

Far Gosford Street

Conservation Area Management Plan



Coventry City Council

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Far Gosford Street Conservation Area Management Plan



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Far Gosford Street Conservation Area Management Plan

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1. Introduction to the Management Plan

1. Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places on local planning authorities the duty to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their districts. The character and appearance of conservation areas can change through incremental stages or quite suddenly and regular appraisals help to identify threats and opportunities which can be developed into a management plan.
2. The Management Plan has been developed from, and should be considered in conjunction with, the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area Appraisal. An appraisal assists local authorities by providing an analysis of the significance of the area, by identifying opportunities for beneficial change or for the need for additional protection and restraint. The role of the Management Plan is to address those threats to the character identified in the appraisal by setting out recommendations, opportunities and actions. A separate Design Guide will also be produced to address design framework topics including shop front design.
3. The aim of this management plan is to complement existing national and local policies by providing further advice on the management of Far Gosford Street Conservation Area. Following formal adoption by Coventry City Council, the Management Plan will be put into practice. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will form part of the evidence base for the City of Coventry Local Plan on the subject of the historic environment within the city. In this capacity the Management Plan will inform the development of planning policy affecting the Conservation Area. Together with the Appraisal, the Management Plan will also assist in development control decisions for planning permission, as well as inform decisions on public realm proposals. The Management Plan will also assist in the planning and delivery of each particular project which is part of the Phase 2 of the Townscape Heritage Initiative as well as the larger regeneration and redevelopment proposals. Far Gosford Street Conservation Area Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with the English Heritage documents *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* published in 2006 and *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* published in 2011 and in accordance with guidance from the Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Initiative.
4. The purpose of the Management Plan is to set out management actions to ensure that the character and appearance of Far Gosford Street Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced, and assist in interpreting the Local Plan– in particular Saved Local Plan Policies BE8: Conservation Areas, BE9: Development in Conservation Areas, BE10: The Retention of Buildings in Conservation Areas, BE11: Alteration or Extension of Listed Buildings, BE12: Changes of Use to Listed Buildings, BE13: Demolition of Listed Buildings, BE14: Locally Listed Buildings and BE15: Archaeological Sites and Proposed Local Plan Policies HE1: Conservation and Heritage Assets, DE1: Ensuring High Quality Design and SC1: The Network of Centres.
5. Far Gosford Street Conservation Area has recently benefited from the first phase of a Townscape Heritage Initiative, with funding provided from a variety of partners including the Heritage Lottery Fund, ERDF and Advantage West Midlands. Coventry City Council have been awarded a further phase of THI and ERDF funding. The aim of Phase 2 is:
 - to extend the heritage restoration work to the remainder of the street, so that the improvement is universal rather than patchwork, including key medieval buildings and the last remaining court houses;

- to focus on education, pulling together a wide partnership including the University and College to ingrain heritage understanding into the business and residential community.
6. The long-term vision for Far Gosford Conservation Area is to forge a renaissance of the once thriving street, to create a streetwide quality heritage environment that is the setting for creative and alternative businesses – a bohemian quarter for the city, attracting a much wider mix of visitors to both day time and evening attractions.
7. The Conservation Area Appraisal identified that the special character of Far Gosford Street Conservation Area derives from the following elements:
- Far Gosford Street was the main road out of Coventry to London and Leicester and had houses fronting onto it as early as the 12th century;
 - Land ownership on Far Gosford Street can be traced from the Medieval period to the present day due to the existence of some of the most complete records in the Midlands;
 - The high archaeological potential for Medieval remains concentrated to the west of the Conservation Area around the former gate and bridge over the River Sherbourne;
 - The cluster of timber framed buildings dating from the 15th and 16th centuries;
 - The existence of court houses and workshops to the rear of the properties, a once common feature of the growth in the post Medieval period;
 - The three groups of the distinctive weavers' 'topshops' which provide evidence of the former industrial use of the street for silk ribbon weaving in the late 18th and early 19th centuries;
 - The high proportion of inserted shop fronts documents the transformation of the residential and industrial buildings into commercial premises in the late 19th century;
 - The impressive offices of two former Cycle works, which later became automobile manufacturers, and a large number of workshops on a further site of automobile manufacturing, documents the late 19th and early to mid-20th century industrial uses of the area.
8. The Far Gosford Street Conservation Area Appraisal identified the following threats to the special character of the area:
- Under used upper floors are an issue and result in a lack of maintenance and deterioration of the structural fabric.
 - There is a lack of maintenance of historic structures such as the 'topshops' and timber framed structures. Numerous buildings display minor signs of dereliction and decay such as peeling paintwork or spalling brickwork.
 - Inappropriate modern alterations and additions have a negative effect on the individual structures and a cumulative effect on the character of the Conservation Area. These include wiring to the fronts of buildings, UPVC windows and doors, plastic rainwater goods, satellite dishes, inappropriate signage, and poor quality to the rears of properties and inappropriately painted and rendered brickwork.
 - Mid 20th to 21st century shop fronts of an inappropriate design, scale and material have a negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area.
 - Some of the shop fronts within the Conservation Area display inappropriate signage and do not reflect the character of the Conservation Area. This is especially an issue in the case of listed buildings or highly visible buildings that form part of the approach to the Conservation Area. Inappropriate materials, design, layout and size of signage to shop fronts have a negative impact on the Conservation Area.
 - There is an issue of low quality boundary treatments, especially to the rears of properties.
 - The quality of the public realm within the Conservation Area is poor in some areas. Many of the surface treatments within the Conservation Area are in need of repair. Poor quality reinstatement by utility companies has resulted in unsympathetic repairs

involving the introduction of inappropriate tarmac patch repairs. There are examples of mixtures of surface treatments, surface treatments in need of repair, unkempt areas and examples of graffiti.

- Another negative element of the street scene is street clutter. There is an unnecessary amount of inappropriate 21st century metal bollards in a mixture of styles.

2. Statutory Controls

1. Designation as a conservation area brings with it a degree of additional statutory protection under planning legislation, the main consequences of which are as follows
 - Planning permission is required to totally or substantially demolish most buildings within a conservation area. There are a few exceptions including a building which does not exceed 115 cubic metres, any wall, gate or fence which is less than 1 metre high where abutting a highway, or less than 2 metres high elsewhere.
 - The extent of permitted development is reduced, such as cladding, extensions to the side of the original dwelling or the installation of satellite dishes visible from the public highway.
 - Further control measures such as Article 4 directions may be placed upon an area (the introduction of such controls is the subject of consultation with owners to establish their need and support). These may be served to protect windows, doors, boundary walls and posts etc.
 - Any works to prune or fell any protected tree requires the written consent of Coventry City Council. In the case of all other trees over 75mm in trunk diameter, six weeks written notice is required to allow consideration for protection. Should a tree be felled, a replacement is usually required.
 - Stricter rules apply in conservation areas with regard to the type and size of advertisements that can be erected without advertisement consent.
 - The desirability of preserving or enhancing a conservation area is a material issue in determining a planning application.
2. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also provides specific protection for listed buildings (Section 54) and areas of special architectural interest (Section 76) by affording Local Planning Authorities powers to take action in the following circumstances:

Urgent Works

3. 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 Local Planning Authority may recover the cost of such works from the owner.¹

Repairs Notice

4. 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.²

Building Preservation Notice

5. A Building Preservation Notice is a form of temporary listing served on the owner of a building which is not listed, but which the Local Planning Authority considers is of special architectural or historic interest and is in danger of demolition or alteration in such a way as to affect the character as a building of such interest. A BPN provides protection to a building

¹ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 54.

² Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, sections 47 and 48.

in that, for a period of six months after service of the BPN, it is subject to the same rules as if it were in fact listed, allowing time for a formal assessment to be carried out.³

Section 215 Notice

6. 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 the work and reclaim the cost.⁴

Compulsory Purchase Orders

7. The Planning Act 1990 affords Local Planning Authorities the power to serve Compulsory Purchase Notices, with the authorisation from the Secretary of State, on land or buildings that are required to secure development, re-development or improvement.⁵

³ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 3.

⁴ Town & Country Planning Act 1990, section 215.

⁵ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 226.

3. National and Local Plan Policies

1. This document must be considered alongside Coventry City Council's policies concerning development and the use of land as set out in the saved policies of the 2001 Coventry Development Plan and the proposed Local Plan. Of particular relevance are:
2. 2001 Coventry Development Plan Saved Policy BE8: Conservation Areas
New Conservation Areas, and changes to boundaries of existing Conservation Areas, will be designated where: the Area has special architectural or historic interest, and it would be desirable to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Area.
3. 2001 Coventry Development Plan Saved Policy BE9: Development in Conservation Areas
Development within, or affecting the setting of, a Conservation Area will only be permitted if it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Area. Having regard to the special architectural or historic interest of the Area, the acceptability of development will be determined on the basis of: the scale, massing, siting, design and materials of any new building or structure; the effect of any associated loss, alteration or creation of buildings and other townscape and landscape features; and the nature of its use and resulting levels of traffic, parking, disturbance and other activities. Supplementary Planning Guidance will be produced for Conservation Areas.
4. 2001 Coventry Development Plan Saved Policy BE10: The Retention of Buildings in Conservation Areas
There is a presumption that buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area will be retained. Planning applications involving the demolition of buildings in Conservation Areas will be determined having regard to the following considerations: the part played by the building in the architectural or historic interest of the area; the condition of the building and the viability of its retention and continued occupation; the wider effects of demolition on the surroundings and on the Conservation Area as a whole; and whether the replacement scheme will make a more positive contribution to the appearance or character of the area or bring other substantial benefits to the community that outweigh the harm caused by the loss of the buildings.
5. 2001 Coventry Development Plan Saved Policy BE11: Alteration or Extension of Listed Buildings
Development which: involves alteration or extension; is within the curtilage of; or affects the setting of a listed building will be permitted only if there will be no detrimental impact on the appearance and character and the architectural or historic interest of the building and its setting or on the contribution it makes to the area in which it is situated. Submission of full details of any changes will be required.
6. 2001 Coventry Development Plan Saved Policy BE12: Changes of Use to Listed Buildings
The change of use of a listed building (either in the short- or long-term) will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use would be the optimum viable use compatible with protecting the special architectural or historic interest of the building and its setting. Full details of all alterations, both internal and external, required to implement the new use will be required with all applications.
7. 2001 Coventry Development Plan Saved Policy BE13: Demolition of Listed Buildings
Development involving the loss of a listed building or any part or feature contributing to its special architectural or historic interest, whether or not specifically mentioned in its listing, will be permitted only if it is proven that no realistic alternative for its survival can be secured. In the case of a development proposal involving the demolition of a listed building particular

regard will be had to whether: it has been demonstrated that the condition of the building, part of the building or feature, makes it impracticable to repair, renovate or adapt it to any reasonable beneficial use for which planning permission would be given; and there is clear and convincing evidence that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain the existing use or find a viable new and acceptable use or uses for the building.

8. 2001 Coventry Development Plan Saved Policy BE14: Locally Listed Buildings
A list of buildings of local architectural or historic interest worthy of conservation will be maintained. Development involving the partial or complete loss of such a building will be permitted only if the benefits of the development can be shown to outweigh any resulting harm, or that no realistic alternative for its survival can be secured.
9. 2001 Coventry Development Plan Saved Policy BE15: Archaeological Sites
There will be a presumption in favour of the preservation of archaeological remains of national importance (whether or not scheduled ancient monuments and whether visible or concealed) and of their setting. Such remains should be accessible for public enjoyment and expert study wherever this is feasible without being significantly detrimental to their preservation. Development adversely affecting known or suspected archaeological remains of less than national importance, or their setting or accessibility, will be permitted only if the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the likely harm. Preservation of remains where they are found, if feasible, is preferred. In any case, all practicable measures must be taken for their assessment, recording and protection. Where the existence or importance of remains is uncertain, suitable assessment may be required prior to the determination of a development proposal.
10. Proposed Local Plan Policy DE1 Ensuring High Quality Design
All development proposals must respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area. Conservation areas, and buildings and sites of local and national architectural, archaeological or historic interest will also be protected.
11. Proposed Local Plan Policy HE1: Conservation and Heritage Assets
In order to help sustain the historic character, sense of place, environmental quality and local distinctiveness of Coventry, development proposals will be supported where they conserve and, where appropriate, enhance those aspects of the historic environment which are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, artistic, landscape or townscape significance.
12. Proposed Local Plan Policy SC1: The Network of Centres
Far Gosford Street is recognised as a Local Centre which is defined as 'an appropriate scale of development for their immediate locality (around a 1 km radius) for day-to-day convenience shopping and also some service and restaurant uses; and social, community and leisure uses.'
13. Additional relevant supplementary planning documents for the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area include: Planning policy for the location of satellite antenna, Installation of security shutters and grilles and the Highways Design Guide.
14. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provide the legislative and national policy framework for conservation area appraisals and management plans. The NPPF states:

'Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that

heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;
- any opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.'

4. Identification and Protection

4.1. Introduction

1. Identification and protection are the first steps in managing conservation areas. To better identify and protect the heritage in Far Gosford Street Conservation Area, context, issues and actions are considered including: protecting listed buildings; identifying and protecting individual buildings with special local significance; reviewing the boundary of the Conservation Area; preparing development briefs for significant sites with development potential and controls over demolition.

4.2. Listed Buildings

Context

1. The Conservation Area Appraisal recognises the important contribution the listed buildings within the Conservation Area make to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There are four listed building entries within the Conservation Area, although some of the listings cover more than one address: 32 and 33 Far Gosford Street, 38 and 40 Far Gosford Street, 67-72 Far Gosford Street and 122-124 Far Gosford Street.

Issue/ Threat

2. Inappropriate works to a listed building or its setting could damage the special character of the Conservation Area.

Action

Objective 1: Listed Buildings

When considering proposals involving listed buildings or affecting their settings the Local Authority will:

- use development control powers to ensure that the proposals will be considered in the context of Saved Policies BE10, BE11, BE12 and BE13, Policy HE1 of the proposed Local Plan and government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework;
- continue to provide advice and seek to work with owners to develop a pro-active strategy for maintenance and repair works.

4.3. The Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

Context

1. Buildings which are not of national significance do not merit statutory listing. However, buildings which are valued for their contribution to the local scene, or for local historical associations, may be included on lists of *locally important buildings*, or the *Local List*. Under the NPPF these are considered to be designated heritage assets. English Heritage encourages the use of local designation to provide communities with the opportunity to identify and manage those aspects of their heritage that are important to them.⁶ Local planning authorities should ensure that local plans set out a positive, proactive strategy for the conservation of the historic environment in their area⁷. Coventry City Council maintains a Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

Issue/ Threat

2. The character appraisal identifies a number of unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, many of which appear to meet the criteria for selection for a local heritage list.⁸ A list of nominations to the Local List is identified in the Appraisal.

