

Guide to conservation area / Article 4 restrictions on your property

Following the designation of the Oxhey Conservation Area (in 2013) and the making of an Article 4 Direction for this area (4th April 2013), formal approval from the Council is required for a number of potential works to your house.

Generally, there is a presumption in favour of retaining buildings and parts of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

However, the general principle is that repairs and 'like for like' replacements can take place without the need for planning permission.

The new controls relate to 'material changes' – i.e. where the external appearance of a property is altered. This could be in the form of a replacement feature (e.g. timber door replaced with plastic door) or the addition/removal of a built form (e.g. addition of a new porch).

Where planning permission is now required (because of the Article 4 Direction) there is no fee to pay to the Council. Free advice on the planning process can be obtained from the Council and we would strongly recommend that

you contact us in advance to discuss development proposals.

You can speak to a planning officer in person at the Town Hall or over the phone on any weekday between 10am and 12:45 by calling 01923 226400 and asking for the Duty Planner.

Applications for planning permission can be made online or by post or by personal delivery to the Town Hall. Determination takes up to 8 weeks, which allows time for the application to be advertised and for consultation to take place.

Demolition

Generally, the demolition of any building larger than 115 cubic meters requires consent from the Council; but there are exceptions to this.

Demolition of boundary structures (e.g. walls) requires planning permission.

Internal alterations

These are not classed as development and do not require planning permission.

Chimneys

Carrying out 'like for like' repairs on chimneys would not require planning permission.

Removing chimneys would require planning permission

Roofs

Repairing or replacing roof tiles on a 'like for like' basis would not require planning permission.

Extending the roof (dormer windows etc) would require planning permission. Installing new roof windows (e.g. velux) would require planning permission.

Entrances

Repairing or replacing doors on a 'like for like' basis would not require planning permission; but replacing a timber door with UPVC would.

Adding door number plaques or door bells does not require planning permission.

Adding porches would require planning permission.

Satellite dishes

These additions would require planning permission if they are located on a chimney, wall or roof slope which both faces onto and is visible from a road.

Windows

Repairing or replacing windows on a 'like for like' basis would not require planning permission (e.g. replacing old timber sashes with new timber sashes). If single glazed windows are replaced with double glazed types of the same materials/proportions and with the same inset from the wall as existing, then planning permission from the Council is not required.

Painting of timber frames may require planning permission if a different paint colour is used to that which is existing.

External walls

Repairing existing render or repointing brickwork on a 'like for like' basis would not require planning permission.

Adding cladding (stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles) to the exterior of the properties would require planning permission.

Repainting an existing external wall in matching colours would not require planning permission.

Painting an existing external wall in a new paint colour would require planning permission.

Drainpipes

Minor scale repairs/replacement of drainpipes would not require planning permission.

Building extensions

Extensions to houses would require planning permission.

Solar panels & other microgeneration equipment

These additions would not require planning permission if on a roof slope (below the roof ridge) and not projecting more than 200mm out from the roof slope.

Hardstanding

Carrying out repairs on existing areas of hardstanding would not require planning permission.

Creating additional areas of hardstanding may require planning permission if more than 5 sq meters and non-permeable.

New buildings (including garages)

The provision of any new building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a "purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse" would require planning permission if located between a side elevation of the house and the

property boundary. Similarly, a container used for domestic heating purposes for the storage of oil or liquid petroleum gas would require planning permission if located between a side elevation of the house and the property boundary. Such proposals would be assessed on a case by case basis.

Trees

Notice in writing must generally be made to the Council before carrying out any works to cut down, prune, top or lop a tree. This applies to surgery works or felling of any tree with a trunk over 75mm in diameter measured 1.5 metres above ground level.

Exceptions are made for the removal of dead wood, dying or dangerous trees. Exceptions may also be made if the works being carried out are to help promote the growth of other trees (trees with stem diameters of less than 100mm at 1.5 metres).

Traditional Materials

Where historic features have been lost, such as timber framed sliding sash windows, we would recommend that you explore the potential for reinstatement using traditional materials. Such features enhance the appearance of the property and the wider conservation area. If high quality materials are used appropriately, property values are also likely to rise.