Caistor Conservation Area Appraisal
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1 Introduction
Caistor is a rural historic Market Town located 15 miles south west of Grimsby, 26 miles north east of Lincoln. Caistor was first designated in January 1970 as an area of 'special architectural or historic interest' under section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 and an appraisal was completed in 1977. The purpose of this reviewed appraisal document is to give an up to date character appraisal.

This review aims to update and reassess the appraisal of the conservation area in order to inform a future management plan for the area.

2 Summary of special interest
Dating from the Roman period, Caistor has a prosperous history as a key market town in the area. The medieval street pattern of narrow plots and interconnecting market square, combined with fine Georgian and Victorian buildings contribute to the town's special character.

The rural character of the town is derived from Caistor's location on the hillside with views over the surrounding countryside. Furthermore the town is sited on many natural springs, Syfer Spring and Pigeon Spring are the most noted of the springs, located in Fountain Street and Horsemarket respectively.

The Conservation Area is centred on the historic core of the town.

3 Assessment of special interest
3.1 Location and Setting
Caistor is set into the hillside and gains much of its setting from this backdrop. The approach from the west of Caistor is very distinctive. The roofscape of terracotta pantiles at the heart of the settlement can be seen for some miles, whilst the church tower amongst the trees provides a landmark feature.

The approaches from Nettleton Road and North Kelsey both have more recent 20th century developments interspersed with older 19th century buildings. Both roads on the approach to the town centre travel steeply uphill. The approach from Brigg Road is a gentle and attractive winding road with wide grass verges.

From the North and East, Caistor cannot be viewed until the visitor is within reach of the town, being sited downhill from a highpoint in the Wolds. The setting to the west and south of the conservation area is adjacent open countryside which is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and there are fine views of the countryside from this direction.

3.2 History and Development
The name Caistor is a derivation of the Roman 'Castra' meaning fortified camp and referring, most probably, to the fortification built in the 4th century A.D., evidence of which can still be found in the town. The existence of numerous natural springs may have influenced the Romans to select this site for their settlement. There is also strong evidence of Anglo Saxon
development and it is likely that settlement has been continuous since the Roman occupation. A 'titulus' or dedication stone of the 8th or 9th century A.D. suggests that an early Saxon church of some importance existed. This church may have been sited just north of the existing church which dates from the 11th century. An Anglo Saxon mint was also sited here, denoting continuing prestige for the site.

The above map illustrates Caistor's historic layers; the shaded area is believed to be the extent of the Roman Town. The shaded areas around the Market Place may form the encroachment into the original space. This often occurred when more land for trading space was required. The map layer also highlights the remaining long thin medieval burgage plots.
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The present day layout of the town is inherited from the medieval period when Caistor was a small and prosperous town deriving much of its wealth from agriculture, particularly sheep farming. The town was also noted for a popular large annual Horse Fair. The development of the town is adaptive rather than planned, with the Market Place being to the east of the more enclosed church area. There are long thin plots with narrow street frontages and back lanes associated with the medieval burgage system. These are found to the west of the Market Place, to the north of the High Street and to the east of South Street [MAP 1]. The original Market Place is believed to have been much larger. Encroachment has formed Cornhill and also the block of property between the north edge of the Market Place and High Street.

A fire in 1681 destroyed most of the timber properties, consequently much of present day Caistor dates from the late 17th and 18th centuries. The fashionable styles of architecture of this period reflect the prosperity of the small town, particularly in the larger houses built for wealthier owners. In 1801 there were 103 households (in comparison with 63 in 1583) and the town grew again so that by 1881 the population of Caistor was 1,897. As a result there are early 19th century buildings and facades as well as some Victorian development. Trade and industry within the town had increased significantly by this time. There was an ironworks and a brewery, as well as quarrying on the NE boundary of the town.

This development seems to have replaced the earlier emphasis on trading in markets within the town.

