

FAQs

What is being proposed?

We are consulting on proposed changes to the extent of the areas and buildings in Crawley which are formally identified as having heritage significance. This will have an influence on planning decisions.

The changes relate to two different types of 'heritage asset': Conservation areas and locally listed buildings.

What is a conservation area?

Conservation areas are defined in legislation as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest'. Designating a conservation area can help to preserve or enhance the special interest of the area. They are usually designated by the Local Planning Authority. For more information visit the [Historic England website](#).

Crawley currently has [11 conservation areas](#).

What is a locally listed building?

A locally listed building is a building which the Local Planning Authority has identified as having local historical or architectural significance. Locally listed buildings should not be confused with Listed Buildings, which are designated by national government, and benefit from greater protections which are set out in legislation. For more information, see the [Historic England guidance](#).

What difference will this make?

We must take heritage significance into account when we make planning decisions. This means that the changes will affect the way we assess planning proposals.

Conservation areas benefit from special planning protections to protect and enhance their character and appearance. We need to consider the impact of a proposal on a conservation area as part of a planning application. Some types of development, which do not normally need planning permission (including demolition of a building which is not a Listed Building), would require permission if they are in a conservation area.

Locally listed buildings do not have the same level of protection as Listed Buildings or conservation areas, but we must give consideration to the impact of a planning proposal on a locally listed building. These buildings should be retained where possible, particularly if they are in a conservation area.

Why is this happening now?

The changes have been recommended by consultants who have been preparing evidence to support the review of the Crawley Local Plan. We are proposing to make the changes before the new Local Plan is finalised.

How does this relate to the Local Plan?

We launched a consultation on the Local Plan on 6 January 2021. This conservation areas and locally listed buildings consultation is a separate, standalone consultation. This means the changes proposed in this consultation do not form part of the Local Plan; and the Local Plan does not form part of the conservation areas and locally listed buildings consultation.

Conservation areas and locally listed buildings have been given their own separate consultation because the documents and processes which formally identify and designate them do not form part of the Local Plan itself.

Once designated, development proposals relating to, or affecting, these heritage assets will be subject to specific policies within the Local Plan. Currently these can be found in the adopted [Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 - 2030](#):

- Policy CH12: Heritage Assets
- Policy CH13: Conservation Areas
- Policy CH16: Locally Listed Buildings

Updated versions of these policies are proposed for inclusion in the [Local Plan Review](#) (Policies HA1: Heritage Assets; HA2: Conservation Areas; and HA5: Locally Listed Buildings).

Even where heritage assets are not formally designated or identified, evidence of heritage significance may be a planning consideration, for example where heritage significance is revealed through the planning and development processes.

Why have these conservation area changes been chosen?

We asked the consultants to consider potential changes to Conservation Area boundaries which were suggested by Conservation Area Advisory Committees within Crawley. These Committees are local volunteer groups who work with the council to consider how best to preserve or enhance the special interest of particular Conservation Areas.

The proposed new Conservation Areas have arisen following the assessment of these areas as possible areas of heritage significance.

Why have these changes to Crawley's locally listed buildings been chosen?

We asked the consultants to consider potential new locally listed buildings which had been put forward by the public since the list was last updated in 2010. Additional buildings were suggested by the consultants following their site visits in Crawley, or by council officers where there was pre-existing expert evidence to suggest that buildings had heritage significance.

What protection will this give to the areas and buildings in question?

These heritage designations will influence planning decisions. Please see “**How does this relate to the Local Plan?**” above for more details regarding the Local Plan Policies.

Conservation area status will have more of an influence than locally listed building status, although locally listed buildings have greater protection where they are within a conservation area.

These designations are not in themselves able to protect areas or buildings from harm that may arise from changes that fall outside planning control. For example, they do not directly require owners to keep their property in a good state of repair, although it is in their interests to do so.

Local Planning Authorities have a duty to prepare and publish a management plan for each conservation area for which they are responsible, in cooperation with residents, property owners and other stakeholders. In this way conservation area designation can provide a focus for additional preservation and enhancement measures.

How will this affect my property rights and the value of my property?

These designations will give greater weight to the protection of the historic significance of the relevant areas and buildings when planning decisions are made, so they may affect your ability to make changes to your property.

If your property falls within a conservation area, you may find that some changes require planning permission or other consent from the council whereas they did not before (for example works to trees will require prior notification to the council). Also, when you make a planning application, consideration will need to be given to the impact on the conservation area. The fact that your property falls within a conservation area will also be registered as a land charge.

