

Compstall Conservation Area Management Plan

Introduction to Management Plan

The aim of this management plan is to complement existing national and local policies by providing further advice on the management of the conservation area. It sets out a possible management plan for the conservation area. The recommendations contained within the management plan are intended to put in place management measures to ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved and enhanced, and assist in managing change by paying due regard to the area's special interest.

This management plan has been developed from, and should be considered in conjunction with, Compstall Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

The management plan is divided into three sections. **Section A** sets out policies and controls in relation for the preservation of the special interest of the area; **Section B** highlights the identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the area; **Section C** relates to general proposals for the enhancement of the Conservation Area.

Section A: Policies and Statutory Controls

This section deals with the following three areas:

- An overview of the planning legislation as it relates to the conservation area
- An interpretation of the existing planning policy framework
- An overview of the statutory powers of the Council

Legislative Background

The designation of a conservation area and production of an appraisal document is not an end in itself. The character appraisal provides the basis for developing management proposals for the conservation area that fulfil the general duty placed on the Local Authority under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, now formalised into a national Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 219c) to draw up and publish such proposals. The purpose of this document is to present draft proposals which seek to promote the preservation and enhancement of the special character of the conservation area, informed by the appraisal for internal consultation. The special qualities of the conservation area have been identified as part of the appraisal process in the first part of this document, and both will be subject to monitoring and review. The national legislative framework for guiding development in conservation areas is provided by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, this guidance draws on the themes identified in the appraisal,

and satisfies the statutory requirement of section 71(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, namely:

“It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas”.

This document reflects Government guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 “Planning and the Historic Environment”, English Heritage guidance set out in “Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas” published in February 2006, and policies within the Stockport Unitary Development Plan 2006.

Unitary Development Plan and Local Development Framework

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires the Council to prepare a Unitary Development Plan (UDP) setting out the Council’s policies and proposals in respect of development and other use of land in the Borough. The UDP contains detailed planning policies relating to conservation areas, listed buildings and the protection of archaeological sites that guide and inform decision-making in respect of planning applications which affect the historic environment. The Council adopted the current Stockport UDP on 31st May 2006 to provide development guidance up to 2011.

Relevant UDP Policies:

The proposals in this management plan reflect the policies in Stockport’s UDP, in particular those contained in Chapter 4, *Heritage Conservation*: HC1 (Conservation Areas); HC2 (Listed Buildings); HC3 (Protection of Archaeological Sites).

Other UDP policies which are relevant to Compstall Conservation Area include those contained within:

- Chapter 1 *Design and Character of Development*: DCD1 (Character and Development)
- Chapter 2 *Landscape, Countryside and River Valleys*: LCR1: LCR1.1 – 1.1a (Landscape Character Areas – M Etherow Parklands)
- Chapter 3 *Natural Environment*: NE1 (Biodiversity and Nature Conservation) and NE2 (Tree and Woodland Protection) in relation to Ernocroft Wood (SBI 38), Redbrow Wood (SBI 30), Etherow Country Park & Roach Wood (SBI 39) and the areas Local Nature Reserve status (Etherow Country Park 39)
- Chapter 6 *Green Belt and Agriculture*: GBA1 (Green Belt Protection) GBA1.7 (Major Existing Developed Site in the Green Belt – MEDS)
- Chapter 8 *Leisure*: L1 (General Policies) L1.8 (Strategic Recreation Route)
- Chapter 14 *Shopping and the Built Environment*: SE1 (Shopping and the Built Environment)
- Chapter 15 *Strategic and Sustainable Transport*: ST1.4 (Walking)

The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 proposes new arrangements for the Planning system. This will involve the adoption of a Local Development Framework (LDF), which will in time replace the UDP. The LDF will consist of a combination of core strategies and policies supplemented by Supplementary Planning Documents on a range of topics. Where new policy is proposed to address particular issues identified in the Conservation Area, such documents will be incorporated in the LDF and a detailed programme for their development will be set.

The Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note, PPG15 paragraph 1.6 emphasises the key role of local authorities in the stewardship of the historic environment urges local authorities to:

"...maintain and strengthen their commitment to stewardship of the historic environment, and to reflect it in their policies and their allocation of resources. It is important that, as planning authorities, they adopt suitable policies in development plans, and give practical effect to them through their development control function. As highway authorities too, their policies and activities should reflect the need to protect the historic environment and to promote sustainable economic growth, for roads can have a particular impact at all levels – not only through strategic decisions on the siting of new roads, but also through the more detailed aspects of road building and road maintenance, such as the quality of street furniture and surfaces. Above all, local authorities should ensure that they call on sufficient specialist conservation advice, whether individually or jointly, to inform their decision-making and to assist owners and other members of the public."

Statutory Controls

Conservation Area Designation

Designation as a conservation area brings with it a degree of additional statutory protection under planning legislation aimed at assisting the preservation or enhancement of the area. The main consequences of conservation area designation, as defined in the Planning Act (1990), are as follows:

- Conservation area consent is required for the demolition of listed and unlisted buildings
- Planning consent is required for the installation of satellite dishes visible from the public highway
- 6 week notice period for works to trees not already protected by Tree Preservation Orders
- Local planning authorities must publish detailed proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and should show what weight will be attached to Supplementary Planning Guidance on individual conservation areas
- The desirability of preserving a conservation area is a material issue in determining a planning application
- The GPDO 1995 requires planning applications for certain types of development that do not require planning applications elsewhere and are 'permitted development'

- Local planning authorities can further restrict development rights on dwellings where the development fronts a public area through Article 4 (2) Direction.
- Permitted Development Rights of non residential properties can be restricted using Article 4 (1) Directions which require approval of the Secretary of State

Demolition of buildings

Section 74 of the Act provides for control over the demolition of buildings in conservation areas, (subject to various exceptions). Paragraph 4.27 of PPG 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment indicates that, *“The general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area”*. It goes on to advise that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings (paragraph 3.16 - 3.19 of PPG15). Conservation area consent for demolition would not be granted where it affects a building or other structure which makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. Permission for development involving the demolition or removal of such a building or structure will only be granted where it is beyond repair and incapable of beneficial use. In exceptional cases permission will be granted if the redevelopment or the result of the demolition would produce substantial benefits for that community (including the physical revitalisation of the conservation area) which would outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.

Article 4 Directions

Article 4(1) and 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) enables local planning Authorities to make certain directions to withdraw permitted development rights given under the order. Article 4(2) Directions are most commonly in relation to conservation areas and apply only to parts of dwelling houses and associated buildings and structures fronting onto highways, waterways, or open spaces. The Local Authority can confirm Article 4(2) Directions once the Direction has been advertised locally and notice served on residents. They may be used to withdraw permitted development rights for a prescribed range of development which materially affects aspects of the external appearance of dwelling houses in conservation areas. Article 4(1) Directions can be used to withdraw permitted development rights on any type of land or building, whether or not fronting onto highways, waterways or open spaces and is the means for the Local Planning Authority to withdraw permitted development rights on non residential properties within a conservation area. An Article 4(1) Direction requires the approval of the First Secretary of State.

Government Guidance on the use of Article 4 Directions is set out in DoE Circular 9/95. It states that permitted development rights should only be withdrawn where there is firm evidence to suggest that permitted development, which could damage the character or appearance of the conservation area, is taking place or is likely to take place.

Works to Trees

If not already protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), anyone intending to lop or fell a tree within a conservation area greater than 75mm in diameter at 1m above ground level, is required to give the Council 6 weeks written notice before starting work. This provides the Council with an opportunity of assessing the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, in which case a TPO may be served.

