

# Park Avenue

## Design Guide

Advice on alterations and repair following the introduction of an Article 4(1) Direction



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## Background

The area outlined in Map 1 and designated as Park Avenue Conservation Area is the subject of an Article 4(1) Direction therefore planning permission is required for additional specified works which would usually not require planning permission in an undesignated area. The directions control small-scale change that might gradually erode the character of a conservation area, such as alterations to windows and doors.

**Map 1**



This guide explains why Park Avenue holds special interest and gives advice on what works are suitable and what will require planning permission. It encourages owners and occupiers to undertake sensitive repairs and to reinstate historic features where they have been lost. Even minor changes to the appearance of houses can destroy the character and appearance of the area, and potentially lower the value of the house. The basic principle underlying all this advice is to:

- Keep your historic property in good repair
- Retain and repair historic features rather than replace them

This guide is intended to help householders, architects, developers, surveyors and others concerned with giving advice to or working on properties within the area covered by the Article 4(1) Direction.

## Why is Park Avenue special?

The Park Avenue area is a speculative suburb of high quality late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture. There is a surviving historic development form and the area retains much of its charm with a variety of house sizes which depict good examples of Victorian and Edwardian architectural styles and features. Tree-lined streets and mature front gardens provide an important green setting for the built form of the area. The Article 4 Direction therefore seeks to prevent harmful work from taking place to ensure that Park Avenue retains its historic character and appearance and remains an attractive and desirable place to live for this and future generations.

## Additional planning controls

The Article 4 (1) Direction applies to the fronts of properties, and the sides of properties which face the street, and includes single family dwelling houses and houses converted to flats.

There is currently no fee for applications made as a result of an Article 4(1) Direction, however alterations which are not carried out in accordance with this guide may be subject to enforcement action by the Council.

Like-for-like replacement and repair does not need planning permission.

### **What does like-for-like mean?**

If existing features are beyond cost-effective repair you may wish to replace them with like-for-like replacements. Like-for-like replacement and repair does not need planning permission.

Like-for-like are those that:

- Match in materials, colour and surface finish (e.g. bricks and mortar)
- Have the same dimensions and
- Have the same pattern and detailed profile
- Replicate original details such as window catches, handles, pulleys etc, (these can sometimes be transferred from the old feature to the new).

For example, if you are rebuilding sections of boundary wall to match the existing, using matching bricks, matching mortar and matching the profile of the mortar pointing, this will not need planning permission.

Replacement windows should match the glazing bar/frame sill dimensions and way of openings- for example vertically sliding sash windows or side or top-hinged casements can be replaced like-for-like without planning permission.

**With the Article 4(1) Direction in place the following additional planning controls apply:**

- Any works to enlarge, alter or improve your property including replacing part or all of any window or door, the alteration in shape or size of any window or door openings including any window or door recess or reveal.
- The alteration to any decorative feature forming part of the fabric of the front elevation including their removal including the alteration to any door or window surround, fanlights and canopies.
- Alterations or development of porches including enclosing the porch or altering its appearance.
- Painting the front of a property if it will differ from the traditional surface treatment, excluding joinery
- Additions or alterations to the roof or chimney, including the installation of a roof-light or solar panel, or the alteration of existing dormers or skylights
- Installation of a flue or soil and vent pipe at the front of a property
- Erecting, altering or demolishing a gate, wall or fence at the front of a property
- Making, enlarging, improving or altering a hard surface at the front of a property or installing a dropped curb

## Windows

**Replacing windows on the front elevation (or side elevations where these front the street) now needs planning permission.**

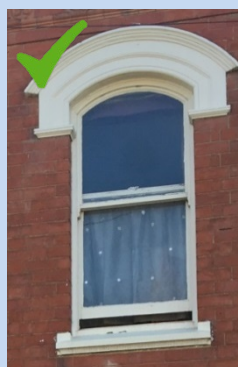
Historic windows can last indefinitely if they are properly maintained by the homeowner with the occasional assistance of a joiner, unlike uPVC windows which are unrecyclable and have a limited lifespan of only 20-30 years. Rarely is it cheaper to replace rather than repair windows and the removal of original features can have a negative impact on the value of your property. Information on alternative ways to improve energy efficiency can be found on page 15.

**Any replacement or alteration of traditional windows should be with windows of an identical appearance.**

Care must be taken with replacements to match the proportions and pattern of the narrow glazing bars. Plain clear glass must be fitted, if possible retaining and re-using any original glass. The Council will refuse permission to alter the shape of, or brick-up, original window openings. The correct recess depth of 114mm (4½") from the outer face of the brickwork to the front face of the wooden sash frame must be retained.

