character areas for The Leas and The Harbour (Areas 1 and 3); to the west is the proposed Character Area 5, comprising the Fringes of the Old Town; and to the north east is an area of different character where, it has been suggested, a future review might consider a separate designation.

5.3 There is one small anomaly, however. There is a case for including the former cinema behind No.1 Grace Hill, which is attached to a building within Character Area 4, but is not itself included. This could be resolved by designation of specific boundary amendments if deemed appropriate.

**Listed buildings**

5.4 Listing began in 1945 and early designations in Folkestone include Nos.18-20 Church Street and the Parish Church of St Mary and St Eanswythe, both listed in 1949. Most of the listed buildings in the Old Town were added as the result of the re-survey in 1975 and, while there have been additions since then, English Heritage would argue that listing coverage is generally complete.

5.5 It has been suggested that there is a case for re-considering St Eanswythe’s School in Church Street. This red brick building of 1876 is architecturally accomplished and it contributes positively to the group value of the buildings fronting the churchyard of which all the others are listed. At present, however, buildings tend to be added to the statutory list only when there is a demonstrable threat.

**Buildings of local significance**

5.6 Government policy has always acknowledged that there are buildings which, although they may not qualify for statutory listing,
are nonetheless of special architectural or historic interest in the local context. Such buildings may be brought together in a local register and can be regarded as heritage assets to which policy considerations may apply.

5.7 Shepway District Council does not currently have such a local register, but it is recommended that the Council should adopt a set of criteria and a planning policy for the protection of locally significant buildings. This will happen alongside the development and adoption of the Land Allocations and Development Management Local Plan (see 4.9 above). Criteria, first put forward in the conservation area appraisal, are provided at Appendix 3 and suggested buildings are shown on the Townscape Appraisal Map.

5.8 The process of selecting candidates for a local register need not be onerous as it is an excellent way to involve local amenity groups and promote understanding of local heritage. Public suggestions can be assessed against adopted criteria by a steering group facilitated by the Council.

6. Planning measures

Development management

6.1 Where development is not already permitted, planning permission is required for any material changes to the appearance of properties, but the interpretation of what is ‘material’ is largely left to the Council. For instance, a new shopfront is generally regarded as a material change, but there is less certainty about the renewal of windows on the floors above or a change of roof materials. There is guidance within the Shepway website, but this would benefit from being as specific as possible. This will be addressed within the Action Plan.

6.2 Good quality design in new development is an expectation of policy at national and local levels. In Folkestone there are several examples where this has produced successful results, but equally there have been less successful cases. The Council has learned from these and has taken steps to address design issues with the benefit of external advice. Steps will be taken within the Action Plan to define and encourage good quality design.

6.3 Fundamental to the Council's management of development is the principle that property owners in the conservation area have access to free pre-application advice and free consultation with the Conservation Officers.
Article 4 direction

6.4 Single dwellings have considerable permitted development rights that enable a range of alterations to be carried out without the need to obtain planning permission. These works, including changes to doors, windows, roof materials and chimneys, can be undertaken despite the designation of a conservation area and, although they may be minimal in each case, the cumulative effect can be damaging to the character of the area.

6.5 An Article 4 direction prepared by the local authority can remove permitted development rights. This does not necessarily prevent alterations, but it does mean that planning permission is required and that allows the Council to take into account the potential effect of works on the character of the conservation area.

6.6 Most of the buildings in the Old Town are commercial or in mixed use, such as shops and flats, and they have very few permitted development rights. Accordingly, controls already exist for works, such as external joinery or roof coverings and the scope for an Article 4 direction would be very limited, for instance to control external painting or solar panels.

6.7 There are a few single dwellings on the Bayle, the Parade and Priory Gardens where an Article 4 direction would be relevant. However, it would be prudent to consider the scope of an Article 4 direction in relation to the rest of the conservation area. This would be less confusing to local residents and would help to promote consistent decision-making.

6.8 If permitted development rights are withdrawn from one sector (dwellings) through an Article 4 direction, it is vital in the interests of parity that the same standards of development management are applied to other sectors, such as commercial, retail and flats where controls already apply.

6.9 It should be noted that listed buildings would not be included in an Article 4 direction because controls over detailed changes already exist.