Action

Objective 2: Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

The Local Authority recognises the contribution of buildings of special local architectural or historic interest in the Conservation Area and will:

- consider the proposed additions to the local list identified in the Appraisal;
- consider further additions to the Local List in the future.

4.4. Sites of Archaeological Sensitivity

Context

1. The NPPF states that: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. English Heritage recommends identifying areas of archaeological interest within

⁶ English Heritage, *Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing* (London: English Heritage, 2012).

⁷ Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (London: Department for Communities and Local Government, 2010).

⁸ English Heritage, *Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing* (London: English Heritage, 2012) 16.

conservation areas.⁹ The Far Gosford Street Conservation Area is classed as an Archaeological Constraint Area, named the Far Gosford Medieval Suburb.

Issue/ Threat

2. There is a high level of potential for underground archaeological remains in this area. The Appraisal identified that most likely archaeological potential in the Conservation Area is associated with: the infilled river valley; the city defences; the medieval suburb; the civil war defences; former industrial production; and the former chapel on Gosford Green.

Action

Objective 3: Sites of Archaeological Sensitivity

The Local Authority recognises the archaeological sensitivity of the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area and will:

- seek to ensure the preservation of archaeological remains of national importance and their setting;
- seek to ensure that archaeological remains of national importance are accessible for public enjoyment and expert study wherever this is feasible without being significantly detrimental to their preservation;
- only permit development adversely affecting known or suspected archaeological remains of less than national importance, or their setting or accessibility, if the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the likely harm;
- seek to ensure the preservation of remains where they are found, if feasible;
- ensure all practicable measures are taken for the assessment, recording and protection of archaeological remains;
- ensure a suitable assessment is required prior to the determination of a development proposal if the existence or importance of archaeological remains is uncertain.

4.5. Review of the Boundary

Context

1. Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local authorities to carry out reviews 'from time to time' but there is no indication in law how often this might mean. Good practice is generally accepted to be every 5 years.¹⁰ Guidance suggests reviews should take place where there is pressure for change and where the original designation took place many years ago. The following should be considered on boundary review: the boundary should be coherent and, wherever possible, follow features on the ground, the boundary should not be drawn too tightly, so excluding integral parts on the periphery; the boundary should ensure the setting is adequately protected, including

⁹ English Heritage. *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* (London: English Heritage, February 2005) para 4.10.

¹⁰ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 69(1)(a).

landscape features such as open spaces or roads (in such cases, the test should be whether the wider area justifies the controls that conservation areas bring); the boundary should ensure all relevant legislation is used, including in relation to trees; and the boundary should consider more recent architecture and history which might now be regarded as having special interest.¹¹

2. The Local Authority should follow the same publicity procedures to vary or cancel a designation as they do to designate: a committee decision, an advertisement in a local newspaper and the *London Gazette*, and other statutory notifications. Good practice suggests a proactive approach to consultation which involves the community at an early stage as well as following formal procedures.

Issue/ Threat

3. The Far Gosford Street Conservation Area was designated by Coventry Council on the 21st of October 1992. The area has not been extended since its designation. The Conservation Area Appraisal considered that the boundary of the conservation should be extended in two small areas, to protect the setting and to protect integral parts of the periphery. The Appraisal proposed that the Conservation Area boundary be extended to include:
 - the Electricity Substation on Gulson Road, an historic structure of a high level of architectural quality, it is already included on the local list;
 - number 2a Grafton Street, an historic structure that was extant in 1850, and is thought to have originally been an agricultural building and used as a workshop later. This building has historic significance and documents the evolution of this part of the Conservation Area.

Action

Objective 4: Review of the Boundary

The Local Authority will:

- consider revising the existing Conservation Area boundaries as advised in the Appraisal;
- seek to review the boundary every 5 years, using relevant guidance;
- revise the boundary as soon as possible after review;
- seek to include early informal community consultation as well as the formal consultation procedures.

4.6. Development Briefs

Context

1. English Heritage guidance suggests local authorities prepare development briefs to demonstrate how policy and guidance apply to specific sites.¹² Development briefs can be a

¹¹ English Historic Towns Forum, *Conservation Area Management: A Practical Guide* (London: English Heritage, 1998) 13.

¹² English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*, 2006, para 7.5.

useful tool for improving the quality and the consistency of advice provided to developers, the efficiency of the planning process and the quality of the built environment.¹³

Issue/ Threat

2. Clear guidance for development of sensitive sites in conservation areas would benefit developers by saving money and time on proposals and the local authority on time spent reviewing inappropriate proposals. Due to the investment in the area and the current grant schemes, the potential development sites within the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area already have proposals prepared. Should any of these schemes be withdrawn, or further redevelopment sites become available, a development brief could assist in protecting the special character of the area.

Action

Objective 5: Development Briefs

The Local Authority will:

- prepare, consult on, adopt and promote development briefs for key sites, whether for regeneration or compete new development;
- follow good practice, take account of the Conservation Area Appraisal, concentrating on conservation and design issues, and
- take account of developer interest and available resources.

4.7. Demolition

Context

1. NPPF defines the elements of the historic environment that are worthy of consideration in planning matters as 'heritage assets'. Conservation areas are defined as heritage assets. The process of designation identifies them as having a level of significance that justifies special protection measures. NPPF states:

'Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
- and no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
- and conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible;
- and the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.'¹⁴

¹³ Department for Communities and Local Government, *Planning and Development Briefs: A Guide to Better Practice*, 1998, 3.

2. The NPPF states 'Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of or damage to a heritage asset the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.'¹⁵
3. Coventry City Council's proposed Local Plan Policy HE1 states: Demolition or destruction of heritage assets will usually be resisted; proposals to demolish a heritage asset will therefore need substantial justification. The greater the damage to the significance of the asset, the greater the justification required and the public benefit needed to outweigh such damage.

Issues/ Threats

4. Deliberate neglect or damage to a building to ensure it is beyond reasonable economic repair is a problem in a few conservation areas. There are quite a few buildings within the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area which are in a poor condition or which suffer from a lack of maintenance. The loss of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area damages the integrity of the area.

Action

Objective 6: Control of Demolition within the Conservation Area

In considering applications for planning permission for the demolition of a building on the Local List, proposed for the Local List or a building that makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, Coventry City Council will:

- ensure the proposal is fully justified against the criteria laid out in NPPF;
- ensure the application for planning permission for demolition has a parallel submission of full proposals for a replacement scheme;
- determine whether an unlisted building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area with reference to the Character Appraisal, the Local List, and criteria set by English Heritage;¹⁶
- only allow demolition after a contract for a replacement scheme with approval has been let, unless demolition without implementation of a replacement scheme would leave the character and appearance of the Conservation Area unharmed;
- take into account any evidence that there has been deliberate neglect or damage to the building when deciding if a building is beyond reasonable economic repair;
- not consider a building is beyond reasonable economic repair if the building was acquired at a price which reflected its perceived redevelopment potential rather than its condition or constraints;
- consider a change of use and/or extension rather than demolition so long as it does not cause harm to the Conservation Area.

¹⁴ Department for Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government 2012) para.133.

¹⁵ Department for Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government 2012) para.130.

¹⁶ English Heritage, *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* (London: English Heritage, 2006) Appendix 2.

