

## Notes from meeting with Catherine Jeater, HDC Conservation Officer on 13 May 2013

Present: Catherine Jeater, Mariella Alexander, Phil Bowell, Tim Lloyd, Martin Toomey

SPC planning committee requested the meeting because there have been a number of problems in recent years such as colour of paintwork on buildings in the conservation area, UPVC window frames, too many retrospective applications e.g. for unauthorised internal works. Essentially, our questions are - what can we do to strengthen the application of rules, to make sure householders are aware of their obligations, to increase the conservation area to preserve examples of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings (e.g. part of College Hill, plus examples of Victorian and Edwardian semi-detached houses, 1920s terraces etc.)?

### Introductory comments

According to Catherine Jeater (CJ), in many instances, it is not possible to stop someone starting alterations e.g. 104 High Street and the installation of UPVC windows, without submitting specifications as required. CJ did not approve of the installation of the UPVC windows in this building, but HDC agreed a compromise.

TL asked what would happen if we draw up a wish list, is there a template, would CJ review? No resources, just her, so depends on wish list. Provide letter of objectives.

PB wants to be more definitive in planning. CJ said a Character and Design Statement would help.

Although SPC has no direct powers, it can be advisory e.g. non-illuminated timber signs for businesses in the conservation area, also suggesting use of traditional materials such as flint. What we suggest should be reasonable. Possibly produce a small leaflet.

We need to set ground rules for High Street; District would like to do guidance; Outline plan in first instance.

#### 1. Producing a Character and Design Statement for Steyning

Steyning is one of the larger conservation areas in the Horsham District and its Character and Design Statement, produced in 2003, was never adopted and anyway, now needs updating. There are four other towns in the Horsham District with Character and Design Statements; Steyning was going to be the fifth.

A new Character and Design Statement for Billingshurst has been published, which is just about to go out for consultation. HDC were going to look at Steyning next, followed by Storrington, Henfield and Pulborough. Unfortunately, this is now unlikely because of spending cuts. The Billingshurst draft is not public yet but we have been given a copy.

The use of official guidelines is advisable. English Heritage has produced Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals (Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (March 2011) which provides a single source of information on conservation area designation, appraisal and management; replaces 2005 document). It is important to look at the overall character and what the road scene looks like.

Contact our local members to discuss replicating and extending Steyning Conservation area to use as a working document for planning.

Need 20-50 houses. Steyning Society could help us to draft a working document. They helped with draft. PB asked if SPC draws up the document with consultants and pays, would HDC be obliged to adopt it? CJ said no, but they would find it difficult to refuse - she would like to advise us on the choice of consultants.

Neighbourhood Plan – conservation area guidelines can be part of it

SPC would like to extend the conservation area to include part of College Hill (specifically the Edwardian semi-detached properties on the north-east side). We would have to include whole roads or sections of road. We could include rows of terraces houses (e.g. the terraces houses in Laines Road and King's Stone Avenue) or individual houses (e.g. Edwardian detached or semi-detached houses in Goring Road, Arts and Craft style house in College Hill). CJ also suggested the SME building as a fine example of a 1950s industrial building.

CJ can put us in touch with consultant and we can get quote.

CJ to send us Horsham Society and Lewes Society documents for comparison and ideas

SPC puts proposal to HDC and ask for support to take forward

SPC could use this document to defend appeal

Action: Take to Council and vote

## 2. Use of Colours for Paintwork on buildings in the Conservation Area

According to CJ, this is subjective and difficult to enforce. We should have a set of colours in a palette e.g. muted natural tones. Regularised by regulating under Listed Building Consent.

SPC planning comm. to come up with a palette of acceptable colours, refer this to CJ. Can make general statements i.e. no pastels or bright colours. Include this in our Character and Design Statement.

Action: Decide on appropriate palette of colours for Steyning Conservation Area

## 3. Signage

Not controllable under Art 4.

Road Signs are controlled by WSCC highways

SPC can say we want to retain traditional signs – keep all cast iron signs.

Shop signage and shop fronts

HDC would like to do a design statement. SPC could include 'best practice' advice from Steyning Business Chamber. Include examples – see Billingshurst doc – 2 examples side-by-side 1 plastic sign and 1 individual painted.

Illuminated signs

Use of neon 'open' signs. If these are below a certain size, we cannot act

Action: Include requirements for signage and non-illuminated business signs in Character and Design Statement

## **SPC Planning Committee to progress (in order of priority)**

1. Colour palette
2. Leaflet on Conservation area guidance
3. Comm to decide whether to produce Character and Design Statement for Steyning - obtain quotes and agree budget (next financial year at earliest)