

Section 2

Section 2 assesses the types of street furniture and street surfaces that currently appear in the Tonbridge Conservation Area and recommends specific designs and materials for each element based on the guiding principles identified above.

Unity will be achieved by selecting a style and colour of street furniture which is used consistently throughout the Conservation Area. Nevertheless, street furniture and surfaces look out of place unless they respond to their context. Where appropriate, the recommendations are also tailored to the different character areas that make up the Conservation Area. There are two broad types of character within the Conservation Area: urban and rural.

The area adjoining the river Medway in the River Walk area (Conservation Area sub area A5) is generally rural in character. The public realm within the remaining sub areas is generally urban in character. The type of street furniture and surfaces selected for the rural area should be different from that used in the urban areas and a separate section on River Walk is included later in the guide.

Within the urban area, there is a hierarchy of streets which have different functions and scale. Most street furniture designs such as seats and railings should be consistent throughout the urban areas to bring unity and identity to the Conservation Area. However, there is an opportunity to subtly distinguish between the hierarchy of streets through the scale and design of the street lighting and in the footway materials. These are set out in the sections on Street Lighting and Surfaces (below)

Hierarchy of Streets

High Street (River Medway to Bordyke) – see Map

The commercial part of the High Street, which coincides with the area located within the Medieval Fosse has a grander scale and the highest footfall and is therefore the most visible street within the Conservation Area. Consequently, there is greater value in focussing investment in street furniture and surfaces in this part of the Conservation Area.

Principal Streets (Bordyke, Shipbourne Road, Dry Hill Park Road, upper High Street and London Road) – see Map

These streets are fronted by larger scale development (often of 3 storeys in height) and most are fronted by a number of listed buildings. As busier routes of a grander scale, there is an opportunity for larger scale street lighting which is appropriate in the historic context.

Streets and footways within the Medieval Fosse - East Street (High Street to Lyons Crescent), Church Lane, Church Street, Castle Street, Bank Street, River Walk (High Street to New Wharf Road) and the Castle and Church precincts and other footpaths – see Map

These are the more intimate side streets and walkways leading away from the High Street and within the oldest part of the Conservation Area. The streets are generally fronted by smaller scale buildings, many of which are listed. It is appropriate to enhance this historic core with traditional street furniture (including lighting) and footway surfaces.

Street Lighting

The scale, material, design and illumination of light fixtures should vary to suite the scale and function of the street. Within the Conservation Area it is important to respect local designs. White lights (rather than orange) are recommended in the Conservation Area as they illuminate the surrounding buildings with a greater depth.

High Street (River Medway to Bordyke) – see Map

Within the commercial part of the High Street, the lamp standards have been copied from the original black Victorian columns and recast in that pattern (right).

The scale of the lamp standards matches that of the adjoining buildings and the more elaborate designs are now correctly reserved for the town's main street. All columns and fixtures should be painted or self-finished in black.



Principal Streets (Bordyke, Shipbourne Road, Dry Hill Park Road, upper High Street, Old London Road and London Road) – see Map

These streets are fronted by larger scale development and are busier routes. The scale of development requires taller lamp columns. A traditional Edwardian design has been used within a number of these streets. Columns and fixtures should be painted or self-finished in black.



Within the streets listed the majority of lamp columns are of this style. The exceptions are the upper High Street (principally fronting Tonbridge School) and London Road where the roads are lit by modern 'hockey stick' shaped lamp columns painted grey with a blue base. In the short

term these should be painted black to allow greater consistency with other streets. In the medium term, the lamp columns should be replaced by the traditional Edwardian design in black with priority given to the upper High Street which is fronted by listed buildings.



DW Windsor Ltd Strand A shown on Edinburgh 8m column with Traditional Scroll column bracket.

Streets and footways within the Medieval Fosse (East Street (High Street to Lyons Crescent), Church Lane, Church Street, The Slade (Castle Street to The Fosse), Annison Street, Castle Street, Bank Street, River Walk (High Street to New Wharf Road) and the Castle and Church precincts and other footpaths) – see Map

These are side streets and footpaths of a more domestic scale within the most historic core of Tonbridge. Within this context, it is appropriate to select smaller scale street lighting but of a traditional Victorian design (previously seen in the High Street in the 1870s).