Urgent Works and Repairs Notices

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural interest by affording the Local Planning Authority powers to take action in the following circumstances:

- Urgent Works

Where a historic building has deteriorated to the extent that its preservation may be at risk, the Act enables the Local Planning Authority (or English Heritage) to carry out urgent works for the preservation of listed buildings following notice to the owner. These powers can be used in respect of unoccupied parts of listed or unlisted buildings in conservation areas (in the case of the latter, only with the agreement of the Secretary of State, advised by English Heritage). The powers are confined to urgent works, such as emergency repairs for example to keep the building wind and water tight and safe from collapse. The LPA may recover the cost of such works from the owner.

- Repairs Notice

If the Local Planning Authority (or English Heritage) considers that a listed building is not being properly preserved it may serve a Repairs Notice on the owner. This Notice specifies the works, which the authority considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building and can only be served on statutorily listed buildings.

- Section 215 Notice

Local authorities have the power to serve a Section 215 Notice on the owner (or occupier) of any land or building whose condition is adversely affecting the amenity of the area, particularly a conservation area. This Notice requires the person responsible to clean up the site or building, or the authority may carry out works and reclaim the cost of such works.

Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)

The Planning Act 1990 affords Local Planning Authorities the power to serve Compulsory Purchase Notices, with authorisation from the Secretary of state, on land or buildings that are required to secure development, re-development or improvement.

Section B: Compstall Conservation Area SWOT Analysis

This section of the management plan examines key characteristics of Compstall Conservation Area following the designation and appraisal process carried out in 2006. It draws upon the findings of the character appraisal as well as comments received following the public consultation exercise. **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**, are summarised below:

Strengths

- Strong historical roots
- Retention of original building fabric
- Strong development patterns and rich architectural detailing
- Views of outstanding visual quality - dramatic panoramic views of the surrounding Pennine landscape and restricted progressive views through the village
- Quality of individual buildings reflected in statutory listings
- Generally well maintained private buildings and land
- Strong visual link between the industrial village and its physical setting of green open space and woodland
- Quality of the environment recognised through Local Nature Reserve, Green Belt Policy, Tree Preservation Orders, SBIs and SSSIs status, Landscape Character Area and Major Existing Development Site policies
- Park with Green Flag award
- Rich industrial archaeological heritage both above and below ground
- Active local groups
- Large number of locally important buildings
- Approved Planning Brief in place for Compstall Mill complex

Weaknesses

- Loss of character arising from inappropriate alterations (windows, doors, rendering and boundary treatments)
- Negative impact of inappropriately sited satellite dishes
- Lack of recognition on local list for key unlisted buildings within the conservation area
- Traffic and parking issues
- Loss of traditional road surface materials, street signage/furniture and street lighting
- Underused/vacant historic buildings at Compstall Mill complex which has resulted in a decline in structural integrity
- Inappropriate new development which is intrusive in the conservation area and in key views

Opportunities

- Improved access to design guidance, and advice on maintenance and repair for home owners, developers, property owners and agents
- Appropriate enhancement/maintenance of the public realm (street surfaces, lighting etc.)
- Improved access to information on the history and development of the area
- Improved access to design guidance, and advice on maintenance and repair for land and property owners
- Introduce Article 4 Directions to protect the erosion of the special character of the area through the exercise of permitted householder development rights
- Review of buildings of local historic and architectural merit for inclusion on local list
- Enhancement opportunities through the sensitive, conservation-led regeneration of Compstall Mill complex

Threats

- Development pressure for alterations to properties in the form of extensions etc.
- Further erosion of character through loss of historic fabric/original architectural details etc.
- Further erosion of character through inappropriate new development
- Further erosion of special character of the area through loss of important trees and green spaces
- Further erosion of special character of the area through loss of key views
- Loss of character through the introduction of insensitive highways and traffic schemes including obtrusive road markings, unnecessary street clutter and poor quality paving schemes
- Alterations to historic street layouts
- Alteration of historic settings by the inappropriate redevelopment of sites in the surrounding area

Section C: Enhancement Proposals for Compstall Conservation Area

This section of the management plan relates to proposals for the management and enhancement of Compstall Conservation Area as identified within the character appraisal.