Since the mid 20th century, the economy of the town has been in steady decline. Present day Caistor suffers from a poor economic base with trade taken by nearby towns, such as Scunthorpe and Grimsby. Areas of the town, particularly the Market Place, have become dilapidated and many buildings are vacant and in disrepair. A Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme is currently running and has identified several buildings for grant aid. This work, when completed, will make a significant improvement to the centre of the town and aims to encourage further investment in the area.

Little archaeological study has been undertaken in town; however, a large area of the centre of Caistor is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument which includes the undeveloped land within the old Roman Town [MAP 1]. Due to the history of the town there is likely to be a wealth of undiscovered archaeology.
3.3 Character and appearance

Natural landscape features
The overall topography of the town is very distinctive and when viewed from afar the impression of Caistor is one of red brick buildings set amongst trees on the hillside. An essential feature is the individual and groupings of trees throughout the town, examples include Fountain Street, the Churchyard, Cromwell View, Castle Hill and Pigeon Spring.

High grass banks create a sense of enclosure on Plough Hill and Nettleton Road/Horsemarket and the natural springs contribute to the distinctive and unique quality of town.

Built landscape
A lack of significant economic development may account for the unusual survival of many of the historic buildings and features. Overall Caistor can be described as a Georgian market town however; the historic core has many quality buildings of several different periods and architectural design contributing to the unique character of the town. Many of the historic buildings are protected by being placed on the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Merit [APPENDIX 1].

Although the built environment of the town is varied in both style and date, there are some distinctive architectural features and building materials which add to the character of the conservation area. These include:

- Horizontal emphasis in the form of string courses, dentilated brick eaves and box cornice gutters
- Tall retaining walls in brick or stone
- Use of architectural classical orders - for example, in pilasters¹
- Rusticated quoins with stucco on rendered frontages - often painted in contrasting black and white.
- Tumbled and/or raised and coped parapet gables.
- Gothic features such as castellation (or crenellation)
- Prevalent building materials within the town include red/brown brick in Flemish or English Garden wall bond; stucco or render; yellow Ironstone; red clay pantiles and Welsh Slate. Whilst many historic windows benefit from box sash windows.

¹ Use of architectural classical orders - pilasters
There are many original and particularly fine shop fronts. Examples from different eras and design are found in and around the town centre adding charm and character. It is unusual to see so many early shop fronts within one settlement and they are an important reminder to Caistor’s past prosperity.

Caistor has a superb collection of door surrounds in the classical style. Their style reflects national trends in architecture, which were copied from Builder’s Pattern Books, produced from about 1735 onwards.

Window head detail is also of a high quality in the town, and is another distinctive architectural feature which should be preserved.

Decorative ironwork - A notable example is the listed town pump in the Market Place, cast in 1897 to mark Queen Victoria’s Silver Jubilee. Additionally there are several examples of decorative iron railings and boot scrapers.
Character assessment

There are a number of specific character areas within Caistor, Map 2 illustrates these and each character area is described below.

Not to scale

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3.4 Market place

The Market Place is large, roughly squared area in the centre of Caistor which, despite many entrances and exits, retains a distinct sense of enclosure. This is further emphasised by the alignment of the street pattern beyond.

Caistor Market Place is dissected by vehicles passing through from both the SW and SE. This creates a triangular space to the north-eastern corner of the square that is presently used for parking spaces. The street surface is tarmac and there is no evidence to suggest what may have existed before. There is a modern block paved surface immediately around the fountain, but its setting is largely lost amongst the mass of parked cars and therefore is a neutral area.

The market place is lined with a strong built frontage consisting primarily of three storey 17th, 18th and early 19th century buildings, most having shop fronts. Many of the building frontages are relatively narrow, probably as a result of the limitations of the medieval burgage plots.

Caistor House dominates the south-west corner of the market place with a fine stucco frontage and pediment. Its frontage leads into the wide entrance of Plough Hill to the south. Westgate House (7 Plough Hill) creates a southern view stop from the Market Place.