Monitoring and Compliance

6.10 It is important to understand the nature of change so that appropriate adjustments can be made to planning policy and practice. An objective understanding can be gained from a photographic survey, which can provide a baseline for measuring change, monitoring building condition or providing evidence for enforcement.
6.11 It is important, however, that photographic records are updated at least every four years because works carried out in breach of planning permission, or contrary to a condition of an existing permission, cannot be enforced against after four years. (There is no such time limit in respect of enforcement related to listed building consent).

6.12 The Cabinet Office Enforcement Concordat sets out principles of best practice for enforcement, such as openness, consistency, proportionality and response to complaints. As many local authorities do, Shepway District Council has incorporated these principles into an Enforcement Protocol. This usefully provides for the delegation of urgent action to the Head of Planning Services who, with the Development Control Manager, can issue related notices and instigate prosecutions.

6.13 The Protocol sets out priorities for enforcement action which include:
- Breaches causing irreversible harm to the locality
- Breaches affecting specially protected areas, such as conservation areas
- Listed buildings or buildings contributing to the character of conservation areas

6.14 Unfortunately, these are elements in a fairly long list of priorities that itself could be prioritised. While public safety will always come first, the historic environment should be closely in the second priority because heritage assets are such a finite resource. It is also unfortunate that the Protocol states that minor matters, such as satellite dishes or windows, will not normally be pursued. This could be confusing to the lay-person who might not appreciate that such matters are generally important in designated areas.

6.15 While the photographic survey will provide the evidential baseline, it is important that the area is monitored on a day-to-day basis so that action against unauthorised works can be taken promptly. This function is performed informally by local amenity groups and Council officers from conservation, planning and enforcement. Within the Creative Quarter, this function is routinely performed by Creative Foundation staff, who visit their properties regularly to liaise with tenants and carry out routine maintenance

Amenity Notices, Urgent Works and Repairs Notices

6.16 These are further devices that local authorities can use to seek specific outcomes. They range in severity:
- An Amenity Notice (S215 Notice) can be used to require works to remedy a local nuisance, such as tidying an overgrown garden or painting a neglected facade. Failure to respond can lead to action in the Magistrates’ Court.
- An Urgent Works Notice requires emergency works to address the disrepair of an unoccupied building, or part of a building, that is either a listed building or one that contributes to the character of a conservation area. If the works are not undertaken, the Local Authority can carry them out and charge the owner.
- A Listed Building Repairs Notice requires the owner to carry out a detailed specification of repairs and failure to comply can ultimately lead to compulsory purchase.

6.17 Clearly enforcement and related notices should be a matter of last resort to be used where negotiation is not able to succeed. It should be noted, however, that awareness of the options available is itself an important management tool. Research carried out by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation has shown that, in the vast majority of cases where formal notices have been embarked upon, they have not run the full course because the necessary works have been carried out by agreement.

7. Design and maintenance standards

Design

7.1 Through its website, the Council has published its Development Control Service Standards to explain what applicants can expect of the Council in matters such as timescales, decision-making and even making complaints.

7.2 The website is equally explicit about the expectations the Council has of applicants when submitting planning applications, particularly in terms of the material to be supplied. However, it does fall short of defining quality and yet Design and Access Statements are notorious for their shortcomings. This has been flagged up within the Action Plan and will result in more specific and far reaching guidance to cover these issues.

7.3 The management of change in conservation areas is often not so much whether change should happen, but how it is undertaken. Owners and occupiers can minimise the negative effects of change by employing skilled advice when preparing development proposals and by avoiding unrealistic aspirations.
7.4 The Council has adopted the Kent Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document and this formal status should be extended also to the occasional amendments published by the County Council. The Guide establishes the need for a rigorous understanding of the context of a site before deciding what development it may be capable of. It also provides appropriate standards for density, parking, street layouts and access.

7.5 The Guide’s approach is vital to maintaining the special interest of conservation areas. However, it is important that it is also partnered with more-detailed guidance on specific issues that can threaten local character, such as the alteration and repair of historic buildings, energy conservation and micro-generation, landscape and boundary treatments. Better guidance will lead to better applications and reduce time spent by Council staff and applicants in explaining expectations and negotiating outcomes and is addressed in the Action Plan.