Listed Buildings

There are at present 4 listed structures within Compstall Conservation Area. All are listed Grade II and are recognised for their group value and the important contribution they make to the special character and appearance of the conservation area. Under Section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, listed building consent is required for demolition of a listed building, and for any works of alteration – internal and/or external - or extension which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed Building Consent is not normally required for maintenance and ‘like for like’ repairs unless they would result in a loss of historic fabric or change to the appearance of the building. It is an offence to carry out unauthorised works to a listed building.

The requirement for listed building consent is distinct from the need for planning permission. Under Section 6(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council, when considering proposals involving works to listed buildings, has a statutory duty to pay “special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

Recommendation for Action

- Use of development control powers to ensure that proposals involving works to listed buildings or affecting their settings will be considered in the context of HC2: HC2.1 - 2.4 of the UDP and government guidance contained within PPG15
- Development of an Enforcement Strategy to identify and address unauthorised works effecting listed buildings in line with guidance contained within *Enforcement Guidance on Listed Building Prosecution* (Department for Communities and Local Government: London 2006)
- Continue to provide professional advice in relation to works to listed buildings
- Seek to work with owners to develop a pro-active strategy for maintenance and repair works

Key Unlisted Buildings

Compstall Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies a number of key unlisted buildings as being of particular architectural or historic distinction which contribute significantly to the special character and appearance of the area. The identification of buildings or groups of buildings of local interest helps to ensure that owners, developers and other interested parties are aware of their local importance and merit.

It is recommended that the Council carry out a survey of any buildings within the conservation area, which make a positive contribution to the conservation area, in order to identify those for inclusion on a local list of buildings of significance.

Planning Policy Guidance 15 states that there should be a presumption in favour of the retention of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area and advises that proposals that may involve the demolition of such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals for the demolition of a listed building.

Recommended Actions:

- Undertake a survey to identify buildings of historic interest for inclusion on the Local List
- Where buildings are identified as being of particular local interest and are included on any update to the Borough Council's 'Schedule of Buildings of Local Interest' their retention, repair and renovation will be sought as far as possible and applications for works to such buildings will be subject to particular scrutiny in accordance with HC2.5 and other relevant Policies of the UDP
- Conservation area consent for the demolition of any unlisted 'key historic building' (as identified within the Character Appraisal and on the relevant appraisal map) should only be granted where justified against the criteria specified in PPG 15 (paragraphs 3.16 – 3.19)

Minor Alterations

The special character of Compstall Conservation Area is essentially derived from the relationship between the natural and built environment and the area's rich industrial archaeology and history. The historic development and the architectural quality of Compstall's buildings and the survival of original detailing and materials make a significant contribution to the individual character of buildings in the area.

The cumulative impact of minor alterations to buildings, including fixtures and fittings, have had a negative impact on the character and appearance of the area and some loss of original architectural features has occurred. Wide spread rendering of terraced housing has impaired the stone-built uniformity of the townscape and disrupted the original relationship between the surrounding natural landscape and local natural building materials. Widespread alteration to original architectural features such as windows and doors has occurred, resulting in some loss of character and visual fragmentation of previously harmonious facades. As such the special character of the conservation area could be eroded by the further loss of these original materials and architectural details.

Special controls over minor development through the removal of certain permitted development rights (in the form of Article 4 Directions) are therefore considered appropriate for this conservation area and this proposal was authorised in principle by the Council's Executive on 13th March 2006. The aim of an Article 4 Direction is to encourage retention of the high quality features of buildings in the Conservation Areas and to enhance the environment of which they are part. 'Like for like' repairs and replacements of original

architectural features will be encouraged, as will the removal of previous unsympathetic changes to buildings.