The Town Hall building forms an effective and decorative view stop to the north of Market Place, on High Street with the former Red Lion Hotel as an important corner building to the entrance of the Market Place. To the West, leading towards this view stop there is a strong building frontage of three storey buildings, punctuated by a small single track entrance into Bank Lane. [5] View to the west of the Market Place.
The northern boundary of the Market Place is enclosed by 17th and 18th century buildings, which now form retail units. These are much altered with modern shop fronts and concrete tiled roofs. Only no. 1 retains its original features.

To the east, no. 11 is one of the few buildings with a gable fronting the market place, however, a photograph of 1910 shows that this was originally a three-storey building with a roofline reversed to match its neighbours. This alteration detracts from the building line and is a weak element. The south of the Market Place is more open with two major junctions reducing the sense of enclosure. The South Street junction leads directly on to the Buttermarket, as an open area.
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There has been some erosion of character in the Market Place due to the installation of incongruous modern shop fronts into historic facades. A portion of the rooftops has been altered by the use of concrete pantiles. The use of corporate signage and replacement windows has also detracted from Castor's individuality. The stepped passageways leading to South Street from the Market Place are also of poor quality and a number of buildings in this area are in a state of dilapidation.
3.5 Plough Hill

Plough Hill is a wide street that leads from the southern Market Place and connects via a steep hill to the Horse market. A deflected view from the Market Place is aided effectively by the grassed 'L' shaped embankment following the curve of the sharp bend into Plough Hill topped by nos 1, 3, 5 and 7 Plough Hill which sit to the back of the steeply grassed bank.

The hill is lined with terraced houses of the 18th, 19th and early 20th century. Plough Hill has only one shop front, and is distinctly residential in comparison to the Market Place. Adjacent to No.2 Plough Hill, a distinctive white painted stucco building picked out with black quoins, there is a semi derelict site containing red brick remnants fronting the street. This site has created a gap in the contiguous street frontage. Plowrise is a 1970's development in a distinctly different style to the adjacent historic buildings.

Buildings to both sides of the hill whether in small groups of terraces or punctuated with some detached buildings give a definite stepped appearance to the skyline as they descend the steep short hill that opens out into Horse market.

There has been some erosion of character due to the replacement of windows and doors.

Bobs Lane is an interconnecting pedestrian lane between Plough Hill and South Street. Many smaller red brick buildings, some of them outbuildings, exist here. Most now have seriously eroded character having suffered from many alterations over the last 30 years. Modern materials and incorrectly styled details have been used, especially windows. The street surface is poor for a historic pedestrian lane.
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3.6 South Street - Cornhill and Buttermarket

South Street is a long curving narrow road interspersed with two squares, the Butter Market and the Cornhill. The remainder of the street is almost continuously lined with Georgian buildings closely built up to the back of pavement, giving a strong feeling of containment. The buildings are a mixture of two and three storey developments.  South Street, beyond the White Hart/Butter Market has suffered some loss of character with poorly altered shop fronts that are now redundant. Satellite dishes and plastic windows are also a problem at both ends of the street.

The Cornhill is a neatly enclosed space with two storey buildings (formed from the rear elevations of buildings that face the Market Square). The sense of enclosure has been retained by the George Court development built in the late 20th century, replacing the derelict George Hotel. This courtyard development is very traditional in style and detail with good quality building materials. The south side of Cornhill is punctuated by two pedestrian alleys leading down into the Market Place. Plastic windows are to be found in the Cornhill. The small square is equally compromised by its use as a car park.

The Butter Market is likely to have been created by historic encroachment on the south-eastern corner of the original Market Square. This is a small square, enclosed on three sides, that is dissected in a similar fashion to the Market Place.  