7.6 Interpreting the rationale and quality of design in development proposals requires particular skills. The Council calls upon a wide range of advisory bodies for advice within the planning process. Its commitment to heritage is demonstrated through its contribution of £8k pa to the Archaeology Department of Kent County Council (KCC) and it will seek their guidance whenever a site is in an area in which archaeological remains are likely. This is indicated on the in-house GIS electronic map system. The Council also seeks specialist advice from English Heritage, Natural England, The Victorian Society, and The Georgian Society. For major applications, it makes use of the Kent Architecture Centre and the views of KCC Conservation Officers are routinely sought. The Harbour development is a case in point.

Maintenance

7.7 In addition, there is further scope for guidance on maintaining buildings in order to prevent deterioration and higher costs in the long run. The publication *A Stitch in Time* should be a familiar tool in the promotion of maintenance. It is still available on the Institute of Historic Building Conservation website, although it is about to be revised and updated. Services and guidance are also provided by the charity Maintain Our Heritage and the society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings through their websites.

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7 IHBC and SPAB – *A Stitch in Time: Maintaining your property makes good sense and saves money* – 2002
8 [www.maintainourheritage.co.uk](http://www.maintainourheritage.co.uk); [www.spab.org.uk](http://www.spab.org.uk); and [www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk](http://www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk)
Public realm

7.8 Advice on public realm issues in historic towns is already provided on a regional basis by English Heritage. However, there is a strong case for aligning this with local aspirations in a highway design guide to address local distinctiveness and the particular needs of Folkestone. This could include co-ordination in the design of street surfaces, signage and street furniture, the reduction of clutter and principles for traffic management.

7.9 It is important that there is a mechanism in place to ensure that the Highway Authority has adequate records of conservation area boundaries and an understanding of the different sensitivities that apply. For instance, an immediate gain could be made by taking advantage of the relaxation in conservation areas for double yellow lines to be 50mm wide rather than the standard 100mm.

7.10 In time, much of the yellow lining and associated signage could be removed if the area was designated as a Restricted Zone where parking and loading are allowed only in the marked bays. This device has been used successfully to minimise the impact of traffic management in many historic towns.

7.11 Access to and from the harbour and old town area of Folkestone is currently via one-way streets, with the road network geared to the ferry/freight sector of the economy that no longer exists in the town. Both KCC and SDC recognise the need to improve access for residents and visitors to and from the harbour and improve local bus services. As such, proposals to return Tram Road to 2-way operation have been approved and are to be implemented whilst detailed design work for Tontine Street to operate 2-way for buses is ongoing.

9 English Heritage – Streets for All: South East – 2006
8. Training, Learning, Community involvement

Complementary initiatives
8.1 There are many activities in Folkestone which are not necessarily heritage focused but are nonetheless complementary to the aims of the THI and conservation area management. These activities, described in the THI Stage 2 submission, include:
- Development of Folkestone Harbour and Seafront
- Action by the Creative Foundation to engage communities in changing the appearance, economy and reputation of Folkestone
- Celebrating creativity and heritage in Folkestone through the Folkestone Triennial, Folkestone Artworks and the Folkestone Festival
- No Use Empty (A Kent County Council initiative to address the problem of empty housing)
- Town Hall and Folkestone Museum
- Memorial Garden
- A Town Unearthed (Community archaeology)
- Step Short (World War I Remembrance)
- The Leas Lift
- The History Resource Centre

Community involvement
8.2 Details and costs for community activities are also provided in the Stage 2 submission. These include:
- A Roving Exhibition
- Guided Walks of the Old Town
- Heritage Interpretation (Plaques providing information on specific buildings and storyboards to explain: the effect of bombing in World War I, the history of Payers Park, and the history of the harbour
- Heritage talks (In partnership with Canterbury Christchurch University)
- Guided Walks for Children involving i-spy and a photographic competition
- Folkestone Triennial Fringe Event – Heritage-related workshop
- Heritage Festivals – Victorian Day and Step Short
- Heritage Open Days

Training and Learning
8.3 Details and costs for training activities are also provided in the Stage 2 submission. These include:
- Construction Skills Training
- Heritage Skills Apprenticeships
- Graduate Conservation Internships
- Princes Trust ‘Get Into’ Programme
- Building Recording
- Training for Development in the Historic Environment
- Design Review/Heritage Asset training for Planners.