Recommendations for Action

- Introduce Article 4(2) Directions to control permitted development within the conservation area
- Make available advisory notes for owners and tenants of land and buildings within the conservation area and those affecting the setting of the conservation area to raise awareness of their role in preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area
- Provide informal guidance and advice to the owners and tenants of land and buildings within the conservation area and those affecting the setting of the conservation area, as requested, in relation to sympathetic works
- Seek to procure funding to make grant assistance available to home owners for repair/restoration/reinstatement schemes

New Development

The special interest of Compstall Conservation Area is essentially derived from the relationship between the River Etherow, its steep-sided valley and the buildings of the mill village; the contrast between the close urban grain of the mill village and its open wooded and lakeside setting; and the way in which the mill group, terraces of former workers' housing, hydraulic engineering features and evidence of mining and transport systems illustrate the development of this important early industrial site. Local stone is the prevailing building material of the area, in association with Welsh slate roofs, whilst brick is the predominant material in the Compstall Mills complex. The scale and massing of traditional properties within the conservation area and their relationship with the overall built form and wider landscape has been maintained and very little of the original mill housing stock has been lost through demolition.

The significance of the area's open rural quality and mature woodlands is acknowledged through its Green Belt and Local Nature Reserve status and the designation of its woodlands as SBIs and SSSIs (Site of Biological Importance and Sites of Special Scientific Interest) with Tree Preservation Order protection. Any proposed development must therefore give due recognition to these additional levels of planning controls. Development of Compstall's countryside is strictly controlled and is subject to specific guidance under Policy LCR1.1 with regard to Etherow Parklands Landscape Character Area.

Compstall Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies a small number of buildings which are intrusive in the conservation area by virtue of their siting, scale, massing, and materials and that are inappropriate to their townscape/landscape setting. Amongst these, Etherow Country Park Visitor Centre is specifically identified as an intrusive building, which is prominent in views from the mill complex and the car park. Its adjacent car park is poorly landscaped and does not provide visual links between the mill complex, lakeside and historic village.

New development which pays minimal respect to local building traditions and which detracts from the special character and appearance of the conservation area such as inappropriate new housing developments, the construction of unsympathetic extensions, and the loss of open spaces, results in the loss of the special qualities that the designation is intended to protect. It is therefore critical that any development which occurs within the conservation area complements the qualities of its context defined within the Compstall Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

The scale, massing, architectural detailing and pattern of development of any new development within the conservation area or affecting the setting of the conservation area will be expected to respect that of the existing built environment of the conservation area. Appropriate external materials and finishes will be expected on all new development. Traditional materials typical of the conservation area, identified within the appraisal, will be encouraged to complement the local built heritage. Where modern materials are proposed these should be in harmony with traditional materials. Extensions and alterations to buildings will be expected to follow scale, proportions, features, detailing and materials of existing buildings. Stone-built and brick boundary walls are important in defining public and private spaces in the area, providing visual continuity through the area and as such boundary treatments will be expected to reflect those identified as typical of the area.

Compstall Mills

As highlighted within the conservation area character appraisal, development opportunities in Compstall focus around the potential for the conservation-led, mixed-use regeneration of Compstall Mills. Appraisals of the historic fabric, historic environment, archaeological significance and structural condition of the mill group have been prepared by consultants on behalf of the owners of the site. This has informed a Planning Brief for the site which considers the complex land use, conservation and environmental issues relating to the site. In addition the site is identified by Policy GBA1.7 as a major existing development site in the Green Belt (MEDS) and is subject to guidance for specific Landscape Character Areas (LCR1.1 Etherow Parklands)

Recommendations for Action

- The Council will ensure that new development within the conservation area or affecting the setting of the conservation area preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area through the implementation of HC1: HC1.1 - 1.3 and HC2: HC2.1 - 2.5, and CDH1: CDH1.1 - 1.2 of the UDP
- The Council will ensure that the area's Green Belt and SBI, SSSI, Local Nature Reserve and Landscape Character Area status is given due recognition through the implementation of relevant UDP policies contained within NE1 & NE2 and GBA1 & GBA2 and LCR1.1
- The Council will ensure that new development proposals within the Compstall Mills complex are in accordance with the approved Compstall Mills Planning Brief
- Production of guidance notes for applicants on expectations for submission of planning applications in conservation areas including the requirement for a Design and Access Statement in the validation of all planning applications which clearly demonstrates how the proposal fits the context of the site and its immediate surroundings.

