



## WEST KIRBY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

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### PART 1 – 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 The special character of the conservation area can be summarised as follows:
- St Bridget's church is one of the oldest ecclesiastical sites on Wirral with medieval fabric surviving within the 'restored' 19th century church.
  - Archaeological finds and artefacts have made an important contribution to the understanding of north Wirral as a Viking colony in the 10th century.
  - Examples of 'vernacular' building from the 17th and early 18th centuries.
  - Examples of late 19th century mock Tudor style building.
  - Open and wooded areas have, in parts, provided the village with a semi rural setting.
  - Village Road provides a succession of views through its changing elevation and direction. These are made more interesting by the traditional buildings abutting the street, sandstone walls and exposed bedrock.

### **3.0 ISSUES, POLICIES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

#### **Protection of Buildings:**

- Only two buildings are protected by Listing. The character of the area depends on the retention of the unlisted buildings which pre date the early 20th Century. Conservation Area Consent for demolition should not be granted in respect of those buildings identified within this report as contributing positively to the character of the area.

#### **Retention of stone boundary walls:**

- Boundary walls of local red sandstone make a considerable contribution to the appearance of the area and gradual loss of these would be seriously detrimental to its character. Boundary walls should be protected through Article 4 Directions.

#### **Playing fields, pasture, paddock and wooded areas:**

- The retention of these open and wooded spaces is essential to the maintenance of the semi-rural appearance of significant parts of the conservation area. They are also important in terms of wider landscape strategy in providing visual links and ecological connections with protected heathland on Caldly Hill, Ashton Park and the Wirral Way. Population increases may increase pressure for new housing and result in relaxing current development restrictions. Future changes in planning policy should recognise the special contribution these spaces make to the character of the conservation area and the wider landscape.

#### **Highway improvements**

- Previous road and junction widening schemes have eroded some of the spatial characteristics of the area. The roads and some junctions are still narrow. Pressure for further changes in highway alignments should be resisted. Visual intrusion with street furniture and road signage should be kept to a minimum.

#### **Alterations to existing buildings**

- The architectural appearance and authenticity of historic facades should be protected.

**3.1 UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND OTHER EXISTING PLANNING POLICIES**

- 3.1.1 West Kirby Village is a designated Conservation Area and contains a number of Listed Buildings. Section 11 of Wirral Borough Council’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP) contains a range of policies relating to the historic environment. Those of particular relevance to West Kirby are CH1 (Listed Buildings and Structures), CH2 (Development in Conservation Areas), CH3 (Control of Demolition in Conservation Areas) and CH13 (West Kirby Conservation Area Policies) as well as Supplementary Guidance Note SPG 33.
- 3.1.2 There is a general presumption against inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Applications for planning permission are currently assessed for compliance with the policies set out in Section 11 of the Unitary Development Plan, as well as Supplementary Guidance Note SPG33.
- 3.1.4 The following Conservation Area Management Policies relate to the implementation of the UDP. Each policy is structured to show the issue or potential threat, a policy and other actions to reduce that threat.

<b>NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONSERVATION POLICIES</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
Policies CH1, CH2, CH3 and CH19, 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
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
Ensure that all new development within the conservation area complies with policies CH1, CH2, CH3 and CH13 together with the relevant sections of PPG15.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Rigorous inspection of planning, conservation area and listed building consent applications.	Immediate
Improve allocated resources and knowledge of planning staff to ensure that proper consideration is given to these issues in applications.	

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

- 3.2.1 In the rare event of any new development being acceptable in relation to the UDP policies set out above then the following recommendations should be applied to ensure suitable standards in the quality and character of new development, its scale, materials, layout and the effect on views. These policies are aimed at preserving and enhancing the ‘character’ and appearance of conservation areas

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<b>QUALITY OF NEW BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
Any potential buildings constructed within the conservation area may not be of a sufficient quality and may not have the design attributes of the historic buildings that characterise the area, therefore failing to preserve or enhance its character.	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
In any new development within West Kirby Conservation Area, there should be a strong presumption in favour of using traditional materials such as local red sandstone, soft textured red or brown brick and Welsh slate.	
The use of render may be considered on developments in parts of the settlement where the use of this material has become well established.	
Any new buildings should match the quality of materials and level of architectural design of the original buildings, although some 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.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate
Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details including materials	