8.4 Some issues run across the spectrum of community, training and events. For instance it is proposed that:
- Communities should be involved in local listing
- A historical research group should be established, linked to the History Resource Centre
- The Council should publish guidance on caring for historic buildings
- The Town should take advantage of the annual Maintenance Event promoted by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and Maintain Our Heritage

9. Putting the plan into practice

9.1 It is important that the Conservation Area Management Plan has a practical dimension that delivers actions, rather than remaining no more than a ‘wish list’. The conservation planning issues considered in the preceding Sections have, therefore, been presented as a series of tasks in the Action Plan set out in Appendix 1.

9.2 It is equally important that the tasks are actually taken into the work programmes of specific individuals. Inevitably at this stage many of the tasks are assigned to the Design & Conservation Officer, but he is not alone and it may be possible to refine the allocation to other staff.

9.3 Timescales are a matter of priorities expressed as:
1. – Immediate – within the first year
2. – Medium term – within three years
3. – Longer term – aspirational

9.4 Priorities are also a consequence of financial implications: There are several tasks that can be achieved immediately because they have no resource requirements, for example the reassessment of existing practices. Other proposals may take longer because budgets have to be raised before they can be realised.

9.5 Proposals for reviewing the Action Plan include the establishment of benchmarking indicators by which achievement can be measured in
9.6 Above all it is important to recognise that heritage is not an isolated issue, but rather a strand that runs through all activities. Responsibility for the heritage of Folkestone is, therefore, a corporate matter for which everyone has a part to play.

10. Vision and adoption

Vision

10.1 The vision for the Folkestone Conservation Area remains, as stated in the THI Stage 1 application: A once in a lifetime opportunity:
- To save and upgrade the fabric of our heritage assets through the HLF
- To improve the economy of the Conservation Area and of the town as a whole
- To disseminate knowledge of the historic and architectural heritage assets among the community and to stimulate community involvement
- To ensure that the consequent benefits of the experience of ‘sense of place’ are widely understood and appreciated
- To enhance education opportunities. This is a key part of the Creative Foundation’s work, and this programme will provide the chance to extend into the area of heritage appreciation and skills
- To promote cohesion of the community through this renewed sense of neighbourhood stimulating ongoing community involvement
- To provide ongoing management strategies that ensure the preservation of the Conservation Area and its enhancement into the future

Effectiveness

10.2 The wide-ranging programme of complementary initiatives will ensure that the aims of conservation area management and of the THI can realistically be met. The programme will, therefore, reach the whole community – residents, businesses and visitors – rather than just the owners and occupiers of repaired buildings.

Commitment

10.3 Effectiveness depends upon recognition of the fact that everyone has a part to play. For their part, the statement by the Chief Executive and the adoption of this Conservation Area Management Plan demonstrates the commitment of the Council to the
conservation of heritage assets. A statement of adoption is provided at Appendix 4.

**Legacy**

10.4 The ultimate aim of conservation area management is to turn best practice into everyday practice. In this way, the process of maintaining the qualities that give Folkestone its distinctive character can become self-sustaining and the peaks and troughs of decline and rescue can be anticipated and avoided.

**11. Monitoring and review**

11.1 While the Action Plan identifies tasks and assigns responsibilities and establishes timescales, the management function will only be meaningful if the programme is subject to periodic review in order to evaluate progress and to make any necessary adjustments.

11.2 To begin with, it is recommended that reviews should be undertaken on a quarterly basis in order to ensure that management tasks are taken into individual work programmes and short-term tasks are undertaken as soon as possible. In time, it may be reasonable to relax the review cycle as individual projects develop programmes of their own.