The DW Windsor Ltd Windsor lantern and Oxford column are used elsewhere in the Conservation Area and match historic designs well. All paintwork should be painted or self-finished in black.

Through enhancement measures or gradual replacement, there is an opportunity to unify some of the sub areas with a consistent use of the DW Windsor Ltd Windsor lantern and Oxford column lighting fixtures. Opportunity should be taken to attach lanterns to buildings to obviate the need for posts in these narrow streets.

Any new development within this area should incorporate such street lighting as at Annison Street (right).



Other Streets

There are a large number of lighting columns within the remaining part of the Conservation Area which are of an appropriate scale and which it would be impractical to replace in the short term. In order to bring greater unity with the appearance of the remainder of the Conservation Area, and to reduce their visual impact on the street scene, a programme of painting the lamp standards black is recommended. Where replacement is required, the DW Windsor Ltd Windsor lantern and Oxford column lighting fixtures used elsewhere in the areas of more domestic scale would be appropriate painted or self-finished in black.



Bollards

The Conservation Area contains bollards which use a range of materials (wooden, concrete, plastic and metal), designs and colours.



The design proposed for new, or replacement, bollards is established in the General Principles Section.

Within the urban area, the Cannon design supplied by DW Windsor Ltd is already used and should be the design used consistently throughout the Conservation Area.

There are two sizes and the Cannon Light design should be appropriate for most locations. In larger public spaces, the Cannon Medium would be appropriate.

The cast iron bollards should be painted or self-finished in black. Within the High Street (River Medway to Bordyke), the Tonbridge crest should be retained where existing (right) to add to the civic identity of the street at the heart of the Conservation Area.



Furnitubes Traffic Bollards should be used, for locations which clearly need to inform the public of a specific Highway Instruction. Although signs are no longer needed to support double yellow lines, other standard DfT and Highway signs can be incorporated on to the cast iron Cannon bollard. This integration of signage will reduce the amount of street clutter.



It is possible to include reflectors neatly within the design (see below). This is preferable to the examples shown on the previous page.



Litter Bins

There is some consistency in the use of black litter bins within the Conservation Area but the materials and designs have considerable variation. A unified design of metal litter bins would help reinforce the sense of place.



There is a tradition of black cast iron street furniture within the Tonbridge Conservation Area. A rounded top circular cast iron bin with gold trim detailing (the CIS 410 closed top Round bin - below) would be consistent with tradition.



Standard features include easily maintained hinges, slam locks and galvanised steel or plastic liners.

A Victorian-style plastic litter container has also been used in the Conservation Area. Whilst the material does not match the metal used for other items of street furniture, its design is compatible with the cast iron round top bin (left) and provides a less expensive option.

The Glasdon Topsy Jubilee litter bin (below) is manufactured in Durapol material has a zinc-coated steel or plastic liner. The bin has gold indents and lettering.

Whilst this bin compromises the standard material used for street furniture throughout the Conservation Area and, as a result, looks somewhat incongruous, it does provide a well designed option which requires less maintenance. For this reason, it is proposed that the Topsy Jubilee litter bin be used consistently for new bins within the Conservation Area with gold indents and lettering.



Fingerposts

Street signs are an integral part of the public realm and play an important part in understanding the place. Generally, signs should be placed on existing posts to avoid clutter but within an area with a large number of visitors it is sometimes helpful to provide dedicated direction signs at focal points. There are a number of fingerposts within the Conservation Area which use black cast metal columns, fingers and ball-shaped finials. Upper case gold lettering is used.



The Leander Architectural fingerpost is currently the most used and the most compatible with the suite of street furniture used in the Conservation Area. The post (LC111) and ball shaped finial (LF2046) as used on the majority of signs are the most appropriate.