<b>CHARACTER OF NEW BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
The appearance of any potential new buildings constructed within the conservation area may be detrimental to its predominantly traditional character	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
In any new development within the parts of West Kirby Conservation Area containing vernacular building there should be a strong presumption in favour of using simple building forms and detailing that characterise most traditional buildings in those areas.	
In any new development within the parts of West Kirby Conservation Area characterised by 'later C19 period building styles' there should be a strong presumption in favour of building design which has similar general characteristics in terms of general form and materials to the existing historic buildings while at the same time being early C21 construction not confusable with those of earlier date.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate
Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and insist that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	

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<b>SCALE, MASSING, POSITION AND PROPORTIONS OF NEW BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
New buildings may detract from existing buildings in terms of their scale, massing, position or proportions	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
New buildings should respect the footprint sizes, shape and massing of existing neighbouring buildings and their relationships with each other (spacing), the road and their site boundaries.	
New buildings generally should be no higher than existing comparable buildings within their immediate vicinity in terms of both their eaves and ridge heights.	
New buildings should match the floor-to-ceiling heights and general proportions of existing neighbouring historic buildings.	
<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.	Immediate

<b>PLAN FORM AND LAYOUT OF NEW BUILDINGS AND INFILL DEVELOPMENTS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
New buildings and infill developments may detract from the townscape, rural appearance, spatial quality and historic development patterns that determine the various character zones within the conservation area.	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
New buildings and infill developments should fit within the existing settlement pattern and historic character.	
<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.	Immediate

<b>EFFECT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT ON VIEWS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
New development or extensions to existing buildings may adversely affect views of buildings within the conservation area, the setting of the conservation area or important views out of the conservation area.	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
Applications for planning permission for new development or significant extensions to existing buildings within the conservation area must demonstrate, where appropriate, that views of existing buildings, the setting of the conservation area and views out of the area are not adversely affected.	
<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.	Immediate

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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 landscape features are matters which have been identified as particular issues in the West Kirby Conservation Area. Significant parts of the conservation area are covered by two tree preservation orders (TPOs).

<b>LANDSCAPING FOR NEW OR EXISTING BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
Poor or inappropriate landscaping around new buildings or extensions to existing buildings can detract from the character of the area	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
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 native species, where these will not interrupt important views either when planted or when mature.	
New boundary treatments should reflect the prevailing historic boundary treatments of the area particularly the sandstone boundary walls.	
Surfacing for public track ways, private drives, paths and hardstanding should reflect the prevailing informal surfaces found within the area.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Promote an understanding of the special landscape 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

<b>PROTECTION, RETENTION AND PROVISION OF HEDGES AND TREES</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
To maintain and enhance the character of the area attention needs to be paid to the retention of hedges as well as trees that contribute to the character and appearance of the area and the provision of new trees and hedges where appropriate.	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
Agricultural field and residential property boundaries comprising hedges of native species and ‘green verges’ should be retained for their visual appearance and to encourage wild flora and fauna.	
Trees which contribute to the character of the conservation area should be retained and if needing to be removed for reasons of tree health or safety, replaced by trees of appropriate species and maturity.	
Planting of hedges of native species should be promoted, particularly on boundaries that currently have unsympathetic boundary treatments.	

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When new trees are planted the impact of the tree on important views, both now and when it reaches maturity, must be carefully considered.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special landscape qualities of hedges and trees within the conservation area.	Immediate
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.	

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 house extensions and the retention of amenity space. The following are additional matters which have been identified as potential issues in the West Kirby Conservation Area.

3.2.4 While it is chiefly historic buildings that are likely to suffer through poorly designed extensions there are a number of modern buildings whose original design was sympathetic to context of the village's historic buildings. These original design characteristics could be threatened by inappropriate alterations

<b>EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS</b>	
Issue	Location
Extensions to buildings within the conservation area may detract from the significance of the individual building or the setting of adjacent buildings	Throughout
<b>Policy Recommendations</b>	
Extensions should only be permitted where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the additional structure has does not detract from the character and appearance of the area or of any building that makes a positive contribution to it. Extensions should be subservient to the parent building.	
Where extensions are proposed they should be prioritised towards the less significant areas of the building (for example a rear elevation or previously altered area).	
Alterations should be chosen that require the least possible degree of permanent loss of or change to historic fabric (for example minimising the size of new structural openings).	
The choice of the materials of the extension should minimise 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 (for example a poor quality porch or inappropriate windows), the opportunity should be taken if possible to secure improvements as part of the new building work.	

