



## EASTHAM VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

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### PART 2 - CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared for Wirral Council by Donald Insall Associates Ltd, 2007 – Wirral Council 2009

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## PART 2 – CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 1.0 ROLE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 1.1 The Management Plan at this stage of the process is an agenda for future action and consideration. This part of the document relies on the analysis contained within the appraisal to set out the issues and negative factors affecting the both the private and public realms. It is a first professional assessment made by Wirral Council Conservation Section as to the issues which need to be addressed and makes suggestions for policy, guidance and investment. This agenda needs to be considered against budgetary and staff capacity in future years. As such it is the first stage in a management plan process which will refine the plan through further consultation, joint officer working and budgetary request.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the Appraisal as an audit of the Conservation Area is adopted by Wirral Council and used as a material consideration in determining any planning applications within, or visually affecting, the conservation area. The Management Plan should be accepted for the time being pending further consultation with the local Conservation Area Advisory Committee and further review. In accordance with the English Heritage guidance, the Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed every 5 years. This review process may be tied into that of the key Local Development Framework documents to ensure consistency in approach and referencing.

### 2.0 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTER

- 2.1 Eastham Village Conservation Area's special character can be summarised as follows:
- Historic village dating back to before the Domesday Survey.
  - The village is centred around a church dating from the late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.
  - Wider village important as a 18<sup>th</sup> century recreational destination, with many of the buildings in the village centre built or used to support travellers.
  - The village has grown up gradually over time, with no one architectural style or historical period dominating.
  - The historic village has retained a degree of separation from neighbouring suburban areas by means of a green 'buffer' of playing fields, landscaped grounds and agricultural areas.
  - Roads are narrow and slightly winding, following a medieval street pattern.
  - There is a mix of building types throughout the village with smaller cottages amongst more opulent villas.
  - The intensity of buildings increases towards the village centre

- Primary views are towards and featuring the church, however a few secondary vistas towards other groups of historic buildings are also important.
- Most buildings are of two storeys with the building's original social status determining their height.
- Buildings are general simple in character, but there is very little repetition of building forms, other than within individual terraces.
- Sandstone boundary walls are an important feature within the area and along the roads leading to it.
- Red Cheshire sandstone is the most prominent building material in the village, however red brick is also widely used. A number of buildings are either painted or rendered. Most roofs with historic coverings are slated.
- Openings and features such as chimneys are generally simple in character. Horizontal sliding sash windows are a common feature with vertical sashes in the higher status buildings. Many simple multi-paned timber casements are old and visually appropriate.
- In the few areas where modern housing exists it is of a limited scale and is not visually prominent. Extensions to buildings that are detrimental to the character of historic buildings are fortunately few in number. However a greater problem is in the extensive loss of historic features such as windows and in the poor repair of original fabric.

### 3.0 ISSUES, POLICIES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

#### 3.1 UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND OTHER EXISTING PLANNING POLICY

- 3.1.1 Eastham Village is located within the Green Belt and this has considerable restrictions on acceptable uses, new development, re-use of buildings, extensions to existing dwellings or their replacement either within the village, its setting or open land beyond. There is a general presumption against inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Applications for planning permission would be assessed for compliance with the policies GB2, GB3, GB4, GB5 and GB8 set out in Section 7 of the UDP and Policies CH1, CH2 and CH10 set out in Section 11 of the Unitary Development Plan, as well as Supplementary Guidance Note SPG24.

DESIGNATION OF LAND WITHIN UDP	
Issue	Location
The future re-designation of land within or around the conservation area in the Unitary Development Plan may be detrimental to its character or setting	Throughout
Policy	
The future re-designation of land within or around the conservation area in the Unitary Development Plan should be considered in terms the effects on of its special character and setting.	
Action	Priority
Consider special character of area before any proposed changes of policy	Mid-long-term

GREEN BELT POLICY	
Issue	Location
In the application of Green Belt policy on land and affecting buildings within the conservation area or affecting its setting, the character and appearance of the conservation area should be preserved or enhanced.	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
In the application of Policies GB 2, 3, 4, 5 the effects of any proposals on of the special character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting should be strong material considerations	
Action	Priority
Consider the special character of the Eastham Village Conservation Area in the application of policy	Immediate