11.3 Responsibility for conducting the review is with the Head of Planning Services in association with the Design and Conservation Officer.
Appendix 1 The Action Plan

Priorities are expressed as:
1. – Immediate – within the first year of Development Phase
2. – Medium term – within three years of Development Phase
3. – Longer term – aspirational

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<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Corporate responsibility for conservation</td>
<td>Confirm the Council’s commitment to make use of all planning powers currently available</td>
<td>Head of Planning and Cabinet Member for Planning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Development Plan Policy and Implementation</td>
<td>Preparation of a heritage strategy to commence Summer 2013 as part of the development of the evidence base for the Shepway Land Allocations and Development Local Plan.</td>
<td>Planning Policy Team and Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Establish register of buildings of local significance</td>
<td>Establish register of buildings of local significance</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Designation</td>
<td>Consider the boundary revision of Character Area 4 in order to include the former cinema at No.1 Grace Hill</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Heritage at risk</td>
<td>Establish periodic surveys following EH guidance</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer and community groups</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Corporate responsibility for conservation</td>
<td>Work closely with the Council’s Heritage Champion and keep him informed of progress</td>
<td>Head of Planning and Cabinet Member for Planning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Informing the heritage strategy and as part of the development of the Shepway Land Allocations and Development Management Local Plan to undertake a review of the appropriateness and effectiveness of ‘saved’ Shepway District Local Plan policies relating to the built environment (listed below) and to consider the need for specific policies relating to heritage (including for Folkestone Old Town):</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning Policy Team and Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Review and confirm, as part of the development of the Shepway Land Allocations and Development Management Local Plan and supporting heritage strategy, the need for further policy measures and interventions required to meet the objectives of the Management Plan including consideration of the following:</td>
<td>Planning Policy Team and Design and Conservation Officer</td>
<td>1 Review to commence May 2013</td>
<td>Local Plan budget/THI</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• A schedule of buildings of local significance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The use of Article 4 directions and other mechanisms for restricting development without the need for consent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The need for any further supplementary guidance relating to heritage management and the built environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Further guidance relating to building alterations, shopfronts, advertisements &amp; signage, building maintenance and energy conservation</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Development of a comprehensive strategy and policy framework for Folkestone Town Centre, including Character Area 4, as part of the Shepway Land Allocations and Development Management Local Plan in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSD6</td>
<td>Planning Policy Team and Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>Review to commence May 2013</td>
<td>Local Plan budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Establish provision for design review and evaluation process</td>
<td>Development Control Team and Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>2 THI/Development Management budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Provision of free pre-application planning advice for conservation areas</td>
<td>Development Control Team and Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>1 Development Management Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Ensure appropriate skills are used for development proposals</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer, Development Control and applicants</td>
<td>1-2 Development Management Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Introduce an Article 4 Direction for buildings that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer, Development Control</td>
<td>1 Development Management Budget</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Review Enforcement Protocol to ensure priority for heritage</td>
<td>Enforcement Officer</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Establish evidence baseline with a photographic survey and update tri-annually</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer, Creative Foundation and community groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>THI/Development Management</td>
</tr>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Monitor development from baseline survey and take enforcement measures as necessary</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer, Project Manager, local community and Creative Foundation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>THI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Make use of Kent County Council archaeological advice service</td>
<td>Development Control and Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Existing allocated budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Submit a report to the Shepway Joint Transportation Board that considers the potential for the following: - The establishment of a heritage protocol between Shepway District Council and Kent County Council Highways &amp; Transportation. - The development of streetscape guidelines to enhance the management and appearance of the conservation area.</td>
<td>Development Control and Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Existing partner resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Review the potential for public realm improvements in Tontine Street, support the proposed two-way operation for buses along Tontine Street to provide enhanced public transport linkages between Folkestone town centre and the seafront, and report results to the Shepway Joint Transportation Board</td>
<td>Kent County Council Highways &amp; Transportation, KCC Regeneration, SDC Economic Regeneration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Existing partner resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Develop working partnerships with local Historical and Heritage Groups</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer, Local heritage Groups and Local History Centre</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>THI</td>
</tr>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Invite nominations for buildings to be included on the register of local significance</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer, Local heritage Groups and Local History Centre</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Development Management budget/THI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Facilitate an annual building conservation and maintenance event</td>
<td>Design &amp; Conservation Officer, local amenity groups, Maintain Our Heritage and THI Manager</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>THI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Establish a conservation award scheme that recognises refurbishment exemplars.</td>
<td>Local amenity groups and Design &amp; Conservation Officer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>THI</td>
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<td><strong>26.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Review</strong></td>
<td>Carry out annual review of the Conservation Area Management Plan</td>
<td>Head of Planning, Design &amp; Conservation Officer and THI Manager</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>27.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Carry out regular monitoring of the Conservation Area Management Plan Action Plan</td>
<td>Head of Planning, Design &amp; Conservation Officer KCC and THI Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>
Appendix 2 Local planning policies

