

Your guide to understanding the Article 4 Direction

Station Road Didcot



History of Station Road

Station Road or Station Hill, as it was then known, was constructed by the Great Western Railway Company in 1848 as a link from the new station, built in 1844, to the privately built and owned railway town of Northbourne which was largely complete by 1887.

In 1904 the Company decided to build houses for their workers along the western side of Station Road. The buildings were carefully designed as an architectural group in blocks of six units with three large detached houses at the north end and a single detached house at the south end. They were built of brick with slate roofs and their stepped roof-lines and contrasting bonds of brickwork reflect the sloping nature of the site. The restrained Queen Anne/Georgian architectural style is typical of the Edwardian period. The buildings were among the first in the town to be provided with gas, then a recent innovation.



The development was laid out on a strict hierarchical basis. The detached house at the southern end (now demolished) was occupied by the permanent railway inspector. The first group of six houses (also now demolished) were occupied by the permanent railwaymen. Going north the next groups were occupied by signalmen and ticket collectors, provender (food) store workers, telegraph linesmen and engine drivers respectively. The engine drivers were given more spacious accommodation which indicates the status of this particular job. The three detached houses at the northern end were occupied by the locomotive foreman, the telegraph office inspector and the signals and telephones inspector.

The Council designated Station Road as a Conservation Area on 14 December 1982.

What is an Article 4 Direction?

An Article 4 Direction removes specific classes of permitted development for works that have the potential to erode certain details and characteristics that are important to the special interest of that specific area.

Where there is local character or distinctiveness that would be lost as a result of works that are deemed to be permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order), the Council can serve an Article 4 Direction which requires planning permission to be obtained. In making decisions, the Council can then take account of local character as well as the interests of the applicant.

General Questions

Can I replace my windows/doors?

You will need to apply for planning permission.

Doors: New exterior doors should follow the traditional design and proportions of surviving historic examples, using timber and occupying their original locations (usually recessed).

Windows: We will encourage people wishing to replace existing uPVC or metal units to do so with timber examples more in keeping with the character of the area. Applications for replacing of traditional timber windows and doors with uPVC will not be acceptable

I need to repaint the woodwork to the front of my house. Do I need to apply for planning permission?

No. You would only need to apply for planning permission if you were painting sections of the stone, brick or render which front the highway and which have not previously been painted.

I want to change my roof and replace the existing slates with an alternative. Do I need permission?

Yes. A change to the existing pitch of the roof or a replacement material would alter the roof and requires planning permission.

Where can I find out more?

The best place to start is the South Oxfordshire District Council website. Here you will find information about Conservation Areas, Article 4 Directions, householder advice and how to make a planning application.

www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building



An original front door design

Article 4 Directions help to protect the special character of a conservation area by removing some of your Permitted Development rights.

The Station Road conservation area has a very distinct local character. The surviving buildings are a vivid three dimensional record of a very important era in the development of the town. They were built at one time in a single, unified style and this style is the most important element in the character of the conservation area. Even small alterations to windows, doors and porches can have a very harmful effect on the overall appearance of the group as a whole, while other apparently minor works such as painting the guttering an downpipes any other colour than black, or the windows any other colour than white, can seriously disrupt the visual harmony.



A good example of a Station Road window painted in GWR colours

The Council considered that the best way to ensure that the remaining character is preserved and, where possible, reinstated was through the serving of an Article 4 Direction. A Direction was therefore approved by the Council and served on 5 February 1992 pursuant to the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1988.

The Council recognises that a number of alterations took place before the Direction was served, such as the replacement of many original doors, the removal of some of the hedging and the repainting in different colours of windows and guttering. The Council therefore wishes to encourage owners not only to retain surviving architectural features, but also to reinstate lost ones, such as front doors to the original pattern. It could also be beneficial to restore original Great Western Railway Company colours to the front doors and the timberwork of the prominent open porches.

The reason for serving a Direction is not to preserve Station Road as a museum piece. Rather, it is to ensure that full consideration is given to the likely effect of any proposed alterations, not only on the character of individual buildings, but also on the appearance of the whole area. This is to the benefit of every resident of Station Road where the properties all have a very strong and attractive visual link. The Council hopes that it can work with residents to protect the character for this and future generations.



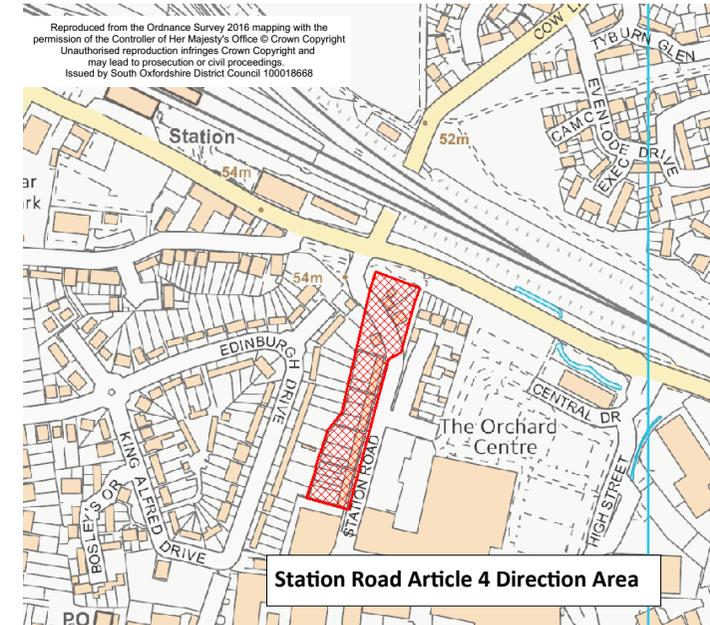
This Direction is permanent. You will need planning permission for the following works:

Part 1 of Schedule 2:

- Class A** The enlargement improvement or alteration of a dwellinghouse
- Class B** The enlargement of a dwellinghouse consisting of an addition or alteration to its roof
- Class C** Any other alteration to the roof of a dwellinghouse
- Class D** The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse
- Class H** The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna on a dwellinghouse or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse

Part 2 of Schedule 2:

- Class A** The erection, construction, improvement or alteration of a gate fence wall or other means of enclosure
- Class C** The painting (i.e. any application of colour) of any building or work



For further information or advice please contact the Planning Service or Conservation & Design team at:

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