The fingerposts should be black to match the other elements of street furniture (and gold lettering). The majority of fingerposts do not have gold edging or pictograms to the direction signs (as shown right). For uniformity and simplicity, this detail should be avoided.



Railings

Pedestrian Guard Rails adjoining the highway

There are a large number of prominent guard rails within Tonbridge Conservation Area in common with other Conservation Areas within the Borough (see examples below). They are grey coloured and of a utilitarian design. The standard of maintenance is generally poor. The railings have a particularly detrimental effect on the appearance of the Conservation Area in general, and on other elements of the street furniture which they abut.



An audit should be carried out to see how many of the railings remain necessary and, for those which are required, a programme of replacement by a more sympathetic design should be undertaken. New highway proposals should be used to remove or replace existing railings with a design which is more compatible with the Conservation Area.

Furnitubes Harrington $\frac{3}{4}$ Steel Railing Panel and Post system has the elegance and traditional appearance of cast iron and offers the protective advantages of steel. The design contains a rounded ball detail atop the posts in keeping with the detailing to be applied within the Conservation Area. The design (right) shows the

HAR 3R Post::

1160 mm above ground

350 mm below ground

75 mm diameter

HARR S1Q Panel:

2m post pitch

There are options for a full guardrail, 3-rail, 2-rail high, 2-rail low, and knee-rail within the same pattern. The railings should be finished in black to match the other elements of street furniture.



Pedestrian railings away from the highway

A range of designs, materials and colours are used for pedestrian railings within the Conservation Area which are neither compatible with each other nor the appearance of the Conservation Area. The standard of maintenance is poor in places.

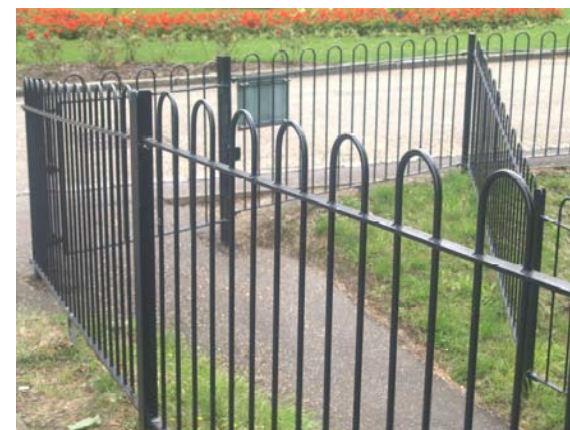


An audit should be carried out to see whether all of the pedestrian railings remain necessary and, for those which are required, a programme of repair, repainting and replacement should be undertaken.

Greater unity would be achieved by using the common colour of black. In some locations this would help merge utilitarian styles with the background and reduce their visual impact. The example below would significantly improve the setting of the Castle and the river if finished in black.



If replacement pedestrian railings are being considered, a plain black spiked or hairpin design (below) would follow traditional Victorian styles and be more compatible with the Conservation Area.



Seats

There is some variety in seat design within the Conservation Area but unity is provided through the use of common elements such as ornate black metal frames and wooden slats. Such consistency means that replacement seating is not required, although future provision should use a common style so that over time there is even greater unity. Without regular maintenance, the wooden slats become unsightly and out of keeping with the black metal frames and the other street furniture.



The Victor Stanley Model C – 10 (below) is already used within the Conservation Area and has black ductile iron frames and a gently sloping wooden back.

Lengths:

Available as standard in 1.2, 1.8 or 2.4 meter (4, 6 or 8 ft.) lengths with wood slats. Available in 1.2 or 1.8 meter (4 or 6 ft.) lengths with 2nd Site Systems® recycled slats.

Options:

Available with intermediate armrests. Custom lengths are also available.



The Mather & Smith 'Castle' SF1162 (below) is also used in the Conservation Area, is of a very similar design and forms an acceptable alternative.



Cycle Parking

The provision of secure cycle parking is important to making streets accessible to all and meeting current sustainability objectives. Stands must be robust, easy to use and be designed as part of the consistent family of street furniture. They should be positioned where they are convenient for cyclists, do not obstruct other users and are not prominent in the street scene. The Conservation Area contains two types of cycle stands as shown below. The traditional design uses the Cannon bollard design whilst the simple robust plain design (below) is inoffensive.