POLICY SD1

All development proposals should take account of the broad aim of sustainable development - ensuring that development contributes towards ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. This involves meeting economic and social objectives and helping people meet their personal aspirations through accommodating the district’s need for commercial and industrial development, new homes and other land uses and improving quality of life for all members of society whilst respecting the following environmental criteria:

a) Shape new development patterns in a way which reduces the need to travel, especially by car, and increases the attractiveness of walking, cycling and public transport

b) Preserve and enhance built and cultural heritage including Listed Buildings and their settings, conservation areas, sites and settings of nationally and locally important ancient monuments and archaeological sites, historic parks and gardens and, historic landscapes

c) Protect and enhance areas of countryside that are of special quality, particularly the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Landscape Areas, Local Landscape Areas, Heritage Coast and undeveloped coast, ancient woodlands and, the best and most versatile agricultural land. Sustain the character and diversity of the wider countryside in general

d) Protect and enhance designated or proposed sites of international, national, countywide and local wildlife importance and plant or animal life protected by law. Maintain the District’s overall stock of nature conservation resources

e) Locate new development within or around existing built-up areas, especially on previously developed land, in preference to ‘greenfield’ sites

f) Maintain and improve the character and vitality of the built environment, promote a high quality of design and ensure that development density is appropriate to its location

g) Encourage energy efficiency and conservation, re-use and recycling of materials and, the sensitive development of renewable energy resources

h) Maintain and enhance water, soil and air quality
i) Maintain and enhance the provision of recreational open space, amenity land and tree and hedgerow cover

j) Prevent negative impacts on coastal protection, flood defence, land drainage and groundwater resources

k) Safeguard and enhance the amenity of residents

Development proposals that would significantly conflict with one or more of environmental criteria a) - k) above will only be permitted where it can be shown that:

i. there is an overriding economic or social need

ii. negative impacts are minimised as far as possible and

iii. measures will be taken to compensate for the adverse environmental effect.

Compensatory measures should, as a minimum, ensure that no net environmental loss occurs.

Chapter 8 – Built Environment

Introduction

8.1 The Local Planning Authority controls and guides the design and layout of new development to ensure that it is of intrinsic merit and appropriate to its surroundings.

8.2 The District’s towns and villages have distinctly different environmental characters, many of a high quality. This is demonstrated through the designation of 21 Conservation Areas and the presence of many listed buildings which themselves reflect architectural and historical change. Pressure for development has increased the need to protect the special qualities of the District’s built environment.

Aims and objectives

8.3 The Plan’s Built Environment aims are:

1. To establish a district-wide environment of quality and character, which is attractive to both residents and visitors

2. To improve the functioning and appearance of the built environment in order to attract and encourage further investment

8.4 The Plan’s Built Environment objectives are:
1. To ensure that development is sensitive and complementary to the established architectural and historic character of the District’s settlements and in particular the streetscene

2. To preserve and enhance the character of Conservation Areas and their environments

3. To preserve architecturally and historically important buildings together with building groups which contribute positively to the established character of the built environment

4. To ensure the physical separation of the District’s settlements to maintain their distinctiveness

5. To protect the landscape setting and amenity value of the built environment and ensure that open spaces and important trees within the urban area are retained

6. To provide positive detailed guidance regarding building alterations, shopfront design and the display of advertisements

7. To take action as resources and opportunities permit to improve the quality of the District’s Built Environment

8. To preserve the sites and settings of locally recognised and nationally important ancient monuments and archaeological sites

9. To preserve and seek the continuing maintenance of historic parks and gardens, and historic landscapes

**POLICY BE1**

A high standard of layout, design and choice of materials will be expected for all new development.

Materials should be sympathetic to those predominating locally in type, colour and texture.

Development should accord with existing development in the locality, where the site and surrounding development are physically and visually interrelated in respect of building form, mass, height, and elevational details.

Planning applications for development with an element of public use will be assessed as to their provision for access for disabled persons in respect of site layout and the relationship between buildings and their car parking areas and other public access points.