4.8. Restriction on Permitted Development Rights through Article 4 Directions

Context

1. Permitted Development rights refer to a range of minor developments where planning permission is not required. These permitted development rights are slightly more restricted in conservation areas for some types of development, but this does not prevent various alterations to buildings being carried out without the need for permission, which might spoil the special interest or local distinctiveness of the area over time.
2. An Article 4 Direction allows the Local Authority the power to restrict permitted development rights to bring certain types of development back under their control so that they may consider potentially harmful proposals and decide whether or not to grant permission. They are normally used to control a proliferation of often minor alterations to buildings which can cumulatively erode the character of the conservation area over time.
3. Research has found that the impact on resources due to an increase in planning applications is actually minimal because clear, concise controls, supported by appropriate guidance, encourage like-for-like repair or replacement in matching materials.¹⁷

Issue/ Threat

4. There is not currently an Article 4 Direction in the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area. However, there is evidence of cumulative harm to the character of the Conservation Area from a series of relatively minor alterations which would not have needed permission, including altering boundary walls, painting exterior walls, replacing traditional timber sliding sash windows with plastic casements and replacing traditional timber solid doors with plastic or glazed doors.
5. The Article 4 Direction would mean certain works to a building (or within its curtilage) would need planning permission. The types of works affected includes:
 - enlargement, improvement or alteration to a building, including re-pointing,
 - cladding, and alteration to windows and doors,
 - erection or alteration of an outbuilding, enclosure or pool,
 - erection of a porch,
 - alteration of a roof including roof lights, dormers, or changes to the material,
 - erection, alteration or removal of a chimney,
 - painting or rendering of exterior walls,
 - installation or replacement of a satellite dish,
 - erection, alteration or removal of gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure,
 - making a hard-standing.
 - Installation of solar panels

¹⁷ RPS Planning, *Planning Research into the use of Article 4 directions on behalf of the English Historic Towns Forum* 2008, paras 3.18-3.19.

Action

Objective 7: Restriction on Permitted Development Rights through Article 4 Directions

The Local Authority will:

- seek to make an Article 4 Direction to control the impact of permitted development rights on buildings in the Conservation Area;
- prepare clear and concise guidance on development likely to receive consent in applications for permission made as a result of the Article 4 direction;
- assess the impact of permitted development rights on the character and appearance of the area;
- offer advice, guidance and encouragement to owners, residents and developers in order to influence the impact of permitted development rights in the interests of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the area;
- on publication of any proposed amendment to the GPDO, assess its potential impact on the Conservation Area, and determine what measures, if any, would be needed were the GPDO to be amended.

5. Street, Traffic and Highway Management

5.1. Introduction

1. Traffic management and highways maintenance schemes can have a significant impact on the character of conservation areas. It is important that a corporate approach is adopted and that potential impacts are addressed in the planning stage.

5.2. Street and Traffic Management

Context

1. The English Heritage guidance, *Streets for All* states that:
'Traffic calming measures should be fitted sensitively into the street scene as though they were part of the original design of the area. Local highway and planning authorities are encouraged to integrate their activities to minimise the impact of traffic management on the historic environment.'
2. With specific regards to conservation areas they advise:
In conservation areas, particular care needs to be exercised. Local authorities have a duty to ensure that new development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area and that should include highway works and traffic calming measures. Major schemes in conservation areas should always be referred to English Heritage for advice and guidance.
3. The application of appropriate planning policies will be more effective if a flexible approach is taken to the requirements of highway policies where they would be in conflict with the preservation or enhancement of the area's character or appearance.

Issue/ Threat

4. Due to the Sky Blue Way and the one way system, the volume of traffic currently moving through Far Gosford Street Conservation Area is not an issue. However, there are some issues with delivery trucks and loading along Far Gosford Street due to the designated loading bays being full of parked cars. Additional developments may also increase the traffic in the Conservation Area. There are improvements planned to the Sky Blue Way roundabout and road layout to the far west end of the Conservation Area which may affect the character of the Conservation Area and views into and out of the area. There are also examples of street clutter in the Conservation Area, making a negative impact on the character of the area.

Action

Objective 8: Street and Traffic Management

The Local Authority will:

- refer the problem of traffic flow in and around the Conservation Area for consideration of available options and, in the long-term, possible alternative routes for traffic;
- ensure parking regulations are routinely enforced so that the designated loading bays are available for delivery trucks;
- consider implementing a traffic management strategy that reduces the amount of traffic within the Conservation Area;
- seek to ensure that new and existing hard surfaces, road signage and other items of street furniture will preserve the special character of the Conservation Area
- have regard to *Streets For All West Midlands* and other published guidance on dealing with the public realm in historic areas;
- apply highways and traffic legislation and guidance sensitively, and design works in a way which recognises local distinctiveness;
- work collaboratively in the planning, design, implementation and maintenance of public realm and highways works.

5.3. Highway Works

Context

1. The English Heritage guidance *Streets for All* contains detailed advice for the management of highway works in conservation areas. English Heritage states that treatments of roads within historic areas should reflect their purpose and location. The general principles for highway works in historic areas are:
 - Surface treatments should relate to their urban character
 - Retain or reinstate setted edges, cobbles and grass verges, taking into account the needs of all users
 - Avoid the unnecessary introduction of kerbs in rural areas
 - Use surface dressings to reinforce local distinctiveness
 - Use road markings sparingly in sensitive areas, consistent with safety standards
 - Consult local disability organisations on detailed design.
2. English Heritage guidance also states that in many conservation areas inappropriate street furniture can mask the special character of the area. They advise that Local Authorities should:
 - Identify and remove superfluous or redundant items
 - Reduce new furniture to a minimum by good design
 - Locate signs, traffic signals and lighting onto existing street furniture and buildings
 - Co-ordinate style, colour and sitting of street furniture
 - New designs should be simple, elegant and appropriate to context
 - Consult local access groups or disability organisations

Issue/ Threat

3. The Conservation Area Appraisal identified several issues of highway works. The single and double yellow lines and white lines in the Conservation Area are very bright and too wide, making a negative impact on the area. Previous unsympathetic repair works have been undertaken involving the introduction of inappropriate materials in the form of tarmac patch repairs. Some areas of the Conservation Area are cluttered with bollards and street furniture of varying styles and quality.

Action

Objective 9: Highway Works

When considering improvements to the public realm, the Local Authority will:

- retain and reintroduce historic surfaces including retention of all stone kerbs and stone sets such as the cobbles in Harnall Row;
- remove redundant or unnecessary street furniture such as bollards, signs, bins or poles;
- consolidate and remove where appropriate road & information signs & markings, where they are an issue;
- reconsider road markings and use sparingly where essential;
- repaint road markings in a restricted width and subdued colour;
- consider reconfiguration of traffic management including improvements to pedestrian circulation/movement using historic route ways and introduction of a shared public realm initiative;
- retain historic lighting columns and design/siting/height of replacements including colour/strength/grade of lighting,
- historic signs/plaques/way marking should be retained and repaired;
- bins, planters, seating, bollards, cycle stands should be a consistent style, materials and colour throughout the Conservation Area;
- the introduction of street trees must be carefully considered and an appropriate tree pit design using natural stone sets around periphery with permeable infill and a flush finish with adjacent hard landscaping;
- telegraph poles & wirescape consolidation should be encouraged.