- Production of design briefs and guidelines in relation to any specific development sites in the area
- Promote high standards of design of any new development within the conservation area, in accordance with national best practice and guidance (English Heritage and CABI)

Supplementary Documents/Guidance:

- Compstall Mills Planning Brief (Ask Property Developments/SMBC May 2008)
- Planning Policy Statement 2: Green Belts
- Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- Buildings in Context: New Development in Historic Areas (CABI & English Heritage 2001)
- Etherow Country Park Management Plan 2004 – 2014 (updated Jan 2008)
- SPD *Sustainable Design and Construction* (SMBC 2006)
- SPG *Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings* (SMBC 2001)
- SPG *Design of Residential Development* (SMBC 2007)

Archaeology

The enhanced Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for Stockport identifies a number of sites of archaeological significance within Compstall Conservation Area. Compstall was an early rural industrial site, and as such the area is of particular importance for its industrial archaeology which features buildings, artifacts and sites relating to the development of the 19th century cotton manufacturing and finishing works and their associated machinery and hydraulic engineering features. Inclusion of a site on the SMR gives it formal recognition in the planning system. The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether that monument is scheduled or unscheduled. The conservation area therefore has archaeological potential both above and below ground which will require further consideration to be given to the affect of applications for any significant new development in the area.

Recommended Actions

- Guidance/advice or consultation should be sought from Greater Manchester Archaeology Unit (GMAU) where development involves sites identified on the SMR
- An archaeological assessment or field evaluation may be required where archaeology is known or thought likely to exist or where the indications are that remains are likely to prove important, prior to a decision on any planning application being made
- A Building Appraisal will be required where substantial alteration/demolition of key historic buildings is proposed
- Where planning permission is granted for a site, conditions should be attached to ensure that provision is made for full investigation of the site's archaeological potential and for the preservation in situ or recording of any archaeological deposits that are encountered

Guidance

- PPG 16 Archaeology and Planning

Trees and Open Space

As identified within the character appraisal trees and green open spaces make a vital contribution to the special character and appearance of the conservation area as the setting to the industrial village and in key views. The interaction between built and natural elements is a strong factor in defining character and creating a distinctive sense of place. Compstall village has an extensive woodland setting made up of woodland to the west around Compstall Hall (Redbrow Wood) and to the east at Etherow Park which includes Ernecroft Wood, Beacom Wood, Keg Wood, and Roach Wood. The areas are expanses of ancient, semi-natural woodland consisting of a mixture of deciduous woodland and Scots pine and Larch plantation. Conservation area designation automatically protects trees over a certain size. Additionally the significance of individual trees and areas of mature woodland is acknowledged through the designation of the woodlands as a Site of Biological Importance (SBI) with Tree Preservation Order (TPO) protection which means that formal permission is required from the Council to fell or lop them. Etherow Country Park is designated as a Local Nature Reserve, an SBI and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and much of its associated woodland and individual trees are covered by TPOs. A formalised review and appraisal of trees in the area would however indicate any need for increasing the number afforded this extra level of control.

Etherow Valley Landscape Character Area

Compstall Conservation Area lies within the Etherow Valley Landscape Character Area, defined within Stockport's Unitary Development Plan, and as such development of the area is strictly controlled and is subject to guidance under LCR1.1 of Stockport's Unitary Development Plan

Etherow Country Park

The park is designated as a Local Nature Reserve and includes within its boundaries a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The majority of the Park has also been assigned Site of Biological Importance status. All the habitats within the Park, especially those within the Local Nature Reserve boundary (which includes the S.B.I and S.S.S.I) are of significant value to wildlife. In recent years the site has also been designated as a Green Flag Park and was the winner of the ILAM open space award in 2003. The Park is managed by the Parks and Recreation Section within the Council which employs five members of staff dedicated to the Park including a Park Manager and three Park Officers, as well as a member of staff on a workstep programme. The SSSI is managed in partnership with Cheshire Wildlife Trust local branch volunteers. Contained within the Park boundaries are three private residential properties, a Council owned residential property and a private working farm. Many of the Park's industrial heritage features require specialist monitoring and maintenance to keep them in working order. The Park infrastructure and its facilities have suffered in recent years due to its popularity, through wear and tear and the financial constraints placed upon local authorities in trying to maintain such facilities. There is a clear commitment however by Stockport