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Dormers should not be accepted on former agricultural buildings or domestic buildings constructed before the late 19th century that do not already feature dormer windows. Roof lights may be considered acceptable for such buildings. They should be confined to rear elevations and of a scale and design appropriate to the building in which they are installed.

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

3.2.5 None of the historic farm buildings in West Kirby conservation area remain in agricultural use, however, it will be important to retain character and appearance of the few that survive in their original form. The English Heritage publication *The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings* (<http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Traditional-Farm1.pdf>) provides detailed information and advice on good practice. ...

<b>CONVERSION AND ALTERATION OF FORMER AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS</b>	
Issue	Location
The conversion of former farm buildings can often result in the loss of the agricultural character of the building.	All former agricultural buildings
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
Schemes for conversion and refurbishment should be carefully designed to retain the form and character of the original structure, strictly minimising the size and numbers of new openings or alterations to existing openings.	
The construction of new 'domestic' features such as porches, dormers, chimneys, garages and garden walls/fences should be avoided.	
The choice of landscaping treatment around the buildings is also important with high quality hard landscaped courtyards more appropriate than domestic lawns.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of original farm buildings within the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications.	Immediate

<b>CHANGES OF USE</b>	
Issue	Location
Changes of use of an existing building can result in a number of incremental changes which result in an adverse effect on the conservation area.	All buildings
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
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

- 3.2.6 UDP Policy CHI (Listed Buildings and Structures) and the national guidance PPG15 Annex C Guidance on Alterations to Listed Buildings (<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/142838.pdf>) set out the controls over work to listed buildings. Any alteration, internal or external, which affects the special interest of a listed building, structure or its curtilage, requires Listed Building Consent.

<b>CHANGES TO LISTED BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
Certain changes to listed buildings, such as insertion of replacement windows and changes to chimneys, boundary walls and roof coverings, can not only be detrimental to the appearance of the individual buildings and their immediate setting, but they also give a poor precedent for other building owners.	Listed buildings
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
Ensure that any proposed alterations to a listed building are sympathetic to its historic fabric and appearance, and that the need for any alterations is fully justified.	
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 or retrospective consent granted for alterations that are considered acceptable.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate for new applications. Short to mid-term for other measures.
Carry out a survey of all listed buildings, photographing them and noting any changes.	
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
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.	

### **3.3 GENERAL GUIDANCE AND CONSERVATION AREA ENHANCEMENT**

- 3.3.1 In addition to the rigorous and consistent implementation of existing policies local authorities can carry out a wide range of activities to further preserve and enhance conservation areas. These relate to building condition, management of the public realm, highway matters, extended planning controls, public information and involvement of local groups in securing improvements to the Conservation Area.
- 3.3.2 Some of the following recommendations have implications in terms of staff resource and finance. They are set out as an agenda for future action.
- 3.3.3 Most of the buildings in West Kirby Village are in use and well maintained but there are also a small number of number of former agricultural structures which are not so well maintained or appear underused.. Local authorities

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have a range of powers to secure the repair of historic buildings, both listed and unlisted, which are seriously at risk. Keeping buildings in use is the best way of ensuring that they are well maintained. Good maintenance of historic buildings is the key to avoiding costly and often damaging repairs.

<b>CONDITION OF INDIVIDUAL SITES AND BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
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. Notwithstanding that, traditional farms and rural settlements are not always highly cared for or 'manicured'. A fine balance has to be struck between retaining the informality and charm of a traditional agricultural environment while avoiding obvious neglect and 'eyesores'.	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
The local authority should serve Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 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 may be required.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Prepare a guidance leaflet and issue to all residents within the conservation area explaining the benefits of good, regular maintenance and appropriate repair techniques.	Immediate to midterm
Regularly visit the conservation area, noting any sites or buildings in a poor condition. Serve relevant notices where appropriate.	