[11] South Street
[12] View down South Street
[13] View into the Buttermarket
[14] View into the Buttermarket
3.7 Horsemarket/Fountain Street/Netleton Road

The Horsemarket is a set in a hollow, probably created by quarrying during the Roman period, where a wide space between buildings denotes the space once used for the famous fairs held at Caistor. There are small, relatively humble two storey dwellings to the west of Horsemarket some of which have suffered loss of historic joinery details. The eastern side is dominated by the elegant three storey façade of the late Georgian terrace known as no’s 1 - 11 Horsemarket with giant pilasters and a central carriage arch.\[14\]

The southern end of Horsemarket is effectively contained by a steep grass bank. The Old Fire Station constructed in 1869 is unusually built in the form of a tunnel into the hillside with Pigeon Spring just to the left. The Victorian School House above the elevated bank provides a view stop.\[15\]
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Northerly views across the Horsemarket rise again picking up the old Chapel and the black and white elevation of no.26 Plough Hill.

No 15 Horsemarket is a historic property which has recently had its traditional windows reinstated.

Continuing down the hillside towards Nettleton Road, the road is lined with Victorian terraces, which have suffered from unsympathetic alterations, although these are largely reversible.

An Edwardian detached property in no. 18 Southdale forms a significant eastern view stop from Nettleton Road.

Fountain Street leads from the Horsemarket, at the bottom of Plough Hill. This narrow lane is bounded by mainly whitewashed brick buildings to the south. The northern side has individual buildings sited up on a high banking and has a more open character. Many of these buildings have historic origin but are generally now heavily disguised by more modern interventions. Both the Syfer Spring and Fountain Springs are sited close together in this street.[16] The greenery of the churchyard area is clearly viewed from the top of Fountain Street.

[16] Syfer Spring a natural water source
3.8 Church Square (including Bank Lane, Chapel Street, Church Street and Castle Hill)

Church Square is on a raised green enclosed by a stone retaining wall. The collections of tall mature trees within the grounds are a key element of the character of the area. The area around the church is a large roughly squared space given a distinct sense of enclosure by the grammar school buildings and its associated buildings. Much of the interest in this part of the Conservation Area is to be found in the detailing of the different boundary treatments, including tall red brick walls and low boundary wall treatments often topped with railings or hedges.

Architecturally there is a combination of fine examples of brick town housing in terraces or as neatly spaced buildings. Private front gardens contribute to the sense of open space.
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Chapel Street is dominated by the large Italianate Chapel of 1841, which placed on a slightly elevated site, dominates the street being of a much larger scale than anything around it [19]. A building belonging to the Grammar School is sited in Castle Hill. This building has a very poorly altered elevation facing directly into the street which detracts from this area of Caistor. There are some 20th century developments, but these are considered to be neutral elements in the conservation area, and have been softened by the retention of trees to the front boundary.

Also of note is an Edwardian detached building, no. 3 Castle Hill which is not currently within the conservation area boundary. This is situated on the hillside with impressive views over the surrounding countryside and has retained its original architectural features. It is recommended that this building be included within the boundary.

Cromwell View leads away from the church in a southerly direction. It is characterised by inviting corners and mature tree coverage. The lane denotes the boundary of the conservation area.
The High Street and Grimsby Road merge from one to another on a sharp dog leg bend. This length of road rises steeply on the approach to the town centre and along the street in either direction the views open and close progressively whilst the pattern of rooflines emphasise the changes in direction and levels.

The High Street is lined with buildings of differing periods from the early 18th to the early 20th century, primarily constructed from red brick with pantile roofs. There are some small shop fronts, many of which are presently empty and in poor repair. At either end of the High Street are two fine examples of 18th and early 19th century buildings; at the western end Holly House with steps up to its fine door surround whilst to the east is Tower House. At the junction with the Market Place, the Red Lion, a former coaching inn and public house has a distinctive curved corner which forms an important feature in the High Street.

Grimsby Road continues with back edge of pavement development on its north side with mainly listed buildings. No’s 3-5, have two replica shop fronts installed. Recent pedestrian safety barriers have been installed immediately to the front of this building, which detracts from the setting.