The Cannon design is already located within the High Street (above) and other cycle stands within the High Street (River Medway to Bordyke) should follow this style, though be finished in black..

Elsewhere, the black Sheffield Bike Stand (left) offers security for two cycles and is coated with zinc phosphate to resist corrosion. The colour and simple design make this an acceptable design for the Conservation Area if sited in locations which are not prominent.

Planters and Tree Guards

Where space and underground services permit, street trees planted in tree pits in the ground are preferable to planters as they make a positive contribution to the street scene and require less maintenance. Where this is not feasible and soft landscaping is required to enhance the area, planters should be considered.

There are few planters within the Conservation Area but in the case shown in the picture (right), a wooden planter has been used. This is neither consistent with the other street furniture within this public space nor other parts of the Conservation Area with an urban character.



A black metal planter with gold trim as shown in the example (below - CIS 801 cast iron planter) should be used to replace the wooden planter if this becomes necessary. Any new planters should also follow the metal design shown.



Where tree guards and grills are to be used, the Streetscene Roundguard 604 and the Streetscene Grate 431 in black remain appropriate.

Street Cabins

Street cabins should be
as small as is practicable with the use of new technology
well maintained,
robust, with moulded panel surfaces to discourage fly posting,
sited at the back edge of the footway, and
painted black



Bus Shelters and Stops

The existing Clear Channel Adshel Heritage bus shelters (right) follow the guiding principles for street furniture (with discrete advertising panels), are black to match other street furniture and generally respect the character of the Conservation Area.

Existing bus stop signs (below) are generally made from grey plastic-covered posts and would benefit from being painted or self-finished in black. The example below illustrates how prominent the post is within this setting and how a black post and litter bin would be much more in keeping with the Conservation Area. Any new bus stops should seek to use existing posts or be mounted on black posts.



Information Boards

As permanent features designed to attract attention, information boards should be easy to locate but not clash with their surroundings. There are some cream and green coloured Tourist Information boards within the Castle precinct. They do not fit well with the proposed colour and designs for the Conservation Area and would provide a more consistent image for the area if they were ultimately replaced by a more compatible design.



The CIS Street Furniture Information boards provide an example of how a re-designed board may look although an information board with permanent display is more likely to be used than a notice board format. The metal structure should be black.



Traffic signs

Signs can clutter the street if used to excess. Clutter is unattractive and can introduce hazards for street users.

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD) is a regulatory document which details every traffic sign prescribed for use in the UK. It includes all of the prescribed road markings as a road marking is legally a sign. TSRGD also stipulates the conditions under which each sign may be used. The TSRGD provide significant flexibility in the application of statutory signs, including the use of smaller signs in appropriate conditions.

The Kent County Council publication *Signing on Kent's Roads* states that the use of signing will be avoided wherever practical in conservation areas. The Traffic Signs Manual advocates safe and attractive streets with balanced consideration of risk and visual impact of signage. Manual for Streets (2007) and Local Transport Note 1/08 Traffic Management and Streetscape (2008), Department for Transport, now also encourage local highway authorities to re-assess the need for signs, and, wherever possible, reduce their number and size. There are examples within the Conservation Area where an audit of road signs may reduce street clutter.

Cluttering tends to take place over time by the incremental addition of signs to serve a particular purpose without regard having been given to the overall appearance of the street. It is recommended that street signs are periodically audited with a view to removing unnecessary signs or combining others. In association with the other recommendations in this Guide, it is recommended that Kent County Council as the Highway Authority conduct an audit of street signs within the Conservation Area and wherever possible remove or reduce the size of signs.

New signs should be kept to a minimum size and number and wherever possible be attached to existing posts or buildings. Black posts and backs to signs should be used to match the other elements of street furniture and to reduce their visual impact.

Surfaces

Ground surfaces should be kept simple and not be in competition with the importance of the buildings. They should reflect their urban or rural setting.