Development proposals must demonstrate that account is taken of opportunities to reduce the incidence of crime and the fear of crime against both property and the person.
For large, complex or sensitive sites, a design statement will be required containing:

1. An appraisal of the site and its context
2. Identification of constraints and opportunities
3. Design objectives and options
4. Consideration of local landscape character and distinctiveness
5. An explanation of the rationale behind siting, massing and proposed elevation and spatial treatments

POLICY BE3
When considering new Conservation Areas or reviewing existing Conservation Areas: the following criteria will be taken into account:

The area is:

a. of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance
b. includes sufficient buildings of historic and/or architectural interest, listed or unlisted, to give a strong character
c. includes sufficient good quality hard and/or soft landscape
d. shows strong relationships between buildings, and buildings and open spaces that create a sense of place
e. one which either illustrates local architectural development or an area of one architectural period which remains largely in its original condition

POLICY BE4
The District Planning Authority will:

a. refuse Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of buildings which contribute to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area
b. refuse proposals for infill or backland development which would adversely affect the character of a Conservation Area
c. require the height, scale, form and materials of new development, including alterations or extensions to existing buildings, to respect the character of Conservation Areas
d. seek to retain materials, features and details of unlisted buildings or structures which preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas
e. seek to retain the historic patterns, plot boundaries, building lines, open spaces, footways, footpaths and kerblines which are essential to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas
f. protect trees, verges and hedgerows which enhance both the setting and character of Conservation Areas

POLICY BE5

In order to preserve listed buildings and their settings and any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess, the District Planning Authority will:

a. refuse Listed Building Consent for demolition, extension, alteration or partial demolition, including internal or external works, if the proposals are considered to be detrimental to the character of the building

b. refuse proposals for the change of use of a listed building where such a use would adversely affect its character or setting, or where insufficient details are submitted to enable the application to be appropriately assessed. Changes of use will normally be permitted where these would provide the best means of conserving the character, appearance, fabric, integrity and setting of a listed building

c. impose conditions as necessary when granting consent to alter a listed building in order to protect the character afforded to that building by the retention or reinstatement of traditional features or materials

d. require the display of signs and advertisements to respect the character of a listed building, and refuse applications which would entail structural alterations for the display of advertisements

e. refuse applications for development which would adversely affect the setting or character of a listed building

f. refuse applications for extensions or alterations which would dominate the original building in either scale, material or situation

g. refuse applications which would involve the replacement of windows having glazing bars with sheet glass

h. refuse applications which involve the blocking up of windows or external doorways, or the making of new openings

i. refuse applications which involve repairs or alterations other than in matching materials and to the original design

j. refuse applications which would entail the removal of mouldings, balustrades, balconies, chimneys or other architectural features

k. refuse applications which would entail the introduction of incongruous period features such as shutters and bow windows
POLICY BE6
Using powers over the control of demolition and other development control powers, the District Planning Authority will refuse permission for redevelopment which would harm the character of groups of historic buildings up to and including early 20th Century buildings of distinctive or uniform architectural style. Permission will only be granted for developments which would reflect and contribute to that style.

POLICY BE8
Alterations and extensions to existing buildings should reflect the scale, proportions, materials, roof line, and detailing of the original building and should not adversely affect the amenity enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring properties or have a detrimental impact upon the streetscene. In considering planning applications, the following criteria will apply:

a. extensions should not cause undue overshadowing of neighbouring property and should allow adequate light and ventilation to existing rooms within the building; single storey extensions should be designed so as to fall within a 45-degree angle from the centre of the nearest ground floor window of a habitable room or the kitchen of the neighbouring property. In the case of two-storey extensions, the 45-degree angle is taken from the closest quarter-point of the nearest ground floor window of a habitable room or kitchen

b. side extensions may be added to detached or semi-detached dwellings where space is available; care should be taken to avoid creating a terracing effect which could result by extending up to the boundary; a minimum distance of 1 metre should be maintained from the boundary and any part of the extension above single storey level including the roof