6. Trees, Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy

6.1. Introduction

1. Open spaces in conservation areas may include historic routes, surfaces, furniture, green spaces and trees. Consideration of the open spaces, trees and green infrastructure should be firmly integrated into management of the overall area. English Heritage also encourages protection of trees and addressing biodiversity within conservation areas.

6.2. Open Spaces

Context

1. English Heritage states coordination is key for the successful management of the public realm, suggesting the use of public realm strategies. Its *Streets for All* guidance, published jointly with the Department of Transport, urges full integration of highways and traffic issues.

Issues/Threats

2. Due to the nature of the area, there are very few open spaces. To the northeast of Binley Road, on the site of the former St Margaret's Chapel, there is an area of landscaped open space. The former All Saints' churchyard is situated to the north side of Far Gosford Street. Further open space along Far Gosford Street include the Gosford Industrial Estate which consists of numerous industrial buildings in a large open area to the south and east of numbers 114-115, and the car park to the west of this.

Action

Objective 10: Open Spaces

The Local Authority will:

- undertake an audit of the open spaces to catalogue the issues that are having a negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area;
- devise a maintenance and repair strategy for the open spaces within the Conservation Area;
- consider serving a Section 215 Notice on the owner (or occupier) of open spaces where the condition of the open space is adversely affecting the amenity of the area.

6.3. Trees and Landscaping

Context

1. Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, requires that anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a conservation area must give six weeks' notice to

the local planning authority. The purpose of this requirement is to give the authority and opportunity to make a tree preservation order.

2. Legislation gives powers over trees in conservation areas– essentially, anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop any tree has to give notice to the local authority which can then decide whether to make a tree preservation orders (TPO)(60) based on its contribution to the area.
3. For any planning application in the area involving development which may affect trees it will be necessary for the applicant to provide a detailed tree survey and tree constraints plan, together with a specification of any proposed work to the trees. The application should be specific as regards levels, hard surface construction, and service trenches.
4. In addition, protection of trees shown as being retained will be required during construction. A scheme showing how this will be achieved will need to be submitted and agreed by Local Authority before work starts and adhered to throughout the construction works. Trees and root protection areas will need to be securely fenced to afford protection from ground compaction arising from the use of machinery and the stock piling of soil or materials.

Issue/ Threat

5. There are quite a few trees in the public areas in the Conservation Area. These trees in public areas make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. There are some larger trees in the gardens of the residential properties in the Conservation Area. These private trees also make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Area as a whole. In some circumstances the future of these trees may be threatened.

Action

Objective 11: Trees and Landscaping

The Local Authority will:

- consider the need for further TPOs as the need arises for trees which make a significant contribution to their surroundings, considering the tree's visual, historic and amenity contributions;
- encourage the retention or replacement of trees through Development Control Processes, and when resources permit a new data base will be created to ensure replacements are achieved;
- seek to maintain existing prominent trees, and to enhance and increase tree cover and landscaping in the area;
- protect any trees that may be affected by a proposed scheme of development;
- ensure a scheme to protect trees during development is submitted and agreed in writing before work starts and adhered to throughout the construction works;
- take measures to avoid damage to trees or tree roots during works to the highway;
- ensure that the British Standard BS 5837:2012 code of practice for trees in relation to construction is adhered to in the event of the following works: new buildings, new car parking areas, new or improved accesses and their sightlines, driveways, service trenches and changes in ground levels.

7. Regeneration Strategy

7.1. Introduction

1. A positive relationship exists between conservation and regeneration. As stated in the English Heritage guidance *Heritage Works*, “the built heritage can be a valuable catalyst for regeneration and that economic prosperity leads to enhancement, building repairs and maintenance.”¹⁸ Heritage-led regeneration can contribute to a sense of place, quality of life and sustainable neighbourhoods.¹⁹ English Heritage guidance also advises that successful regeneration within a conservation area requires more than just repairs to buildings, but a resolution to address the causes of low investment in run-down conservation areas.
2. Several major investment and development plans are currently being progressed within the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area. These include the development of the Fargo Village, a bohemian quarter created within a complex of former car manufacturing workshops; Gosford Gateway, a mixed use development of hotel, student accommodation, retail and leisure close to the site of the former Gosford Gate; Kilby Mews, 31 new mews style houses created on a vacant plot behind Nos. 121-129 Far Gosford Street and Sky Blue Way Offices, two new offices located to the rear of Nos. 28-34 Far Gosford Street with a new timber framed building replacing 27 Far Gosford Street.

7.2. Vacancy Strategy

Context

1. English Heritage guidance for vacant properties is in *Vacant Historic Buildings: an Owner's Guide to Temporary Uses, Maintenance and Mothballing*. Reports suggest allowing a change of use of vacant buildings to residential to bring vacant buildings back into full use. The Living Over the Shop project has had success in setting up legal agreements between housing associations and commercial businesses to convert and then let vacant floors above shops as flats.²⁰

Issue/ Threat

2. The Conservation Area currently has a noticeable number of vacant properties or vacant shops which has a negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area. Significant under-use or vacancy of historic buildings, especially of upper floors above shops, can be a serious problem as it can lead to a lack of maintenance and dereliction.

¹⁸ English Heritage, *Heritage Works: The Use of Historic Buildings in Regeneration* (London: English Heritage, 2006) 1.

¹⁹ English Heritage, *Heritage Works: The Use of Historic Buildings in Regeneration* (London: English Heritage, 2006) 1.

²⁰ LOTS Projects, *An Assessment of the Housing Potential of Vacant Commercial Space over Shops in Chichester* (York: LOTS Projects, 2001). Stockton City Challenge, *Living Over The Shop: a Survey of Stockton-on-Tees* (Stockton-on-Tees: Stockton City Challenge, 1998).

Action

Objective 12: Vacancy Strategy

The Local Authority will prepare an action plan to bring vacant or under-used historic buildings back to full beneficial use, this will involve advice on repair and maintenance, use of the development control process and finding solutions for the upper floors above shops.²¹

7.3. Regeneration Strategy

Context

1. The NPPF states that in developing a strategy for managing the historic environment, local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of ensuring heritage assets have viable uses consistent with their conservation and should also take into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.²²
2. Although each regeneration scheme is unique, English Heritage believes there are lessons that are common to successful historic environment regeneration schemes. These lessons are set out as a *Checklist For Successful Regeneration*:
 - i. A strong vision for the future – that inspires people and encourages them to get involved;
 - ii. A respect for local residents and businesses – who have often fought hard to stop an area declining; ensuring they are included in a regeneration partnership means the project starts with community commitment;
 - iii. A tangible link to the past – since places are not created in a vacuum and people need familiar elements, visual reminders and a sense of continuity; landscapes, streets, spaces, buildings and archaeological sites play a part in defining a sense of place;
 - iv. An understanding of the area – knowing what exists and how it came to be makes it easier to plan its future;
 - v. A respect for what already exists – making sure that places that people value are kept for the future;
 - vi. A record of the area before work starts – so that future generations can understand how the site has evolved;
 - vii. An integrated, sustainable approach – not concentrating on a particular social, economic or environmental consideration or a single use;
 - viii. Achieving the right pace – regeneration that happens too quickly can harm the fabric and the community, while that which happens too slowly fails to create the momentum, commitment and enthusiasm needed to make a scheme a success;
 - ix. The highest quality design and materials – to enhance local distinctiveness and sustain a sense of place that people can be proud of;

²¹ The Policy Exchange, *More Homes: Fewer Empty Buildings* (London: The Policy Exchange, 2011).

²² Department for Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government 2012), para.126.