3.3.4 The public realm is a major feature in the overall appearance of an area. As part of its role as the highways authority the local council can make a major contribution to the well being of conservation areas. Changes to highway alignments, safety and traffic management measures can make a very significant impact sometimes visually beneficial but often detrimental.

3.3.5 The installation of street lighting, signage and other street furniture also requires careful consideration due to the rural character of the area

<b>CONDITION / MAINTENANCE OF THE PUBLIC REALM</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
The physical condition of the public realm has a major impact on the appearance of historic areas.	All public roads and pavements
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
The existing public realm areas should be well maintained and where necessary repaired to a standard that befits the conservation area and enhances the setting of the existing buildings.	
Any new service installations must take account of the area's special interest.	

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Action	Priority
Regularly monitor condition of public realm areas and make any necessary improvements	Mid-term

<b>HIGHWAYS MODIFICATIONS MARKINGS AND SIGNAGE</b>	
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.	All public roads and pavements
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
Any major changes or additions to the existing highway layout may have negative impacts on the conservation area. New proposals should be subject to a heritage impact appraisal at an early stage and adequate mitigation measures introduced.	
Ensure that the objective of preserving and enhancing the character of the conservation area carries due weight when considering proposals to improve road safety or traffic flow.	
Ensure that all future highways features are proven to be necessary and are of an appropriate design and constructed of appropriate materials.	
Action	Priority
Obtain advice on appropriate alternatives to standard practice	Mid-term

3.3.6 While many local residents may be interested in the history of their area and derive pleasure from the conservation area status of West Kirby Village others may be unaware of the benefits and responsibilities that designation brings.

<b>PUBLIC AWARENESS AND CONTRIBUTION</b>	
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.	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
Make conservation area information readily available to residents, for instance making appraisals / management plans available in local libraries (or other well used public buildings) and on the internet.	
Prepare a guidance leaflet and issue to all residents within the conservation area.	
Residents groups and Amenity Societies may be particularly useful in the recording of the area in terms of its present day character and historical development.	
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	Mid term.

3.3.7 In carrying out conversions or alterations to the fabric of existing buildings and boundary structures the following good conservation practice should be applied. Some development within conservation areas, particularly for householders, is within permitted development rights. Depending on the scale of the building works planning permission may or may not currently be required. Even when a statutory consent is not required, the local authority is in a good position to offer advice to property owners and so help them to maintain both the historic interest and commercial value of their property.

<b>GUIDANCE ON STRUCTURAL ALTERATION TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
Alterations to the main historic fabric of a building can lead to the loss of some of its historic value and visual qualities and can be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area as a whole. The same concern applies to more recent buildings whose original design was sympathetic to the area's character and appearance.	All buildings making a positive contribution to the area.
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
Where alterations are necessary for the continued use of the building they should be prioritised towards the less significant areas of the building (for example a rear elevation or previously altered area).	
Alterations should be chosen that require the least possible degree of permanent loss of or change to historic fabric (for example minimising the size of new structural openings).	
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 traditional materials for modern alternatives (for example repairing a stone wall using stone, not concrete blocks).	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate for advice to residents' queries. Mid term for other measures.
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	

<b>GUIDANCE ON ALTERATION OR LOSS OF ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
Alterations to or loss of existing features on historic buildings that contribute to their character and appearance can be detrimental to the individual building and the area as a whole. The same concern applies to more recent buildings whose original design was sympathetic to the area's character and appearance.	All buildings making a positive contribution to the area
<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 and chimneys should be carefully considered by the local authority.	