c. permission will not be given for flat-roofed extensions, unless the proposed extension would not be generally visible from a public place and would serve only as an adjunct to the main building, or the provision of a flat roof is the only practicable means of providing an extension
d. permission will not be granted for loft conversions requiring
dormer extensions which are large in proportion to the
existing roof, as these can completely alter the proportion of
the building, presenting a top-heavy and flat-roofed
appearance. Planning applications for extensions in roof
spaces which front a highway will be refused where the
proposed structure would damage the character of the
existing building and would appear incongruous in the
streetscene

e. alterations or extensions which cause undue loss of privacy
for occupiers of neighbouring properties through overlooking
windows, doors or balconies should be avoided

f. garages should be set back 5.5 metres from the highway
boundary, to enable a vehicle to stand clear of the highway
whilst the doors are being opened or for cleaning or
maintenance purposes. In exceptional circumstances this may
be reduced to 1 metre, but forward opening swing doors
would not be permitted

POLICY BE9

Shopfronts of aesthetic, architectural or historic merit should be
retained and repaired. Only where this is proven to be impracticable
will a replacement be acceptable. In all cases a new or replacement
shopfront will only be permitted if it:

a. relates well to the building on which it is to be built taking into
account scale proportion, architectural design, materials and
vertical alignment of the upper floors;

b. takes account of the design and materials of neighbouring
shopfronts so that it will fit in with the character of the
streetscene

c. preserves any existing separate access to the floors above to
allow them to be used for residential or other use compatible
with the retail use

PAYERS PARK

13.8 This site between Tontine Street and Rendezvous Street on the
eastern fringe of the town centre is currently in use as a public car
park. Planning permission has been granted for a development of
135 residential flats with 246 car parking spaces for public and
private use. The site is located between the harbour area and the
rest of the town and therefore has a potential role as an intermediate
destination point and link between the Harbour/Tontine Street area
and the town centre. The site is suitable for a mixed use
development of residential, retail, business and leisure uses, with pedestrian orientated links to Tontine Street, Rendezvous Street and the Old High Street. Development proposals should preferably incorporate sites fronting Tontine Street and the Old High Street to enhance the entrances to the scheme, which will form ‘gateways’.

POLICY FTC2
Planning permission will be granted for the development of the Payers Park Car Park and adjoining land, as shown on the Proposals Map, for mixed use where proposals meet the following criteria:

a) Comprehensive approach to development of the site
b) The creation of strong, attractive pedestrian links with Tontine Street, Old High Street and Rendezvous Street
c) Built development is mainly residential use. Active frontages at ground level incorporating retail, business and leisure uses would be acceptable
d) Provision of 100 public car parking spaces
e) Provision of any car parking required by the development within the site/building complex or below ground level
f) The site of 29-33 Old High Street to be redeveloped with retail on the ground floor and residential or office use above
Appendix 3 Locally significant buildings

The Conservation area appraisal put forward a set of criteria for defining Key Unlisted Buildings. It then identified relevant buildings in Character Area 4: The Old Town.

The implication is that these should form the basis for a district-wide local register for Shepway. Clearly, the effectiveness of such a register will also depend upon formal adoption and a primary policy under the emerging Core Strategy.

The criteria for the selection of buildings for the local register require that the building should fall within one or more of the following categories:

a. **Age.** The earliest buildings should merit greater attention towards preservation

b. **Authenticity.** Buildings or structures should be substantially unaltered and should retain the majority of their original features

c. **Architectural Significance.** Buildings or structures of local architectural significance for aesthetic merit or craftsmanship of any period; principal works of principal architects or designers of local importance; exemplars of key building types

d. **Local technological significance or innovation**

e. **Historic Significance.** Buildings/structures illustrating or associated with local architectural/social/cultural history or events, locally or nationally well known people

f. **Townscape Significance.** Individual buildings, objects or groups of exceptional quality in their context for example, landmark buildings, notable buildings marking or creating interesting places, vistas, or interesting skylines

It should be noted that buildings identified as being of local significance do not have to be restricted to designated conservation areas.
Appendix 4  Statement of adoption

The Folkestone Conservation area Management Plan: Character Area 4 – The Old Town was considered by the Cabinet of Shepway District Council at its meeting on .............

The meeting formally adopted the conservation area management plan for planning purposes and confirmed the local planning authority’s commitment to making it publically available and implementing the recommended actions.

The relevant Cabinet minute to that effect is attached.

~ To be completed after the Cabinet resolution has been made ~