- x. Early discussions between the community, the local authority and other interested parties – ensuring that options can be discussed and designs modified at an early stage, before too much has been committed.²³

Issue/ Threat

3. As well as the number of vacant or partially vacant buildings, there are a number of buildings in a poor state of repair or with a lack of maintenance or minor dereliction.

Action

Objective 13: Regeneration Strategy

The Local Authority will:

- recognise the value of conservation-led regeneration by ensuring conservation is central to both physical and economic regeneration projects;
- continue to explore regeneration opportunities which improve the condition, quality and authenticity of the historic built environment and the public realm;
- ensure potential regeneration projects follow the English Heritage *Checklist For Successful Regeneration*;
- pay particular attention to the retail and service sectors in Far Gosford Street;
- promote the benefits of and encourage support for a heritage-led approach to regeneration owners and the business community;
- ensure the special requirements of the Conservation Area are taken into account in plans or proposals for regeneration;
- investigate future heritage-led regeneration and funding options.

²³ English Heritage, *Regeneration and the Historic Environment: Heritage as a Catalyst for Better Social and Economic Regeneration* (London: English Heritage, 2005) 6.

8. Enhancement Schemes

8.1. Introduction

1. Proposals for the enhancement of the character and appearance of a conservation area should be aimed at reinforcing those qualities and/or characteristics which provide the special interest that warrants designation.²⁴ Several major investment and development plans are currently being progressed within the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area. These include the development of the Fargo Village, a bohemian quarter created within a complex of former car manufacturing workshops; Gosford Gateway, a mixed use development of hotel, student accommodation, retail and leisure close to the site of the former Gosford Gate; Kilby Mews, 31 new mews style houses created on a vacant plot behind Nos. 121-129 Far Gosford Street and Sky Blue Way Offices, two new offices located to the rear of Nos. 28-34 Far Gosford Street with a new timber framed building replacing 27 Far Gosford Street. The Townscape Heritage Initiative is supporting the enhancement of the Conservation Area through a series of projects which address: critical repairs to two listed timber framed buildings; infill of a gap site; landscape improvements; restoration of altered 'topshops', a distinctive local building type; reinstatement of traditional shop fronts and windows; and restoring small historic workshops.

8.2. Opportunities for Enhancement

Context

1. NPPF requires that local authorities create a positive strategy for the conservation and protection of the historic environment. The NPPF also advises local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.²⁵ Guidance on the management of conservation areas delivered by English Heritage advises that the enhancement might include redeveloping negative sites and buildings, or proactive investment such as building or public realm improvements.

Issue/ Threat

2. The poor quality of the public realm in some areas, poor quality reinstatement by utility companies, unsympathetic alterations or additions, the poor quality of some shop fronts, the impact of unsympathetic signs and advertisements and the loss of traditional features area all having a negative impact on the character of the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area.

²⁴ English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (London: English Heritage, 2006) para 7.1.

²⁵ Department for Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government 2012) para.137.

Action

Objective 14: Opportunities for Enhancement

The Local Authority will:

- prepare and maintain a long term agenda of enhancement opportunities in the area;
- consider opportunities for enhancement for both public and privately owned buildings and spaces;
- investigate opportunities for delivery and funding of enhancement schemes;
- where possible, use opportunities provided by the investment of others to bring about enhancements to the area;
- consider as a high priority enhancement opportunities which:
 - improve the condition, appearance and architectural integrity of buildings which contribute to the economic vitality of the Conservation Area;
 - restore a suitable historic character to modernised historic spaces,
 - encourage private owners to carry out enhancement schemes.
 - Improve the appearance of the rear of

8.3. Public Realm Enhancement Schemes

Context

1. NPPF requires that local authorities create a positive strategy for the conservation and protection of the historic environment. Guidance on the management of conservation areas by English Heritage advises that enhancement of a conservation area might include redeveloping negative sites or proactive investment such as public realm improvements.

Issue/ Threat

2. The poor quality of the public realm in some key areas is having a negative impact on the Conservation Area. There are examples of inappropriate and redundant street furniture such as the proliferation of bollards, signage and street furniture of varying styles and character. There are also examples of road markings that are too thick and are not appropriate for the Conservation Area.

Action

Objective 15: Public Realm Enhancement Schemes

The Local Authority will:

- undertake a detailed audit of the public realm with the aim to minimise visual clutter, enhance hard surfacing and to ensure that items of historic street furniture which make a major contribution to the character of the area are retained in situ;
- seek the removal of confusing, ambiguous, duplicated and redundant signs and other street furniture which results in a proliferation of street clutter particularly in focal areas/convergence points;
- carefully consider the appropriateness of the design, material, luminosity and style of future replacements of street furniture such as lighting columns, railings, bollards, bins and street signs with the aim of unifying the style and character;
- carefully consider hard surfacing in particular road and pavements;
- consider the form of road markings to ensure that they are not intrusive;
- carefully consider the location of elements that may block the pavements and decrease public access;
- carefully consider car parking spaces and traffic management.

8.4. Enhancement Through Development Control and Local Authority Powers

Context

1. NPPF requires that local authorities create a positive strategy for the conservation and protection of the historic environment. English Heritage guidance states that in commercial conservation areas, longer-term enhancement can be achieved through the consistent application of sensitive and detailed development control over alterations and shop fronts.²⁶ Utility companies are required to inform the relevant local authority of any street works which it is carrying out on their roads.

Issue/ Threat

2. Poor quality reinstatement of carriageways by utility companies, unsympathetic uses, alterations or additions to buildings, the loss of traditional architectural features, poor quality shop fronts, inadequate refuse facilities and fly tipping are all factors making negative impacts on the character of the Conservation Area.

²⁶ English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (London: English Heritage, 2006) para 7.3.

Action

Objective 16: Enhancement Through Development Control and Local Authority Powers

The Local Authority will:

- make maximum use of Local Authority powers under the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991 to inspect works by utility companies and to apply financial penalties for inadequate reinstatement;
- when resources permit, seek to develop protocols which ensure relevant conservation area information is provided via Local Authority's Highway department;
- seek to develop a co-ordinated approach to public realm works via consultation between all relevant Local Authority Departments/stakeholders etc. including Highways, Planning, Conservation, Regeneration and Utility companies;
- encourage the re-instatement of traditional features through the Development Control process;
- ensure that adequate provision is made for bin storage on all applications for new developments or changes in use. The local authority will also review the refuse strategy for the street;
- use its powers to pursue fly tippers and those who threaten the amenity of the area by failing to keep their property in a tidy state;
- remove or improve the appearance of unsympathetic alterations or additions;
- ensure the preservation of remaining original features such as windows, doors, rooflines, shop fronts, historic signs and boundary treatments through the Development Control process and;
- resist the removal of chimneys and chimney pots as historic, character features of the building and the Conservation Area;
- resist proposals by owners to paint the exterior of historic brick buildings;
- seek to obtain a positive improvement in shop front design through the Development Control process and the issuing of guidance to developers and owners;
- with regards to new development, encourage best practice in the use of Design & Access Statements, particularly regarding the need to demonstrate how design has responded to the special character of the site and the Conservation Area;
- encourage applicants to use design to enhance the Conservation Area and favour schemes that reflect the layout, materials, height, scale and massing of the structures within the surrounding area
- with regards to extensions, the schemes will be favoured that reflect the detailed architectural and historic characteristics of the building; retain as much historic fabric as possible; use appropriate materials and aim to include materials salvaged from the original structure; seek a balance between protecting character and appearance and meeting other requirements such as building regulations and access; and ensure the junction between old and new fabric is well thought through.
- Resist uses that cause a harmful cumulative impact on the character and appearance of conservation area and its vitality and viability as a local shopping centre.

