Demolition

A “conservation area consent” must be obtained from the planning authority for the demolition of most walls, buildings or structures within the area. This does not apply to:

- buildings smaller than 115 cu.m. in volume, or to walls or fences below 1m. in height abutting the highway (2m. elsewhere).
- some agricultural buildings.
- partial demolition of industrial buildings (in specific circumstances).
- buildings subject to some statutory notices or orders.

A separate “Listed Building Consent” is required for the demolition or alteration of a listed building (inside or out), or structures within the curtilage of a listed building.

Some buildings have been identified as locally important, and placed on a “Local List”. While they do not enjoy the same protection as those on the statutory list, it is expected that particular care be taken with these buildings and there will be a presumption against demolition.

Repairs

Repairs do not generally need planning permission unless they include alterations which significantly change the external appearance of the building or structure. Repairs should be carried out on a ‘like for like’ basis, matching materials and details. Where an unoccupied building is not being properly maintained, the Local Authority can carry out urgent works necessary for its preservation.

Restricting Development

In a conservation area, planning permission is required for work that would ordinarily constitute “permitted development”. This includes:

- exterior cladding
- side extensions, or the construction of any other building or structure to the side of the house
- rear extensions of more than one storey
- roof extensions, including insertion of dormer windows
- the installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe visible from the highway
- erection of an aerial or satellite dish facing on to, and visible from, the highway
- installation of solar panels on a wall or roof facing on to, and visible from, the highway
- limits on the size of domestic and industrial extensions.

The Local Authority may also selectively restrict specific development through Article 4 Directions.

You are advised to check with the Council before carrying out alterations.

Trees

Well-established trees make an important contribution to the positive character of the area. Within a conservation area all trees with a stem diameter of over 75mm (measured at 1.5m above the ground) have a measure of protection since six weeks notice must be given to the Local Authority for any works to, or likely to affect, these trees. Selected trees may have the full protection afforded by a Tree Preservation Order, where the consent of the Local Authority is needed before any work can be carried out on the trees.

Please check with the Council’s Arboricultural Officer before carrying out works to any tree in a conservation area.
**What is a Conservation Area?**

This is an area identified as being of special architectural or historic interest—often the historic nucleus of a village or a part of town retaining enough of its historic character to justify protection. Conservation areas aim to protect the overall character of the area, not just particular buildings. The main objectives of designation are:

- To enable the implementation of conservation policies
- To control the demolition of unlisted buildings and structures within the area
- To control the removal of important trees
- To provide the basis for planning policies designed to preserve or enhance all aspects of the character or appearance that define an area's special interest. This will include the identification of buildings and structures, open spaces, views, trees and areas of the public realm (streets, squares and places) which make positive contributions to the area.

**Historical Background**

Duston village is situated 2 miles west of Northampton’s town centre. It is one of a string of settlements along the top of the northern valley slope of the River Nene, and is a village with a long history of continuous occupation, at least since Saxon times. It was recorded as a farming community in the Domesday Book, and extensive evidence of a large nearby Catuvellauni settlement and Roman camp was discovered during mid 19th century ironstone mining operations to the south-east of the church. St Luke’s Church is now to be found on the eastern edge of the old village and it seems likely that the village nucleus has gradually moved westwards in a linear fashion along Main Road. Since the 1950’s the historical village has been engulfed on all sides by the expansion of Northampton. The names Peveril and Melbourne found in the village record former lords of the manor.

**The Conservation Area**

Duston contains many attractive buildings and features, but the groups of old buildings are sporadic and infilled by more modern development, giving a rather mixed character to the conservation area. Most of the older buildings, a high proportion of which are listed, are constructed from the local brown sandstone (Rich Ryeland) which, until recently, was quarried nearby. Local quarries also used to provide roofing material in the form of a slate known as “White Pendle”, but this is no longer to be seen in the village. A few of the roofs are thatched, but most are slated or tiled.

One of the features of the village is the prevalence of stone walls, which add to its character, although some of these have disappeared in recent years to make room for new development. Some of this new infilling has paid less regard to the character of the village than is desirable in a conservation area, the over-development in Holmeleigh Close with the consequent loss of a fine group of trees is a case in point. Conversely, the 1980s shopping development fronting Main Road has been carefully designed to blend in with the general character of the area, with its modest scale, traditional detailing and choice of materials.

St Luke’s Church is an early monastic church, built some time before 1113 by William Peveril, and given by him to the Augustinian monks at St James Abbey as a place of worship. The late 13th/early 14th centuries saw the addition of the chancel, aisles and south porch. Some features survive from an earlier Norman edifice, but nothing remains of the wooden Saxon church which preceded it.

The approach to the church, with its handsome Lych Gate (1907) and landscaped setting, provides tranquillity to this part of the conservation area. This corner is particularly worth a visit. At the entrance to the narrow lane leading to the church is the war memorial, paying homage to those who died in both World Wars. The war memorial and its setting add a certain charm and interest to the entrance to the conservation area.

Across the junction with Millway is a prominent building which was, until recently, the village’s Primary School. It opened in 1856 as a Church of England school for the education of the poor. Apart from the church the oldest buildings in the village date from the 17th century, including ‘The Cottage’ in Squirrel Lane, and ‘The Elms’ in Millway, one of the few former farmhouses still surviving. A number of farmhouses populated the northern side of Main Road. While the farmhouses have gone, many of the farm buildings have survived, converted for human habitation, as at Holmeleigh Close. These farm building groupings also explain a curious characteristic of the building pattern in this part of the village, with half-hidden courts and all the main street façades.

One of the major problems besetting Duston is traffic. A great deal of new development has taken place to the west of the village, with the result that there has been a massive increase in the volume of traffic passing through the village on its way to the ring-road or to the town centre. Added to this is the parking problem caused by the village’s popularity as a local centre for a wide residential area.

Trees are not prominent in the central part of the village, which is predominantly commercial in character. There are, however, significant groups of mature trees in pockets away from the main shopping areas.