In the case of windows which have previously been altered, consideration should be given to restoring a window of a traditional appearance to the property. When replacing modern windows or doors with ones more sympathetic to a historic building, it will be important that the design and detailing of the new windows is correct. Historic photographs may show what the original windows were like, or, if your property is in a terrace, neighbouring properties may still retain the original windows. The use of windows which are of a similar appearance but have a different opening mechanism are acceptable where the frame and bar thicknesses and proportions reflect those of traditional sash windows.

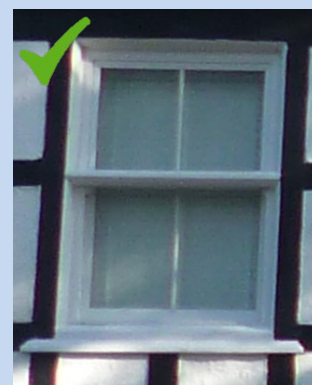
Where traditional windows have been lost the following designs would be considered acceptable:



Timber sash



uPVC to traditional sash design



Mock sash

## Doors

The original period design of doors is one of the most important features of a property and contributes significantly to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area. Where original timber doors survive in a property they should be retained and repaired where ever possible. Any replacement or alteration of traditional doors should be with doors of an identical appearance. The use of traditional materials will be encouraged, however the use of modern materials will be considered if the replacement is identical to the original in terms of detail and appearance. Where historic door furniture survives this should be retained.

**Replacing original or traditional doors on the front elevation (or side elevations where these front the street) now needs planning permission.**



When replacing modern doors with ones more sympathetic to a historic building, it will be important that the design and detailing of the new doors is appropriate to the age of the property. If your property is in a terrace, neighbouring properties may still retain the original doors for examples.



## Decorations

**The whole or partial removal or replacement of decorative glass or details on front elevations (or side elevations where these front the street) now needs planning permission and is likely to be**

### Decorative glass

Decorative glass in doors and windows has an important ornamental role in addition to letting light into the building; it may be stained, etched and held together with lead 'comes' or combination of all three. It should always be retained and repaired and specialist advice sought.



### Decorative details

Decorative details often occur around the windows and doors of historic properties, and became very flamboyant in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These are features that add interest and character to properties and are often what attracts buyers and owners. They may include columns, mouldings and rubbed brickwork and terracotta decoration, tile hanging, render panels and other ornate brick and terracotta features applied to walls, around windows, and to roofs. Decorative details are very important to the character of Park Avenue and should be preserved or reinstated where lost or damaged.





## Porches

**Adding a new porch or altering existing porches on front elevations (or side elevations where this fronts the street) now needs planning permission.**

Porches are often overlooked but are an integral feature in the architectural design and historic appeal of your property. Finely detailed brick, timber and tile porches are a feature of some properties in the conservation area, particularly to the north side of Park Avenue. Some of the larger homes on Park View Terrace have enclosed porches. A number of buildings display 'open' porches with tiled roofs and brackets.

Proposals for new porches should not interfere with existing architectural details. Designs should consider the visual impact of the porch on the building line and how it integrates visually with neighbouring dwellings.

The infilling of open porches or the loss of existing porches will be resisted.



The council will resist the infilling of open porches



The council will seek to retain existing porches where they form part of the original architectural design

## Painting the front of a property

### Brick fronted properties

**The painting over of unpainted brickwork on the front elevation (or side elevation where this fronts the street) now needs planning permission and will be resisted.**



Park Avenue has many attractive properties fronted in red brick, which gives a depth of character to the street particularly when combined with traditional details such as painted timber windows and doors and slate or tile roofs. Unpainted brickwork should never be painted over, even in a matching colour.

Where brickwork has been painted, re-painting should always be carried out in a matching colour.

### Rendered or pebble-dash properties

**Re-painting render does not need planning permission providing that it is repainted in matching paint colours. Paints should be permeable so as not to damage the existing materials**



A small number of properties in Park Avenue and Park View Terrace are partially rendered or pebble-dashed- this is a key characteristic of Edwardian properties. Where render needs re-painting this should be done with traditional permeable paints in matching paint colours which conform to a traditional palette.

## Additions and alterations to the roof or chimney

**The following works now need planning permission on a roof slope or a side roof slope where it faces the street:**

- **Re-roofing in a material which differs from the original or existing material**
- **The removal without reinstatement of any decorative details such as decorative ridge tiles**
- **The installation of a rooflight, including a 'flush' conservation style roof light**
- **The installation of a solar panel or other micro-generation equipment**
- **The alteration, demolition or partial demolition of a chimney**

Unaltered roofs and chimneys play an important role in defining the character of the Park Avenue area. Some of the houses at the northern side of Park Avenue have prominent and decorative roofs, some with projecting bay windows, gables, chimneys and turrets. The roofs are covered in traditional tile or slate. It is important to preserve these roof forms, materials and details where they survive as they contribute significantly to the overall character and quality of the area. Their loss will be resisted

Roof materials are particularly important on terraced houses. The consistency in material is a key feature and where new or modern roofing materials have been introduced the effect is one of an interruption to the roof scape. The replacement of traditional slate or clay tile roofs with concrete interlocking roof tiles has had a negative effect on the character and appearance of some terraces. In these cases reinstatement of the original material would be considered an enhancement to the conservation area.