Metropolitan Borough Council to address the problems brought about from financial constraints by working in partnership with the local Community Council (local residents group), the Friends of Etherow volunteer group and the Water User Groups, as well as other service sectors within the Council.

Recommended Actions

- The Council will continue to ensure that the area's Green Belt, Local Nature Reserve, Country Park, SBI, SSSI, and Landscape Character Area status is given due recognition through the implementation of all relevant UDP Policies contained within NE1 & NE2, GBA1 & GBA2 and LCR1
- Undertake a review of protection afforded to trees through Tree Preservation Orders
- The local authority will maintain and replace as necessary street trees within the conservation area
- Continue to provide professional advice on all tree matters as required
- Continued application of the Council's planning powers and policies contained within the UDP Review to protect trees and woodland which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area
- Continue to develop relationships and work in partnership with internal Council departments and local community groups

Supplementary Documents

- Etherow Country Park Management Plan 2004 – 2014 (updated Jan 2008)
- Stockport Council's Strategic Plan 2007-2010 '*Greener, Safer, Stronger*'
- Countryside Act 1949
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Reservoir Act 1975
- Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 (with respect to litter)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Setting and Views

Compstall Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies and describes important views across, within and through the area which make an essential contribution to its special character and appearance. It is vital therefore that any development proposals which come forward for the area must be considered in this context and their impact on important views should be fully assessed as part of the planning process. The Council will seek to ensure that all new development respect all important views as identified within the character appraisal.

Recommendations for Action

- Seek to ensure all development respects the setting of the conservation area and important views within, into and out of the area as identified in the Appraisal. Key views are to be protected from inappropriate forms of development. HC1.3 Stockport UDP

Shopfronts and Signage

As highlighted within the character appraisal, alterations to commercial premises within the conservation area such as the insertion of inappropriate shop frontages, replacement windows, unsympathetic signage and advertisement boards are an area of concern which are harmful to the special character and appearance of the conservation area. It is essential therefore to ensure that these elements do not detract further from the character and appearance of the conservation area. Surviving traditional shop fronts in the area shall be protected as far as possible and opportunities to reinstate original designs shall be required whenever alterations are proposed. New or replacement shop fronts shall be high quality, sympathetic to the building and local architectural traditions and shall not detract from the character and appearance of the area as a whole.

There will be a presumption against projecting box signs, oversized fascias and internally illuminated signs. Formal policies contained within the UDP, adopted SPG and PPG19 should be adhered to in order to preserve or enhance the character of buildings and that of the Conservation Area. Opportunities to replace inappropriate signage will be taken as they arise.

Recommendation for Action:

- Undertake a photographic survey of all surviving traditional shop frontages within the conservation area
- The Council will give special regard to applications to alter or develop commercial frontages within the conservation area and ensure proposals are high in overall quality and make a positive contribution to the conservation area
- Ensure high standards in the design of new shop fronts and in the design of alterations to existing shop fronts through the implementation of SE1, SE1.2, SE1.3 and SE1.4 of the UDP in the determination of applications for development
- The Council will apply high standards when considering applications for Advertisement Consent in the Conservation Area
- Development of an Enforcement Strategy to identify and address inappropriate signage in the area in line with Planning Policy Guidance 19 *Outdoor Advertisements*
- Continue to provide design guidance in relation to appropriate signage and advertising in conservation area

Supplementary Guidance:

- SPG: *Shopfronts and Related Advertisements* (Stockport MBC Adopted 2002)
- PPG 19: *Outdoor Advertisements*

