

Conservation Area Appraisals

As at January 2019

Derek Leach

The Dover Society has agreed to carry out conservation area appraisals for Dover District Council (DDC).

What is a conservation area? The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines the quality of a conservation area as being: 'the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. They exist to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place. Every local authority in England has at least one conservation area and there are now over 10,000.

An appraisal looks at the following issues:

1. The origins and evolution of the area under consideration.
2. The current boundary of the area and any review that should be made of that.
3. The positive and negative factors that contribute to or detract from the current condition of the conservation area.



Dour Street 2019

4. Any recommendations that will protect and enhance the conservation area. Any changes proposed must sustain and enhance the historic environment and its heritage.

What are conservation area appraisals?

The Act requires local authorities to keep conservation areas under regular review. It also calls for proposals to be formulated that will enhance conservation areas. Section 72 of that Act says that in determining a planning application for development attention must be paid to the character and appearance of a conservation area. When an appraisal is adopted by DDC it becomes a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission within and adjacent to the conservation area.

Why is the Society getting involved?

One of The Dover Society's aims is to lobby for our buildings and streets to be tidy, in good repair and attractive both for local people and for visitors. To help achieve this we have urged DDC to carry out reviews of Dover Town's seven conservation areas, but with limited resources in recent years DDC has only managed two reviews since 2000 and has urged the Society to assist by conducting the necessary surveys and submitting a draft report with any recommendations to the DDC Conservation Officer. We have

accepted this challenge and formed a small team which started work in the summer of 2018. We decided to cut our teeth in a relatively small and uncomplicated area: the Dour Street Conservation Area comprising Dour Street, Park Place and Park Street.

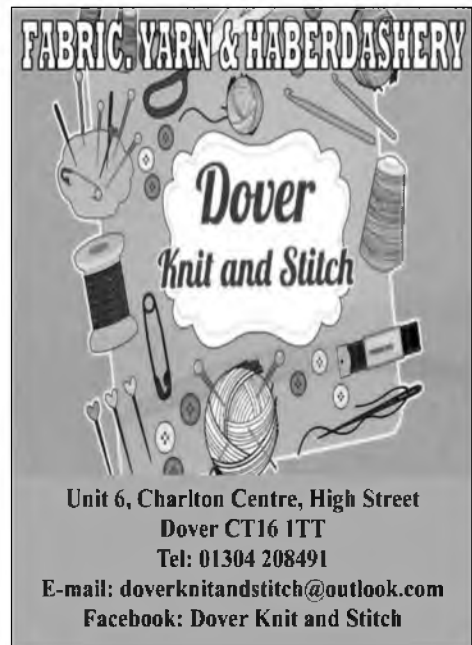
By the time you read this I expect our draft report to have been submitted and, hopefully, considered by the Conservation Officer and arrangements made for the public to be consulted before the report is submitted to the DDC Cabinet for approval.

The draft covers the historic development of the area, how the community was involved (announcement in the press and a letter to every resident inviting comments), detailed surveys (on foot) of the streets concerned, vulnerabilities and negative features and the significance of the area with its attractive, decorated, original 19th century terraces of houses, largely unchanged except for WWII bomb damaged houses replaced by two modern blocks of flats (excluded from the conservation area).

Our draft recommendations are to include within the conservation area the small open green space with its magnificent tree at the junction of Crafford Street and Dour Street as well as the police station in Park Place (excluded at present) as a fine example of a 1930s public building. We also consider that Park Place would be enhanced by replacing the present protective walls over the River Dour with railings. Finally, we recommend that an Article 4(2) direction be implemented for the whole of this conservation area to prevent any further degrading and, if possible as opportunity offers, to reinstate original shop front designs. All local authorities were given the power to

impose an Article 4(2) Direction by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. An Article 4(2) Direction, if adopted by DDC, would reinforce the Council's ability to protect the special character of the town. It would give DDC control over a variety of alterations to unlisted residences. Planning permission would be required for changes to windows, doors, roof materials, and chimney stacks, and the construction of external porches, the provision and removal of walls and fences and the provision of hard standings. These controls do not relate to the whole building, but only to those elevations which front a highway, waterway, or public open space, and which, therefore, affect the public face of the building.

Our work on the Dour Street area is finished. Only another six conservation areas left to do!



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