The council will seek to retain original gables, chimneys and roof detailing



Replacing tiles in modern materials harms the character of the area

Roof lights, solar panels or photovoltaics are sometimes necessary to provide additional living space or improve energy efficiency. These should be positioned to the rear of the property where possible, where no planning permission will be required. However, where the south facing slope of the roof faces the highway it may be necessary for them to face the road. Where this occurs they will be supported subject to their design.

The profile of roof lights, solar panels or photovoltaics should be kept to a minimum potentially through 'flush' conservation style roof lights or similar. The position of the them should consider and relate to the position of doors and windows on the façade below and should be positioned at a height where they do not dominate or interfere with the windows or eaves below. Further information on solar panels and micro-generation equipment can be found on page 15.

## Installation of a flue, chimney or soil and vent pipe

**Flues, chimney, soil or vent pipes now need planning permission on the front elevation (and sides where these front the street) and will be resisted.**

Services such as flues (including for biomass boilers), soil and vent pipes and new chimneys should always be located on the side or rear elevation where possible, so that the smart, public face of the building remains untouched.

Where these already exist to the front of properties their removal or replacement to somewhere less conspicuous would be considered an enhancement.

## Walls, Railings, Fences, and Hedges

**The demolition of boundary walls and railings facing the street now needs planning permission and will be resisted.**

Surviving boundary walls to green front gardens are one of the most noticeable aspects of the Park Avenue historic character. The traditional treatment of the boundary varies according to the date and style of the house. In some areas elaborate brick, stone and terracotta boundary walls and gate piers help give the area a particular charm. Some boundary walls have decorative details such as balustrading and terracotta detailing.

Where boundary walls have been lost or replaced in non-traditional materials or to a different design residents are encouraged to restore them to their original form.



By reinstating front boundary walls where they are lost, residents can restore the attractive qualities of the streetscape for both residents and passers-by. Weather-struck or bucket-handle pointing is unlikely to be original and is rarely appropriate. Cement mortar for pointing is also likely to be a later addition and can harm historic brickwork. A lime based mortar is encouraged for pointing. Hedges should be retained and replanted where they are a feature of the streetscape. The like-for-like maintenance and repair of boundaries does not require planning permission.

## Front Gardens

**The creation of a hard surface at the front of a house which faces the road, now needs planning permission and will be resisted.**

Green front gardens are vital not only in preserving the attractive character and qualities of the area, but also in providing a wildlife corridor, enhancing biodiversity and reducing flood risk. Planting more soft landscaping- grass, flowers, shrubs and trees- in front gardens, and reinstating it where lost, helps to ensure that Park Avenue remains an attractive place to live.

Historic and traditional front garden paths are also a feature of Park Avenue and a key characteristic of the conservation area. Vegetation and tiled paths should be retained and repaired where necessary.

### Control over Trees

Within conservation areas trees are given special protection. Written applications for consent must be made to the council giving six weeks notice of intent to top, lop, or fell a tree over 75mm (3 inches) in diameter, measured at 1.5 metres above ground. This period of six weeks must be given for the council to either approve the application or to serve a Tree Preservation Order. For more information on tree work applications, please contact the Council's tree officer via [planning@worcester.gov.uk](mailto:planning@worcester.gov.uk).



## Energy Improvements

Historic buildings were often built differently and using different materials than we do today. Improving their energy efficiency whilst at the same time not harming their character or damaging the existing materials therefore requires careful consideration. Many new materials (particularly insulations) are incompatible with historic buildings whose construction was designed to 'breathe' where new build construction is designed to work as a barrier to the outside.

Energy use can often first be reduced by small internal measures such as smart metering, insulating hot water cylinders and pipes or the installation of a high-efficiency condensing boiler with individual thermostatic controls on each radiator. Energy efficient lighting and household appliances can also play a significant part in reducing household carbon emissions.

Before making any decisions on how to upgrade your home it is important to understand where you are losing energy and how you can most cost-effectively utilize it. This requires first most making repairs to exclude draughts and ensuring that you have effective controls to manage your energy usage.