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Repair of worn or damaged features should always be considered before replacement. For example partially decayed timber doors and windows may be easily repaired by a suitably skilled joiner.	
Upgrading to meet modern requirements should be considered before replacement. For instance draft stripping and secondary glazing should be installed in preference to the wholesale replacement of existing windows.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate for advice to residents' queries. Mid term for other measures.
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	

<b>GUIDANCE ON ALTERATIONS TO MODERN BUILDINGS</b>	
Issue	Location
Alterations to more modern buildings in the conservation area may offer opportunities for enhancing the character and appearance of the area as a whole. Poor design choices may make an unsympathetic building worse in terms of its wider contribution.	All buildings making a negative or neutral contribution to the area.
<b>Policy recommendations</b>	
The fundamental character of the existing building should be respected so that alterations do not appear incongruous.	
Colour for painted elements of a building must be carefully considered for their impact on the wider area and setting of the conservation area.	
Natural and locally traditional materials should be considered as an alternative to man made, for instance painted timber window frames or fascia boards in place of uPVC	
Where traditional details are not out of character with the building their use should be considered, for instance side hung casements not top hung opening lights	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate for advice to residents' queries. Mid term for other measures.
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	

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<b>LOSS OR ALTERATION TO BOUNDARY WALLS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
The loss of or alteration to boundary walls and gateposts would adversely affect the character of the conservation area.	Throughout
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
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.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate for advice to residents' queries and planning applications. Mid term for other measures.
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	

<b>EXISTING UNSYMPATHETIC ALTERATIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
There are a number of instances of detrimental changes to un-listed buildings carried out in the past, most notably the insertion of replacement windows and work such as poorly executed pointing to boundary walls, unsuitable fences and unsympathetic paving. 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 and un-listed buildings which contribute to the conservation area
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
Through example and encouragement promote reinstatement of historic features and replacement of unsuitable modern elements.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
A guidance leaflet should be issued explaining the benefits of reinstatement works.	Mid-term

- 3.3.8 The installation of new fixtures can adversely impinge on the character of buildings and the Conservation Area. Recent changes to the General Permitted Development Order 1955 (October 2008) now mean that planning permission can be required for a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe on a dwellinghouse on its roof or wall fronting a highway and forming a principal elevation or side elevation of the dwellinghouse

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<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.	
Microgeneration of energy is to be encouraged in terms of environmental conservation principles but 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.	Short term
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	
Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	

3.3.9 Many of the historic buildings that contribute to the character and appearance of the West Kirby Conservation Area are unlisted. Features that contribute to the area such as windows, roof materials and boundary walls are at risk from future alteration and loss. Guidance, such as that set out above, can help people to make good decisions about their historic properties. However the full public benefit of conservation areas can only be ensured through extended planning controls.

<b>ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Location</b>
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, by restricting permitted development and requiring	All buildings

planning permission for a variety of building works.	
<b>Policy recommendation</b>	
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.	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
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

3.3.10 Section 4 of this Appraisal and Management Plan discusses Article 4 directions in more detail

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

### **4.1 BOUNDARY AMENDMENT**

4.1.1 Amendments to the conservation area boundary are not proposed despite consideration being given to the following: **(could these be included on a map)**

- Altering the boundary to exclude the post 1960s developments to the rear of the properties fronting onto the east side of Village Road - although not contributing to the character of the area, the sites will originally have been included to protect the area's immediate setting. This will still be relevant in assessing any future development proposals.
- Extending the conservation area up Village Road to include 'The Lodge' at the junction of Wetstone Lane, the heathland between Column Road and Village Road (bounded by the public footpath between the two, the Column and the sandstone buildings at the junction of Village Road and Column Road – These are all features important to the history of the area but it could be argued that they are already protected by UDP designations (Area of Special Landscape Value and Site of Biological or Earth Science Importance).

### **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 and render the erection of satellite dishes fronting a highway and the reduction in the size of extensions.

- 4.2.2 Amendments for Part 40 for domestic microgeneration equipment (April 2008) and for Part 1 development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse (October 2008) have altered these rights chiefly in regard to the extent of ancillary buildings in back gardens and solar panels on the front of properties.
- 4.2.3 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.
- 4.2.4 Article 4 directions are not just an automatic consequence of conservation area designation, but should derive from 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.
- 4.2.5 In the case of West Kirby, there are currently no article 4 directions associated with the unlisted buildings. In order to protect the existing unlisted historic buildings and to encourage the reinstatement of lost features, it is recommended that article 4 directions are used to withdraw permitted development rights for the following elements:
- Windows and doors
  - Roof coverings and roof features
  - The colour and surface treatment of elevations.
  - Boundary walls.
  - Solar panels on front roofs.
  - Microgeneration