

IMPORTANT THIS LEAFLET CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING YOUR PROPERTY

YOUR PROPERTY FORMS PART OF THE WATTS AVENUE/ROEBUCK ROAD CONSERVATION AREA. THIS MEANS THAT SPECIAL PLANNING REGULATIONS ARE IN FORCE. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE REGULATIONS CONSTITUTES A BREACH OF PLANNING LAW AND MAY CONSTITUTE A CRIMINAL OFFENCE.

WATTS AVENUE/ ROEBUCK ROAD CONSERVATION AREA ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

Permitted development rights

Certain minor works or alterations are usually treated as development that can normally be carried out without the need for an application for planning permission. These are known as **permitted development rights**. These apply to houses only. They cover works such as the replacement of windows and doors, roof alterations, construction of paths, drives or garden walls and extensions or conservatories up to a certain size.

Council control over development in conservation areas

Conservation Areas are designated in order to greater and/or enhance the special architectural or historic character of the area. In many cases this alone is sufficient to control inappropriate development. In some cases, however, the council needs greater control. This control is provided through article 4 of the planning act and is generally known as an **article 4 direction**. It removes certain permitted development rights from an area. This means that **those who wish to carry out minor works must first seek planning permission** from local planning authority (the council) before they can do so. If you carry out these works without planning permission (in other words illegally) enforcement action may be taken requiring remedial work to be undertaken and proceedings for prosecution may be commenced.

The need for special planning controls

These controls are necessary as much of the special character of this area derives from the uniformity of its architectural style. This includes original window and doors, common building materials, walled front gardens and repeated decorative features. However, modern demands for such things as PVC frame double-glazing and off-street private parking, for example, have led to the loss of many of these elements. Gradually, the character that these elements combine to create is eroded away.

Article 4 directions in Watts Avenue/Roebuck Road

The Watts Avenue/Roebuck Road conservation area was designated in 1995 and consists of an area of fine Victorian terraces and villas in Maidstone Road, King Edward Road, St Margaret's Streets, Watts Avenue and Roebuck Road. An article 4(2) direction has been placed on this area since February 2001 and requires planning permission for the following works to elevations **fronting a road, public path or open space**:

PLANNING PERMISSION IS NEEDED FOR:

- The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney
- The enlargement, improvement or alteration of a house (including the replacement of doors and rainwater goods and the application of bargeboarding and timberwork)
- The replacement of windows
- The alteration of a roof (including the replacement of tiles and slates, ridge tiles, finials, rooflights, leadwork and eaves)
- The erection of a porch
- The provision of a hard surface such as a drive or path within the grounds of a house
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna
- The erection, alteration or demolition of a gate, fence wall or other means of enclosure
- The painting, rendering or pebble dashing of the exterior (excluding the painting of joinery)

How should these works be carried out?

As a general rule, original building elements such as windows and doors, roofs, and decorative features should be repaired rather than replaced. Where replacement is inevitable, this should be as much 'like for like' as possible. The reinstatement and sensitive restoration of original features adds value to a property and to the area as a whole.

The replacement of windows is a particularly important issue as they make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area. **It is council policy to insist on the retention or like for like replacement of any remaining original windows.** Applications to renew replacement windows of poor design are encouraged provided that the new units would be of the same pattern and materials as those originally found on the property.

Building regulations

As from April 2002 new building regulations, part L1 (see paragraphs 2.9-2.11), have been introduced with regard to improving energy efficiency. Building works should always aim to improve the energy efficiency as far as possible. However, in the case of listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas such work **should not prejudice the character of the historic building or increase the risk of long-term deterioration to the building fabric or fittings.** The guidance in this leaflet, particularly with regard of the need to fit sympathetic traditional windows, should therefore take precedence over part L1 of the building regulations. If in doubt, please contact the design and conservation section at Medway Council.

Listed Buildings

Several properties in this conservation area are listed. Listed building consent is required for any alterations, internal or external that affects the character of the building. Further information is available from the design and conservation section at Medway Council.

Further information

The **DESIGN AND CONSERVATION** section of Medway Council is keen to advise householders on the care of their property. This includes advice on the design of alterations and repairs. For general enquiries on all aspects of planning contact **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL** and for enquiries relating to building regulations contact **BUILDING CONTROL**.

If you require advice or help
you can contact all sections
at:

**Regeneration and Environment
Division**

**Development and Environment
Directorate**

Medway Council

Compass Centre

Chatham Maritime

Kent ME4 4YH

Telephone: (01634) 306000

Facsimile: (01634) 331125

More detailed design guidance
will be published shortly

The Watts Avenue/Roebuck Road Conservation Area