Neglected buildings in the High Street jointly contribute to a strong sense of detraction in terms of streetscape quality.
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A three storey terrace of late Georgian houses, no’s 4-14 Grimsby Road denote the beginning of the conservation area boundary. These terraces retain pantiled roofs although much historic window detail has been lost.

North Street runs on a steep incline and is approximately parallel with the High Street and Grimsby Road. This street has some modest 18th and 19th century terraces and cottages in pairs or groups of 3 [22]. Many of these have suffered from poor quality interventions and historic character has been eroded. As with other areas of Caistor, there is a stepped appearance as the building line follows the topography. There are unsightly gaps in the frontage, notably on the south side of the street; however, a sense of enclosure is created by a long section of very tall walled garden belonging to the rear of Holly House. There are a number of modern bungalows on the street but their impact is minimal.

[22] North Street showing typically modest group of terraces
3.10 Mill Lane

Mill Lane is a narrow street that meanders over the hillside on the eastern boundary of the conservation area. The entrance is formed of tall flanking curved brick walls which form the boundary treatment to Tower House, and the wall of a castellated garden folly known as The Tower [23]. The road begins on a short steep incline, levelling out to give views over the pantile roof tops of Caistor and the back gardens of South Street. Many of these show clearly the long thin plots associated with the medieval burgage system of land division.

On both sides there are a variety of 19th century outbuildings which are unlisted but of historic merit [24] and also a Stonemasons yard lining the left side of Mill Lane. The southern end of Mill Lane travels downhill to meet with South Street. No.11 Mill Lane is small red brick traditional 3 bay fronted house with its gable end to the street. Beyond is the private garden space stretching down to meet the play area at the edge of the conservation area boundary.
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4. Problems and pressures  

Caistor has suffered from a lack of investment within the town and this is evident from the condition of the historic buildings in some parts of the conservation area. However, the townscape and buildings are of a high quality and if they are sensitively restored the quality of the conservation area would be enhanced.

As Caistor is a small town, there is limited scope for new development within the conservation area. However, some inappropriate development existing currently may be considered for redevelopment. Where opportunities arise, developments should be informed by the character of their location in terms of siting, density, design and materials.

4.1 Intrusion or damage to the conservation area  

Some corporate signage within the marketplace is inappropriate in scale and materials. Owners should be encouraged to consider replacement with a more traditional design which would not detract from the character of the area.

There are some buildings dating to the 20th century which have a negative effect on the conservation area. This is mainly due to the designs making no reference to the location or the character of the area.

4.2 Buildings at risk  

A Townscape Heritage Initiative is currently running within Caistor, and several of those buildings identified as priority buildings within the town either have been or will be offered grant aid to bring them back into a good state of repair. Appendix 2 contains these identified buildings.

4.3 Alterations to existing historic buildings  

Some unsympathetic alterations have been made to historic buildings within Caistor. These include uPVC replacements to window and door openings, widespread replacement of pantiled roofs with concrete tiles and the erection of satellite dishes in prominent locations. In most cases these alterations are reversible and where possible owners should be encouraged to reinstate original architectural features.

4.4 Street Audit  

Caistor has little in the way of original street surfaces. One of the sets of steps which lead from the Market Place to South Street are the only known survivors of York stone paving. Most street surfaces are of a poor quality and could be improved with a sensitive scheme.
5 Recommendations

5.1 General

☐ The value of survival of historic townscape and buildings should be recognised and efforts made to preserve these.

☐ Public open spaces should be preserved and maintained.

   With the exception of some residential terraced and houses in the Church/Chapel Street area, any proposed new development is to be sited at the back edge of the pavement, whether residential or commercial.

☐ New development should also take into account the variety of the rooflines, chimney stacks and architectural detailing within the town to inform new design. Appropriate materials for the area should also be used.

5.2 Preservation, enhancement and reinstatement of architectural quality

☐ Efforts should be made to encourage and assist the repair of buildings at risk.

☐ Period shop fronts, door and window detailing, and ironwork should be preserved.