9. Enforcement and Remediation Strategy

9.1. Introduction

1. Effective conservation area management requires enforcement and remediation to resolve breaches of planning requirements, non-compliance with conditions on schemes which have consent, unauthorised works and infringements of planning law. Enforcement and remediation actions are also very effective when used to secure the repair and full use of buildings at risk and to remedy the poor condition or unsightly nature of land or buildings, where it is adversely affecting the amenity of the conservation area.

9.2. Monitoring Change

Context

1. English Heritage guidance recommends the development of procedures²⁷ for monitoring change in conservation areas on a regular basis, such as photographic surveys and recording.

Issue/ Threat

2. The lack of a detailed dated photographic record can frustrate enforcement actions as the enforcement action cannot be taken unless the un-authorised alteration can be shown to have been carried out within the previous four years. The cumulative effects of the deteriorating condition of a conservation area generally and buildings at risk in particular, can go unnoticed without regular monitoring.

Action

Objective 17: Monitoring Change

The Local Authority will:

- prepare a comprehensive dated photographic survey of every building, boundary wall and significant area of public realm in the Conservation Area;
- update the photographic survey at least every 4 years;
- use the photographic survey to monitor the Conservation Area annually;
- use the dated photographic survey as evidence of the condition of the Conservation Area generally and buildings at risk in particular.

²⁷ English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (London: English Heritage, 2006).

9.3. Enforcement and Remediation Strategy

Context

1. English Heritage guidance recommends that the special character of conservation areas is protected and enhanced by enforcement of planning controls.

Issue/ Threat

2. A large number of properties in the conservation have lost historic details or had inappropriate changes. Coventry City Council has taken enforcement action against unauthorised works which have been carried out in other conservation areas. However, the lack of a detailed dated photographic record can frustrate enforcement actions.

Action

Objective 18: Enforcement and Remediation Strategy

The Local Authority will:

- use the dated photographic survey as evidence for breaches of: planning control, trees preservation orders, listed building consent and article 4 directions;
- address unauthorised works within the Conservation Area in line with national guidance;²⁸
- give the priority to:
 - the demolition or threat of demolition of a listed building, or alterations or removal of significant features of the building;
 - the demolition or threat of demolition of a building on the local heritage list;
 - the demolition or threat of demolition of a building which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
 - the topping, lopping or cutting down trees, or the threat of unauthorised alteration to trees;
 - alterations which have a negative impact on the interest of a listed building;
 - works which have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area including un-authorised works to shop fronts;
 - advertisements which have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

9.4. Heritage at Risk Strategy

²⁸ Department for Communities and Local Government, *Best Practice Guidance on Listed Building Prosecutions* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government 2006).

Context

1. English Heritage guidance encourages the use of heritage at risk strategies for buildings in poor repair, with English Heritage stressing the need for prevention as well as cure. English Heritage publishes a Maintenance Checklist, and further guidance for vacant properties is in *Vacant Historic Buildings: an Owner's Guide to Temporary Uses, Maintenance and Mothballing*. English Heritage has also produced detailed guidance on enforcement action in *Stopping the Rot: A Guide to Enforcement Action to Save Historic Buildings*. Serving Urgent Works Notices, Repairs Notices and Compulsory Purchase Orders have all proved successful methods of ensuring that the character and appearance of a conservation area is preserved or enhanced. Other studies have also documented that section 215 notices are effective powers to secure compliance in both small and large sites, buildings, rear gardens, shop fronts, industrial and residential property. The scope of the works can include planting, clearance, enclosure, demolition and external repairs and is considered effective for longer term regeneration.²⁹ Guidance also documents that the threat of a notice is often successful in remedying the situation.
2. Building Preservation Trusts are charities whose main aims include the preservation and regeneration of historic buildings. BPTs often work in partnership with local authorities to deal with buildings at risk and can enter into back-to-back agreements to take on buildings acquired through compulsory purchase orders.³⁰ As charities, BPTs can access special grant schemes to acquire, repair and convert a derelict historic building, which otherwise would be commercially unfeasible. There are several BPTs currently active in the local area and the remit of the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust also includes Coventry. Other national BPTs such as the Industrial Buildings Preservation Trust may also assist with relevant projects.

Issue/ Threat:

3. Coventry City Council currently maintains a Heritage At Risk Register for Listed Buildings. Within Far Gosford Conservation Area and the proposed extensions, there are a number of historic properties, Listed and non-designated which are vacant or neglected and are considered to be at risk, including 29-30, 32-33, 73-76 and 93-93 Far Gosford Street, 9 and 11 Bramble Street and 2a Grafton Street. These vacant or neglected buildings have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

²⁹ Department for Communities and Local Government, *Derelict Land and Section 215 Powers* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government 2006) 6.

³⁰ Further advice is available from the Association of Preservation Trusts and the Architectural Heritage Fund.

Action

Objective 19: Heritage at Risk Strategy

The Local Authority will:

- advise owners of vacant buildings on the benefits of temporary uses, protection, security, maintenance and mothballing, following English Heritage guidance;³¹
- maintain their city wide Heritage at Risk Register which includes the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area and look to expand the register to include Locally Listed Buildings and other significant buildings;
- consider a partnership with a building preservation trust to resolve particular buildings at risk;
- decide on priorities for intended action to secure the repair and full use of any buildings at risk;
- based on the priorities, prepare an action plan for the repair and reuse of each building at risk, some in the context of wider programmes of regeneration;³²
- if necessary, consider using statutory notices including Urgent Works Notices, Repairs Notices, Compulsory Purchase Orders and Section 215 Notices.

³¹ English Heritage, *Vacant Historic Buildings: an Owner's Guide to Temporary Uses, Maintenance and Mothballing* (London: English Heritage, 2011).

³² English Heritage, *Heritage at Risk: Conservation Areas* (London: English Heritage, 2009) 4.

10. Community Involvement Strategy

10.1. Introduction

1. Both English Heritage and Government guidance recommend the involvement of residents, interest groups and businesses within conservation areas. Government guidance emphasises the need for local planning authorities to understand the significance of heritage assets to the local community. Community involvement can also assist in efficient conservation area work; ensuring valuable local knowledge is available to influence new development and regeneration within the conservation area. The local community can also assist in the promotion of good design and conservation and in the appreciation of the value of the conservation area.

10.2. Community Involvement and Training Opportunities

Context

1. National planning guidance promotes early public involvement in policy formulation and decision making. Coventry City Council's Statement of Community Involvement sets out the Local Authority's proposals on how it intends to involve people in preparing and revising Local Development Documents, and consulting on planning applications. English Heritage guidance on the management of conservation areas also stresses the need for local involvement and suggests consultation activity should generally be in line with the Statement of Community Involvement, whether or not it applies technically.³³ Regular information, consultation and participation with the town Local Authority, local amenity societies, environmental groups, residents' associations, chambers of commerce and local business organisations helps sustain community involvement. A series of significant community education activities are proposed as part of the Phase 2 Townscape Heritage Initiative including: the adoption of Far Gosford Street as a national history curriculum case study for local schools with a leaflet, talks and field trips; a programme of community access to completed heritage buildings, heritage open days and talks to community and business groups; circulation of a book to all businesses in the street; work to set up guided walks and a history trail connecting the history panels in the area publicised on a website; displays on completed buildings setting out the history of the buildings and their importance. In addition, during Phase 2 of the THI a series of training activities are planned including: production of a much simpler guide for building owners on shop front and elevation treatments; one on one training for owner applicants on their property and the particular special features; post works maintenance training; workshops for local design professionals on conservation area requirements; production of a simple leaflet to be circulated annually through the programme explaining what is and isn't allowed in the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area; and expanded training in traditional skills through City College.