APPLICATION AND INTERPRETATION OF EXISTING POLICY	
Issue	Location
Policies CH1, CH2 and CH10, together with the guidance in PPG15, may not always be rigorously applied during the planning process, resulting in development or changes to buildings which are detrimental to the character of the conservation area.	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
Ensure that all new development within the conservation area complies with policies CH1, CH2 and CH10 together with the relevant sections of PPG15.	
Action	Priority
Rigorous inspection of planning, conservation area and listed building consent applications. Improve allocated resources and knowledge of planning staff to ensure that proper consideration is given to these issues in applications.	Immediate

## 3.2 NEW DEVELOPMENT AND ALTERATION TO EXISTING BUILDINGS AND SITES

- 3.2.1 In the event of new development being allowed under the criteria set out above, the following recommendations are made regarding the quality and character of new development, scale, materials, and effect on views:

QUALITY OF NEW BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Any potential buildings constructed within the conservation area may not be of an equal quality and do not have the design attributes of the historic buildings that characterise the area, therefore cannot be shown to be preserving or enhancing its character.	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
In any new development within Eastham Village Conservation Area, there should be a strong presumption in favour of using traditional materials such as natural red sandstone, red brick, render, timber framing and slate.	
Any new buildings should match the quality of materials and level of architectural design of the original buildings, although simplification of the detailing may be acceptable.	
The use of contrasting modern materials of the highest quality may be appropriate if it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that they do not have an adverse effect on the setting of neighbouring existing buildings.	
The use of imitation materials such as reconstituted stone or slate should not be permitted.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details including materials	Immediate

SCALE, MASSING, POSITION OR PROPORTIONS OF NEW BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
New buildings may detract from existing buildings in terms of their scale, massing, position or proportions	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
New buildings generally should be no higher than existing buildings comparable within their immediate vicinity in terms of both their eaves and ridge heights.	
New buildings should respect the footprint sizes of existing neighbouring buildings and their relationships with each other (spacing), the road and their site boundaries.	
New buildings should match the floor-to-ceiling heights and general proportions of existing neighbouring historic buildings.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate

EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT ON KEY VIEWS	
Issue	Location
New development or extensions to existing buildings may adversely affect key views within or the setting of the conservation area	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
Applications for planning permission for new development or significant extensions to existing buildings within the conservation area must demonstrate, where appropriate, that key views or the setting of the conservation area are not adversely affected.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate

3.2.2 SPG 16 “Landscaping and New Development” and SPG 17 “Trees and Development” set out guidance on landscaping throughout the Wirral. The following are matters which have been identified as particular issues in the Eastham Village Conservation Area:

LANDSCAPING ASSOCIATED WITH NEW OR EXISTING BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Poor or inappropriate landscaping around new buildings or extensions to existing buildings can detract from the character of the area	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
A detailed landscaping scheme should be submitted with any planning application for new buildings or significant alteration to existing sites	
The magnitude of necessary car parking should be considered alongside the level of occupation of any	

proposed building. Schemes for buildings that require an extent of car parking / number of cars that will detract from the character of the conservation area should be rejected.	
New buildings should preserve existing areas of mature trees and other landscaping. Where any trees are removed, they should be replaced with semi-mature trees of the same or more appropriate species (e.g. native).	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by full landscaping schemes.	Immediate

PROTECTION, RETENTION AND PROVISION OF HEDGES AND TREES	
Issue	Location
To maintain and enhance the character of the area attention needs to be paid to the retention of hedges as well as trees and their provision where appropriate	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
Hedges of native species should be retained in areas of agricultural land and on the boundaries of domestic curtilages	
Trees which contribute to the character of the conservation area should be retained and if needing to be removed for reasons of health, replaced by trees of appropriate species and maturity.	
Planting of further trees and hedges of native species should be promoted, particularly in areas devoid of such trees and hedges	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of hedges and trees within the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by full landscaping schemes showing the retention of trees and hedges and any replacement planting.	Immediate

3.2.3 Extensions to dwellings are covered by Policy HS 11 in the UDP. The policy covers matters relating to scale, materials, design details, dormers, set backs of extensions and retention of amenity space. The following are additional matters which have been identified as particular issues in the Eastham Village Conservation Area:

EXTENSIONS TO BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Extensions to buildings within the conservation area may detract from the significance of the individual building or the setting of adjoining buildings	Throughout
Policy Recommendations	
Extensions to those buildings that have been shown to contribute to the conservation area should only be permitted where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the additional structure has no adverse impact on the principal elevations of the parent structure. Extensions should be subservient to the parent building	



The choice of the materials of the extension should be considered so as to provide the minimum visual distraction from the original structure. Generally, it should be assumed that materials should match in terms of colour and texture. Traditional and/or natural materials such as sandstone, brick, timber and slate should be used unless an alternative can be adequately justified in terms of its visual effect on the conservation area. Where buildings are extended using traditional forms and materials, the subtle dating of the new element should be encouraged.

Where a building has existing detrimental features, the opportunity should be taken to secure improvements as part of the new building work.

There should be a strong presumption against extensions that adversely affect the balance of pairs or groups of buildings which had symmetry as one of their original predominant design characteristics.

Dormers, if acceptable, should be confined to rear elevations, situated below the ridge and of a scale and design appropriate to the building on which they are mounted.

Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications.	Immediate

3.2.4 In carrying out conversions or alterations to the fabric of buildings and boundaries the following good conservation practice should be applied:

ALTERATION TO HISTORIC FABRIC	
Issue	Location
Alterations to the historic fabric of a building can lead to the loss of some of its visual history and aesthetic value and can be detrimental to the visual setting of the area as a whole.	All pre Second World War buildings
Policy recommendations	
Where alterations can be justified to be necessary for the continued use of the building they should be prioritised towards the less significant areas of the building.	
Alterations should be chosen that require the least possible degree of permanent loss of or change to historic fabric. For instance, secondary glazing should be installed in preference to the wholesale replacement of existing windows.	
Where replacement of existing original or early fabric is proved necessary it should always be done on a like-for-like basis where possible, not exchanging materials for modern alternatives.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details. Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents. Take enforcement action where appropriate.	Immediate

<b>ALTERATION OR LOSS OF FEATURES ON HISTORIC BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
Alterations to or loss of specific features on historic buildings can be detrimental to the character of the individual building and the area as a whole.	All pre-WWII buildings
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
Existing original or early features should be retained if at all possible. Where their replacement is necessary, it should be on a like-for-like basis in terms of materials and design. Any changes to primary features such as windows, doors, chimneys and boundary walls should be carefully considered by the local authority.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details. Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents. Take enforcement action where appropriate.	Immediate

<b>INSTALLATION OF NEW FIXTURES</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
The installation of new fixtures, such as aerials, satellite dishes, rooflights and ventilators, generally detracts from the character of the individual building and the area as a whole. Particular care should be taken in the use and location of microgeneration equipment to minimise intrusion on the building or its setting	All buildings
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
The installation of rooflights into existing roof slopes should not generally be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that they are not visible from public areas or adversely affect the setting of other buildings. Any rooflights installed should be of a 'conservation' type and fixed flush with the roof covering.	
Building owners should be strongly encouraged to only install satellite dishes and aerials in positions not visible from public areas or adversely affect the setting of other buildings.	
Building owners should be strongly encouraged not to install ventilators and other fixtures onto roof slopes or prominent elevations. Where they are absolutely necessary their visual impact should be minimised in terms of their location, number, size and design.	
Whilst microgeneration of energy is to be encouraged in terms of conservation principles, the impact on buildings and their settings within the conservation area should be minimised by careful positioning in parts and areas not visible from public locations	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details. Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents. Take enforcement action where appropriate.	Short term

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LOSS OR ALTERATION TO BOUNDARY WALLS	
Issue	Location
The loss of or alteration to boundary walls and gateposts would adversely affect the character of the conservation area.	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
All existing historic boundary walls and gateposts should be retained. Alteration as part of any planning permission should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and when fully justified and mitigated.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents. Take enforcement action where appropriate.	Immediate

CHANGES OF USE	
Issue	Location
Changes of use of an existing building (subject to Green Belt Policy) can result in a number of incremental changes which result in an adverse effect on the conservation area.	All buildings
Policy recommendation	
In considering applications for change of use, the council will require information on the design of refuse storage, waste pipes, ventilation fixtures, satellite dishes and aerials, any other fixtures, signage and car parking.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate

ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS	
Issue	Location
Small scale alterations to buildings in the conservation area can lead to a gradual and progressive loss to its character. Article 4 directions can bring such alterations under control as matters requiring planning permission	All buildings
Policy recommendation	
Consider the need for article 4 directions in respect of windows and doors; roof coverings and roof features; colour and surface treatment of elevations; and boundary walls	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area, discuss the need for and extent of Article 4 directions, and determine the priority for them in relation to other conservation areas and the resources available	Short to mid- term

### 3.3 GENERAL GUIDANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS

- 3.3.1 The following are recommendations relating to building condition, management of the public realm, highway matters, and involvement of local groups in securing improvements to the Conservation Area. They have major implications in terms of staff resource and finance but are set out as an agenda for future action.

CONDITION OF INDIVIDUAL SITES AND BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
The condition of an individual site or building can be detrimental to the appearance of the area and may set a poor example to other owners.	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
The local authority should serve Section 215 notices on owners of buildings or land whose condition adversely affects the amenity of the area, requiring them to remedy the detriments or face the necessary costs for the local authority to do so.	
Under section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, urgent works notices should be used to secure emergency or immediate repairs on any unoccupied building (or part of a building) within a conservation area where it adversely affects the character of the area. Where the building is unlisted a direction from the Secretary of State will be required.	
Prepare a guidance leaflet and issue to all residents within the conservation area explaining the benefits of good, regular maintenance and appropriate repair techniques.	
Action	Priority
Regularly visit the conservation area, noting any sites or buildings in a poor condition. Serve relevant notices where appropriate. Preparation of guidance leaflet.	Immediate to midterm

CONDITION / MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING PUBLIC REALM AREAS	
Issue	Location
The existing public realm areas may be insufficiently maintained and act as a poor example to conservation area residents.	
Policy recommendation	
The existing public realm areas should be maintained and where necessary replanted / resurfaced to a standard that befits the conservation area and enhances the setting of the existing buildings.	
Action	Priority
Prepare and agree a maintenance plan for the area, improving maintenance regimes and identifying necessary physical improvements.	Short-term

DETRIMENTAL CHANGES TO LISTED BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
There have in the past been a number of detrimental changes to listed buildings, such as insertion of replacement windows and changes to chimneys, boundary walls and roof coverings. These are not only detrimental to the appearance of the individual buildings and their immediate setting, but they are also setting a poor precedent to other building owners.	Listed buildings
Policy recommendation	
Owners of listed buildings should be notified of unauthorised changes to their buildings. Where evidence is available, (e.g. in the form of dated photographs) enforcement should be taken to ensure the reinstatement of the original fabric unless retrospective consent can be given.	
Action	Priority
Carry out a survey of all buildings, photographing them and noting any changes. Notify building owners of unauthorised changes and take necessary enforcement action. Where changes are unenforceable and not attributed to the current owners, the potential for grant-funded reinstatement should be investigated.	Short to mid-term.

DETRIMENTAL CHANGES TO UNLISTED BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
There are a number of instances of detrimental changes to un-listed buildings, such as insertion of replacement windows and changes to chimneys, boundary walls and roof coverings. A particular issue in Eastham is works to stone walls, such as insertion of damp-proof courses and ribbon pointing. These are not only detrimental to the appearance of the individual buildings and their immediate setting, but they are also setting a poor precedent to other building owners.	Un-listed buildings which contribute to the conservation area
Policy recommendation	
Through example and encouragement promote reinstatement / retention of historic features and 'best practice' maintenance and repair	
Action	Priority
A guidance leaflet should be issued explaining the benefits of reinstatement works.	Mid-term

CHANGES TO FABRIC OF UNLISTED BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
The character of unlisted building may be threatened by future changes to historic fabric.	Un-listed buildings which contribute to the conservation area
Policy recommendation	
Through example, encouragement and extended control, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Action	Priority
Put in place article 4 directions to protect unlisted features of interest. A guidance leaflet should be issued explaining the benefits of retaining historic fabric.	Short to mid-term