Public Realm

As identified within the character appraisal, little of historic interest survives in the floorscape and street furniture of the conservation area. The conservation area character appraisal

identifies the loss of traditional street surfacing and street furniture and their replacement with unsympathetic modern materials, as an area of concern. It is therefore important to understand the impact of floorscape on the area and to ensure that this does not detract further from the character and appearance of the area. Street furniture should be introduced only where necessary and in a coordinated manner which is sympathetic to the area and is high quality design. As such the sensitive repair and reinstatement of any surviving traditional paving materials and only the introduction of high quality street lighting, street furniture of a sympathetic design to enhance the character and appearance of the area and reinforce its special identity should be sought.

Quiet Lanes

Identified Quiet Lanes within the conservation area are subject to Policy TD2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan and are subject to specific guidance to control developments and highway improvements that have an impact upon rural roads and which would detract from their character and value as “Quiet Lanes”.

Recommended Actions

- Seek to procure a co-ordinated approach to public realm works via consultation between all relevant Council Departments/stakeholders etc. including Highways, Streetscene, Planning, Conservation/Regeneration and Utility companies
- Seek to procure funding for the implementation of sympathetic environmental enhancement schemes within the conservation area
- Liaison between Planning, Conservation/Regeneration and Highways should be further developed, with an agreed approach to new surfacing within public areas or those likely to be adopted
- Ensure developments and highway improvements do not detract from recognised “Quiet Lanes” in line with specific guidance contained within Policy TD2.2 of the Council’s UDP
- Street furniture should be co-ordinated as part of new highway and development schemes, and the addition of new poles and features should be avoided where possible in order to reduce visual clutter and obstacle to pedestrians
- The Council will seek to ensure the retention of any surviving historic streetscape features
- Any future highway works should bring a positive improvement to the character and appearance of the conservation area in line with best practice recommendations
- Undertake a comprehensive photographic audit of ‘floorscape’ and ‘street furniture’ within the conservation area and its setting
- Seek to develop specific guidance for public realm works within Conservation Areas which addresses reinstatement/repair works

Supplementary Documents/Guidance

- Streets for All (North West) - English Heritage Publication (2005)
- Transport and Highways in Residential Areas – (Supplementary Planning Document)
- Footways Policy (Adopted 2005)
- Traffic Management in Historic Areas: Department for Transport advisory leaflet

Monitoring Change

Guidance from English Heritage in relation to the 'Management of Conservation Areas' (February 2006) recommends that arrangements for the monitoring of conservation areas should be considered. Changes in the appearance of conservation areas resulting from both the implementation of approved schemes and permitted or unauthorised alterations, as well as the condition of the areas' physical fabric, should be monitored regularly, the effects reviewed and policies modified, or specific action proposed as necessary, to deal with current issues. A review of the conservation area as a whole will also need to be undertaken on a regular basis in order for the character appraisal to be kept up to date in line with recommendations within the English Heritage publication *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* (February 2006) and in accordance with the requirement in BV219b for them to be up to date. Existing appraisals should ideally be reviewed on a five yearly basis. Where there is a comprehensive and up to date appraisal in place and in areas where little significant change has occurred a review is likely to result in a supplement to the existing appraisal which records any changes, confirming or redefining the special interest that warrants designation, setting out any new recommendations and revising the management strategy.

Detailed change can be monitored using initial audits and photographic records as a benchmark. The creation of a comprehensive photographic record of the conservation area will provide an invaluable aid to any later enforcement action. It will also provide an important baseline for measuring change in the appearance of the area and monitoring the physical condition of the buildings. Once established, such a record should be kept up to date to maintain its usefulness (enforcement action cannot be taken unless the unauthorised alteration can be shown to have been carried out within the previous four years). Where appropriate, the local community might be encouraged to help with creating a photographic record of the area and monitoring change.

Recommendations for Action:

- Seek to engage the local community in the production of a comprehensive photographic survey/record of the area
- General monitoring of the area to inform updates to appraisal and management and enhancement proposals
- Development of an Enforcement Strategy