☐ Original boundary treatments should be retained.

5.3 Environmental and street improvements

☐ Consider rationalising highway signage in the Conservation Area.

☐ As noted above, the quality of street surfaces could be improved.

5.4 Boundary Review

The Boundary has been amended slightly since the first Conservation area appraisal in 1977 to more accurately reflect the historic core of the town.

5.5 Article 4

The protection afforded to buildings within the conservation area will be increased with the designation of an Article 4(2) direction. This would benefit those historic buildings within the area that are not listed, but retain original architectural features which contribute to the character of the conservation area.
**Townscape analysis**

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**Key for townscape analysis**
- Conservation area boundary
- Listed Buildings
- Unlisted Buildings of Interest
- Important Open Space
- Focal Point/Building
- View
- Panoramic View
- Important Trees
- Important Enclosing Feature
- View Stop

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Appendix

Listed Buildings in Caistor Conservation Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audleby House</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fonaby House</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hundon Manor House</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caistor Methodist Chapel</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradise Cottage West</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradise Cottage East</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Wall</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No 9 Church Street</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No's 3, 5 And 7 Church Street</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caistor Grammar School Old Building</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Of St Peter and St Paul</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caistor School Library</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Old Vicarage</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No 2 Hestcroft House</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleece Inn</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No 2 Tower House</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No 3 Grimsby Road</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No 7 Grimsby Road</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Mill at Old Corn Mill</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House and Garage in Garden Of No 24 Holly House</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Important buildings in Caistor Conservation Area

- Nat west Bank, Market Place
- 3 Bank Lane
- 6 Bank Lane
- 2-16 Chapel Street
- Church of St Thomas More, Church Street
- 1 (The Vicarage) Church Street
- 6 and 10 Church Street
- No's 4-14 Cromwell View
- Heighington Cottage, North Kelsey Road
- Cherry Holt, High Street
- 26 High Street
- 20 and 22 High Street
- Town Hall, High Street
- 12 High Street
- 10 High Street
- 1 Grimsby Road
- No's 9 and 11 Grimsby Road
- No's 3, 5, 7, 9 South Street
- 21, 34, 36 South Street
- 9 and 11 Mill Lane
- 4 Bobs Lane
- 13, 15, 17, 19 Plough Hill
- 26, 28 Plough Hill
- 2, 4 Fountain Street
- 18 Southdale
- No’s 2-16 Nettleton Road

## Townscape Heritage Initiative Critical Buildings

- Westgate House, no. 7 Plough Hill
- No, 20 Market Place
- 14-16 South Street
- The Red Lion Hotel.
What is a conservation area?

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, every Local Authority has a duty to consider designating Conservation Areas. A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Within Conservation Areas there are greater planning controls on development in order to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. These include:

- Consent is required for the demolition of buildings (except for very small buildings).
- Trees within the area are protected and any works require written consent from the council before they commence.
- Development that can be carried out without the need for planning permission is more limited.

Any planning application, which proposes development likely to affect the character and appearance of the area, must be advertised by the council.

What is an Article 4 Direction

This Direction is made under Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. The effect of the Direction is to remove specified permitted development rights from the properties within the designated area with an aim to encourage the retention of high quality features of buildings within a Conservation Area. The Directions generally only apply to the front elevation facing a highway. Work to rear elevations does not require permission and normal permitted development rights apply to rear extensions etc. Following a change in the interpretation of the law relating to demolition, work to boundary walls has been included in the more recent Directions. They also only apply to houses and not to flats, or other commercial properties.

Once an Article 4(2) Direction has been made planning permission becomes necessary for changes. It does not affect any alterations which have already taken place. ‘Like for like’ exact replacement and repairs are unlikely to require permission. The details of Article 4(2) Directions vary between different areas but includes all or some of the following: windows, doors, roofs, chimneys, details, painting of unpainted properties, boundary walls, fences, railings, porches, hardstanding.
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