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 1 m. in height abutting the highway (2 m. 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 the highway
- limits on the size of domestic and industrial extensions.

The Local Authority may also selectively restrict specific development through Article 4 Directions. Derngate Conservation Area has such a Direction in place, requiring the consent of the local authority for any alterations to the street-facing façades of residential properties, including changes to windows and doors, roofs, chimneys, front walls and fences, erection of porches and satellite dishes, the provision of hard surfaces, and painting of unpainted surfaces. You are advised to contact the Council before carrying out any 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, spaces and squares) which make positive contributions to the area.

Historical Background

Derngate, known up until the 19th century as Darngate, is the only road in Northampton to retain its original gate name. Den, or Darn is derived from the old English word for water – Derngate being the gateway to the river and wells.

Derngate has also been known in the past as Swineswell Street, and the eastern section as Waterloo, up until comparatively recently.

There are no buildings of great antiquity in this conservation area, all housing succumbed to the Great Fire of 1675. Most of the buildings of character stem from the 19th century.

The Conservation Area

Derngate stands at the busy south-eastern approach into the town centre. Linking to the Bedford Road, it has always been an important thoroughfare, though much of today’s traffic now diverts around Victoria Promenade.

The area extends from the tree-lined Victoria Promenade in the south-east, to the busy shopping area of St Giles’ Street and Fish Street to the north-west where it adjoins the All Saints’ Conservation Area. Much of the architectural attraction of this area stems from the wealth of early- to mid-nineteenth century terraces, formerly the homes of Northampton’s trades and professional families, but now, being too large for present domestic purposes, mainly given over to office use. This change has proved beneficial in ensuring the upkeep and restoration of buildings without a significant alteration of the façades, and the result has often been an enhancement of the street.