Issue/ Threat

2. Due to the THI programmes, there is a high level of local community involvement with regards to the local heritage in Far Gosford Street Conservation Area. Within the local area the Coventry Society and the University are particularly active. There is a wealth of local knowledge available and fostering participation and involvement of these amenity groups,

³³ English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (London: English Heritage, 2006) paras 3.8-3.10.

local educational institutions and the community in the conservation area management could assist the preservation of the area.

Action

Objective 20: Community Involvement

The Local Authority will:

- have regard to the Statement of Community Involvement as the basis for public consultation and involvement, whether the SCI technically applies or not;
- foster local involvement in conservation area management;
- provide regular opportunities for involvement including information, consultation and participation
- evaluate the training and learning activities of the Phase 2 THI programme and consider how to build upon these initiatives to sustain the conservation-led approach the managing the Conservation Area over the long-term.

11. Resources

11.1. Introduction

1. Good management of conservation areas requires Local Authority resources: the skills and time of the officers and members as well as funds. Local Authority resources can be best used efficiently if the officers can work corporately and in partnership, ensuring appropriate skills are available for decisions. English Heritage recognises that limited resources requires that priority is given to key issues, but the availability of external funding can allow the Local Authority to ensure both enforcement and enhancement of the conservation area.³⁴

11.2. Local Authority Resource & Corporate Working

Context

1. Having insufficient resources to manage conservation areas can seriously undermine their purpose and value. "Resources" refer to members of staff within the Local Authority as well as monetary concerns. English Heritage advises that "Proposals for preservation and enhancement will be most effective when all the departments within the local authority understand the significance of designation and work corporately to ensure that development decisions respect the historic context. A 'development team' approach can help to ensure such that issues are widely understood within an authority."³⁵ It is preferable for all local authority functions to understand the significance of conservation areas, and work together. Managing Coventry's historic environment effectively will require experienced professional input from a range of fields to ensure decisions are balanced. It is required that officers from a variety of departments, including development control, conservation and highways, work in a corporate manner to deliver the successful management of the conservation area.
2. Good practice, recommended by both English Heritage and CABA, is for local authorities to appoint a Historic Environment Champion and a Design Champion.³⁶ The positions, usually at member level, aim to influence the functions and decisions of the Local Authority by encouraging high quality in architecture, design and the historic environment.

Issue/ Threat

3. The Conservation Area Appraisal highlighted the damage to the character of the Conservation Area by a substantial amount of unauthorised alterations and a previous lack of enforcement work.
4. Coventry City Council has appointed a Historic Environment Champion but has not appointed a Design Champion.

³⁴ English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (London: English Heritage, 2006) para 3.3.

³⁵ English Heritage, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (London: English Heritage, 2001) section 3.2

³⁶ English Heritage, *Historic Environment Champions*, (London: English Heritage, 2004). CABA, *Local Authority Design Champions* (London: The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 2004).

Action

Objective 21: Local Authority Resource and Corporate Working

The Local Authority will:

- ensure a corporate commitment to conservation area management in planning and regeneration;
- create an informal Officer Group with the multi-disciplinary skills (Building Control, Structures, Asset Management, Parks & Countryside and Highways) needed to ensure effective conservation area management over time;
- ensure a Design Champion is appointed;
- ensure the Historic Environment & Design Champions are involved in conservation area work, encourage collaborative working, encourage local involvement and publicity, and help secure training where needed.

11.3. External Funding

Context

1. English Heritage currently offers grants to local authorities to underwrite the preparation of Urgent Works Notices (applicable for listed buildings in conservation areas) and acquisition grants to underwrite repairs notices. Section 106 funds may still be available to fund regeneration and enhancement schemes. In addition, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) could be accessed to fund some environmental improvements and public realm works in the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area. The ERDF and The Townscape Heritage Initiative, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, have provided funding towards the regeneration and enhancement of Far Gosford Street Conservation Area.

Issue/ Threat

2. English Heritage guidance recognises that enhancement proposals may involve major investment.³⁷ Similarly, many regeneration strategies may require grant funding.³⁸ Enforcement actions require Local Authority resources as well.

³⁷ English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (London: English Heritage, 2006) para 3.5.

³⁸ English Heritage, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (London: English Heritage, 2011) section 3.12.

Action

Objective 22: External Funding

The Local Authority will continue to endeavour to secure the necessary funding to ensure the implementation of the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area Management Plan, including enforcement, regeneration and enhancement schemes. A variety of sources including English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund, ERDF, Section 106 funds, the Community Infrastructure Levy, and working in partnership with other organisations will be considered.

12. Management and Maintenance Plan

12.1. Introduction

There are a series of projects identified as critical, priority and reserve projects in the Phase 2 Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme. Of these, currently 27 are privately owned and 2 publicly owned. The benefits of the Townscape Heritage Initiative funding will be sustained through a combination of legal agreements and proactive enforcement for the privately owned projects and committed management and maintenance of the publicly owned projects.

12.2. Management and Maintenance of the Privately Owned Grant Aid Projects

The Grant Aid agreement with private landowners ensures that the properties are maintained for a 10 year period following practical completion of the project. The grant works cannot start until this agreement is signed to ensure sustainability of the project. The Grant Aid Agreement also prevents modifications being carried out which are detrimental to the works completed as part of the grant and there is also a 5 year claw back if the property is sold.

12.3. Management and Maintenance of the Publicly Owned Projects

The City Council continues to see Far Gosford Street as a high priority and will continue to bid for further funding. On-going maintenance of the publicly owned areas, including the Street and the church yard, will also continue along with a proactive approach to enforcement.

13. Sources

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14. Contacts

Coventry City Council Contacts

General development control enquiries concerning Far Gosford Street Conservation Area should be referred to the Development Management Team. Telephone: 024 7683 1212

General enquiries concerning Far Gosford Street Conservation Area and listed buildings should be referred to the Local Authority's Conservation and Archaeology Officer.
Telephone: 024 76831271

Enquiries relating to trees within the Conservation Area should be addressed to the Local Authority's Arboricultural Officer. Telephone: 024 76831269

Enquiries relating to the Historic Environment Record should be addressed to the Historic Environment Record Officer. Telephone: 024 7683 2795

National Organisations

English Heritage

West Midlands Office The Axis, 10 Holliday St, Birmingham, West Midlands B1 1TG
Tel: 0161 242 1400 www.english-heritage.org.uk
Email: westmidlands@english-heritage.org.uk

Victorian Society

The Victorian Society
1 Priory Gardens Bedford Park London W4 1TT
Tel: 020 8994 1019 www.victorian-society.org.uk Email: admin@victorian-society.org.uk

Georgian Group

6 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 5DX
Tel: 087 1750 2936 www.georgiangroup.org.uk Email: info@georgiangroup.org.uk

Twentieth Century Society

70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ
Tel: 020 7250 3857 www.c20society.org.uk Email: coordinator@c20society.org.uk

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