Research by Historic England and The London School of Economics has indicated that properties within conservation areas have higher values and appreciate more over time, because people value these areas for their distinctiveness and character.

For further information see the [Historic England Guidance](#).

If your property is a locally listed building outside a conservation area, there is no automatic restriction on what you can do without planning permission. But when you

apply for planning permission you may find there is a greater need to justify proposals which involve harm to, or loss of, the historical significance of the building.

What impact will this have on local jobs and businesses?

Because conservation areas restrict certain permitted development rights and require impact on the conservation area to be taken into account when planning proposals are submitted, businesses may find it harder to obtain permission for some changes, or may even find that some proposals are refused because of their heritage impact.

On the other hand, the distinctiveness and character associated with Conservation Area designation, and the environmental improvements it can bring, often make these areas attractive to visitors. Designation can also give greater confidence to businesses and investors that change within the area will be carefully managed to maintain and enhance its environmental quality. Furthermore, Conservation Area designation can help to highlight and celebrate the distinctive identity of an area, helping to single it out from its competitors.

For these reasons, conservation areas exist in many successful high streets, town centres, and shopping areas. Within Crawley, this includes the High Street and Southgate Neighbourhood Centre.

Where a building outside a conservation area is locally listed, similar considerations apply on a smaller scale. There is no automatic loss of permitted development rights, but it is likely to be harder to secure planning permission for changes involving significant harm to or loss of the heritage significance of the building.

Some of the documents refer to Article 4 Directions. What are these?

The Conservation Area Review document (Appendix D) prepared by our consultants makes a number of suggestions in relation to Article 4 Directions. These are used by councils to reduce the scope of the changes which can take place without requiring planning permission, in order to safeguard the character and amenity of an area. They do this by removing particular 'permitted development rights' which form part of national legislation, within a given area. They are frequently used in conservation areas in order to safeguard features which are important to the character or appearance of the area, but which can usually be changed without planning permission. This is because although some permitted development rights are restricted automatically within a conservation area, most remain unaltered. Further specific consultation would be undertaken should Article 4s be proposed by the council in any areas.

Are hard copies available?

Unfortunately because of Covid-19 and the associated requirements around social distancing, this consultation is taking place online only.

How can I respond?

Please respond in writing by either completing the online form or by writing to us:

- Email: strategic.planning@ Crawley.gov.uk
- Post: Strategic Planning, Crawley Borough Council, Town Hall, The Boulevard, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 1UZ

The consultation remains open for responses until 5pm on Wednesday 31 March 2021.

Can I suggest additional conservation areas?

We are not formally proposing any additional conservation areas at this stage, and any suggestions for additional areas would have to be considered and subject to appropriate expert review. If you would like to make suggestions about additional conservation areas, however, we will keep them logged for future consideration. If completing the online form please use question 8 for this purpose. Check first in case the area has already been considered in the Conservation Area Review (Appendix D) or the Areas of Special Local Character Assessment (Appendix C2).

Can I suggest additional buildings for local listing?

Yes, we would welcome any suggestions you have of additional buildings for Local Listing. In addition to identifying any buildings please consider the criteria for Local Listing set out in the draft Local Heritage List document and try to summarise why you think the building meets these. Check first in case the building has already been considered in Appendix A2, which identifies buildings which were recently assessed but not thought to justify local listing.

Depending on the number of suggestions, and the resulting time and resources required to give them expert consideration, any resulting additions to the Local Heritage List may be delayed until after the adoption of the Local Plan, when we intend to consult on and adopt an enlarged Local Heritage List, including other local heritage assets (Historic Parks and Gardens and Areas of Special Local Character) which are identified in the Local Plan.

What will happen next?

New conservation areas: subject to the outcome of the consultation and consideration of responses, a decision regarding the designation of the new Conservation Areas will be taken by the council's Cabinet. This is currently anticipated to take place later in 2021. If new Areas are designated, the council will prepare a Conservation Area Statement for each new area, including an updated Appraisal, and a Management Plan. These will be subject to local consultation before being adopted.

Existing conservation areas: subject to the outcome of the consultation and consideration of responses, a decision regarding conservation area boundaries will

be taken by the council's Cabinet. This will be coordinated with any decision about the designation of new conservation areas, and is currently anticipated later in 2021.

Locally listed buildings: subject to the outcome of the consultation and consideration of responses, the draft Local Heritage List will be formally adopted by the council as a Supplementary Planning Document. This is currently anticipated to take place later in 2021.