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HIGHWAYS MARKINGS AND SIGNAGE	
Issue	Location
Highway markings and signage can be visually intrusive and detrimental to its character and appearance. Future highways features, such as speed control measures may be visually obtrusive and of an inappropriate design / materials.	Roads and pavements
Policy recommendations	
Reconsider all existing signage, highways features and markings and make necessary improvements to enhance the character of the area, whilst maintaining / enhancing the safety of all village users.	
Ensure that all future highways features, such as speed control measures, railings etc are proven to be necessary and are of an appropriate design and constructed of appropriate materials.	
Action	Priority
Carry out an assessment of existing signage, highways features and markings in terms of their impact on the character of the area. Obtain advice on appropriate alternatives (e.g. narrower lines etc).	Mid-term

TRAFFIC	
Issue	Location
The level and type of traffic through the village is at times detrimental to the village's rural character.	Roads
Policy	
Consider means of lessening the impact of traffic. (N.B. new highways features should preserve or enhance the character of the area).	
Agree improved traffic routes with major distribution companies	
Action	Priority
Carry out an assessment of existing vehicular movements and recommend improvements	Mid-term

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND CONTRIBUTION	
Issue	Location
Residents are often inadequately aware of the purpose of a conservation area, the benefits designation may have to them and how they may influence its future. The skills and expertise of local residents groups, individuals or major landowners may be underutilised.	-
Policy recommendations	
Make conservation area information readily available to residents, using for instance existing notice boards to publicise boundaries and making appraisals / managements available in local libraries (or other well used public buildings) / on the internet.	
Encourage dialogue between local residents groups and major landowners to promote enhancement and maintenance works within the conservation area.	
Action	Priority
Dialogue between local authority, residents groups and major landowners	Immediate

## **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOUNDARY AMENDMENTS AND PROVISION OF ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS**

### **4.1 BOUNDARY AMENDMENT**

4.1.1 As a general rule, the existing Eastham Village Conservation Area boundary represents a true reflection of the extent of the character it defines, with a small buffer zone of green space around it which protects its setting.

4.1.2 It is important however, that the boundary of a conservation area can be readily comprehended by residents and landowners and therefore wherever possible it must relate to physical land features. The current boundary has a number of oddities, where this does not happen. It is therefore recommended that the following changes are made for clarification purposes:

- The triangular ‘notch’ out of the New Chester Road boundary does not relate to the garage forecourt and cuts through the building. It is recommended that the boundary is adjusted to follow continuously along the road.
- The boundary has an irregular shape between the village and the oil refinery which makes no reference to historic or current features. It is therefore recommended that it is extended to follow the refinery fenced boundary.
- Although the south-eastern boundary does not follow any field lines, there are no sensible points of reference, and as a straight line, it is simple to map. It is therefore recommended that it is left in its current position.

4.1.3 The following additional area is recommended for inclusion:

- Extended area along Ferry Road, to include the former Carlett Cottage. The exterior of this building is in exceptionally good condition, with original (or good replacements) materials to the roof, windows, front wall and gate posts. The chimneys and stonework detailing are particularly attractive. This building, constructed in 1870, contributes positively to the character of the area, but is not currently protected by listing or inclusion within the designated conservation area.

### **4.2 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS**

4.2.1 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 allows building owners to carry out a range of minor developments without planning consent subject to limits and conditions. These ‘permitted development’ rights are automatically limited within conservation areas: restrictions include the addition of dormer windows, various types of cladding, the erection of satellite dishes fronting a highway and the reduction in the size of extensions.

- 4.2.2 Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order enables local authorities to withdraw some specified permitted development rights on buildings or land, such as removal of a chimney, changes around the front boundary of a building, construction of porches, painting of houses or removal of architectural features such as windows and doors. Local authorities must notify local people and take account of their opinions before confirming an Article 4 direction and in certain instances obtain approval from the Secretary of State.
- 4.2.3 Article 4 directions are not just automatic consequence of conservation area designation, but should be bourn out of a careful assessment of what is of special interest within an area and should be preserved. Permitted development rights should only be withdrawn where there is evidence to prove that such development would damage the character of a conservation area and is currently taking place.
- 4.2.4 In the case of Eastham, the following items have been identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal part of this document as being important to the character of the area and therefore it is suggested that Article 4 directions are assigned to all category A and B buildings protect them from loss or change without consent:
- Windows
  - Doors
  - Roof coverings
  - Front boundary walls
  - Solar Panels
  - Microgeneration