Simple measure such as heavy duty curtains and blinds will reduce the effect of draughts, while mending cracks and eliminating gaps in your windows and doors and fitting draught proof strips and brushes (available from any DIY store) can reduce air loss by as much as 86%. Secondary glazing used with well-fitting shutters can cut heat loss by 60%. When fitting secondary glazing you should ensure that the meeting rails on the secondary glazing units match the location of the glazing bar/meeting rail of the existing windows. **None of these works need planning permission.**

**Planning permission will however now be required for double glazing, solar panels and microgeneration equipment and external insulations or renders on the front of properties or facing the street.**

### Solar Panels and Micro-generation Equipment

Solar panels and micro-generation equipment such as wind turbines need planning permission if they are to be installed on the front of a house or the side of a house which faces the road, and so less visible locations should be considered first. Where they are required to face the road in order to maximize solar gain their placement will be considered in accordance with the design guidance for roof lights on page 12.

### Double or Secondary Glazing

Installation of secondary glazing is usually preferable to replacement: this can insulate effectively whilst also limiting draughts. Well-designed secondary

glazing units can be both discreet and reversible while the installation of double glazed units would usually require replacement of the whole window as the glazing bars of these sash windows are too thin to support heavier double glazing. Where secondary glazing is fitted care needs to be taken to ensure that any central division aligns with the meeting rails or central glazing bars of the timber sashes. **Secondary glazing does not require planning permission.**

New double glazed timber windows may be suitable where these match the original window details and do not result in unsuitably thick frames or glazing bars. The replacement of historic Victorian or Edwardian windows with untraditional modern alternatives is likely to detract from the appearance and reduce the value of your home so you should think carefully before replacing your original windows. Some traditional glazing patterns are difficult to replicate with thicker double glazed units, so repair, rather than replacement, should always be first choice. Large paned sash or casement windows may be possible to double glaze, either in the existing frame, or in new joinery, in a way that replicates the appearance of the original "like for like". New double glazed timber windows may also be suitable where these match the original window details and do not result in unsuitably thick frames or glazing bars.

There is guidance available on the options for improving the energy efficiency of your home at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eehb-how-to-improve-energy-efficiency>



## Summary of Planning Requirements under Conservation Area designation and Article 4(1) Direction

- ✓ **PLANNING PERMISSION IS REQUIRED**
- ? **PLANNING PERMISSION MAY BE REQUIRED**

**Note: This list is not exhaustive**

### Repairs and Maintenance

- ? Repairs (If undertaken in a like for like manner)
- ? Maintenance

### Extensions and Ancillary Buildings

- ? Single storey rear extensions constructed in materials of similar appearance to those used on the existing house (Subject to scale restrictions)
- ✓ Front, side and two storey extensions
- ✓ Detached ancillary buildings or enclosures to the side of the dwelling house

### Walls

- ✓ Painting or cladding unless repairing or renewing an existing surface
- ✓ Satellite dishes or microwave antenna on an elevation fronting a highway, on a chimney, and on a building over 15 metres high
- ✓ Installing, altering or replacing a chimney, flue soil or vent pipe on a wall or roof on a principal or side elevation fronting a highway

### Roofs

- ✓ Raising the ridge/expanding the size of the roof
- ✓ Installing a dormer window or roof light
- ? Renewing or replacing a roof covering
- ✓ Installing solar panels or photovoltaics on a principal or side elevation facing a highway

### Boundaries

- ✓ Demolition, erection or alteration of walls, fences, gates and railings visible from a highway

### Gardens

- ✓ Works to trees - in most cases (see page 14)
- ✓ Hard surfacing or dropped kerbs to front gardens
- ? Garden ornaments/planting and maintenance (Deep digging in areas of archaeological importance may require notification)
- ✓ Swimming or other pool to the side or front of the dwelling house

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What about minor alterations?

Minor changes which do not detract from the character or appearance of your building such as painting your doors or windows, installing a single light to the porch, or fitting a burglar alarm box *do not need planning permission*. Other periodic general maintenance and repairs such as repointing and cleaning *do not need planning permission*, however, when improving houses owners are encouraged to use appropriate methods in order to preserve the character of the area. The basic underlying principle is to keep your historic property in good repair and retain/repair historic features rather than replace them.

If in doubt contact the conservation and heritage team before starting work by email: [planning@worchester.gov.uk](mailto:planning@worchester.gov.uk)

### Will I need to pay a fee for planning permission?

Worcester City Council does not charge a fee for any planning application that is required as a result of the Article 4 Direction. All other applications for planning permission still require a fee.

### Making a planning application

The City Council actively encourages the use of the [Planning Portal](#) for online submission of Planning Applications. The service is free and registration is easy. Whilst we strongly recommend that you submit your application online via the [Planning Portal](#), we appreciate that in certain circumstances this may not be appropriate, in this instance, you will need to download the appropriate [application form](#).

Contact details:

Development Management  
Worcester City Council  
The Guildhall  
High Street  
Worcester  
WR1 2EY