Natural local materials including predominantly red brick footways laid stretcher bond, granite sets and granite kerbs are used within Tonbridge Conservation Area and are preferred to man-made alternatives. They should be used to reinforce the identity of different areas.

Footways

High Street

Within the High Street, square-edged (unchamfered) red brick footways laid stretcher bond across the width of the footway (at right angles to the kerb or the buildings) and granite kerbs enhance the principal street within the Conservation Area. Granite sets are used to denote the bus and service lay-bys.



York stone is reserved for the foreground to the Castle where the space widens by the bus stops.

All these surfaces are natural materials, enhance the character of Tonbridge Conservation Area and should be retained.



Footways within the Medieval Fosse - East Street (High Street to Church Street), Church Lane, Church Street, Castle Street, Bank Street the Church precincts other footpaths and any new development within the area defined by the Fosse) – see Map

These are small scale, intimate streets which lead from the High Street. There is an opportunity to provide continuity with the footway surfaces of the High Street by extending the square-edged (unchamfered) red brick paving (stretcher bond across the width of the footway and at right angles to the kerb or the buildings) and granite kerbs into this area. This would bring significant enhancement to the character of this historic core of Tonbridge.

Red brick paving is already used within the Church precinct with York stone complementing the church building.



It is unfortunate that Church Lane (right) has been laid in concrete block paving which does not match the quality natural materials of the High Street or the York stone paving which it abuts – nor has it been laid in stretcher bond.



Castle Street and Bank Street are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal for enhancement. Following the completion of the Landsdowne Road Link Road the two streets will experience a reduction in traffic and there is a significant opportunity for a comprehensive enhancement scheme for this area and the creation of an attractive, pedestrian-friendly environment including a shared surface street with vehicles subordinate to the pedestrian. A natural square-edged (unchamfered) red brick surface should be extended from the High Street to form the shared surface with any 'rumble strips' used to slow the traffic created from granite sets to match the natural materials used in the High Street.

Where it is essential to include road markings in a block paved area, yellow or white surfaced paving should be used in preference to road markings which wear off as in the example above.

Footways adjoining the River and within the Castle precinct

There is a tradition alongside the river and within the castle precincts to use gravel footpaths which gives an attractive natural appearance in this informal setting.



Other Footways

It is not practicable to extend red brick paving throughout the Conservation Area. The remaining footways are often in poor repair and comprise paving slabs or tarmac.

Paving should generally be resurfaced to match.

However, where paving is already a mix of non-matching materials, it should be replaced with black tarmac which would represent a simple unifying solution which would not compete with the adjoining buildings. It should also make repairs easier to match in the future.



Road Surfaces

Road surfaces are generally black tarmacadam within the Conservation Area. This acts as a contrast which sets off the red brick paving in areas where this is laid; elsewhere it will match the footways. For this reason, with the exceptions set out below, the road surface should remain black tarmacadam throughout the Conservation Area.

Shared surfaces should use square edged red brick paving in stretcher bond across the width of the road to symbolise the pedestrian dominance of the area.



'Rumble strips' and raised surfaces (used to calm traffic) should use granite sets. Lay-bys should also be denoted by granite sets.

Within the Conservation Area, coloured surfaces, such as those used for bus and cycle lanes, should be avoided.

Any yellow lines should be narrow (50mm) in width and painted in primrose yellow unlike those illustrated below.



Riverside Walk (south of New Wharf Road)

Riverside Walk (south of New Wharf Road) has a more rural character than the remainder of the Conservation Area and the street furniture should respond to this context whilst retaining some continuity with the remainder of the historic area. Following the guiding principles, the amount of street furniture should be minimised. The street furniture that is necessary should follow the recommendations for the remainder of the Conservation Area. Whilst the use of wooden slatted litter bins is already evident, there is no consistency in style and metal bins are also used. Following a consistent style in the future such as the bins illustrated (below) would improve the appearance of the area

Furnitubes Jubilee Timber Slatted Litter Bin

JUB 405 T

765 mm above ground

410 mm square

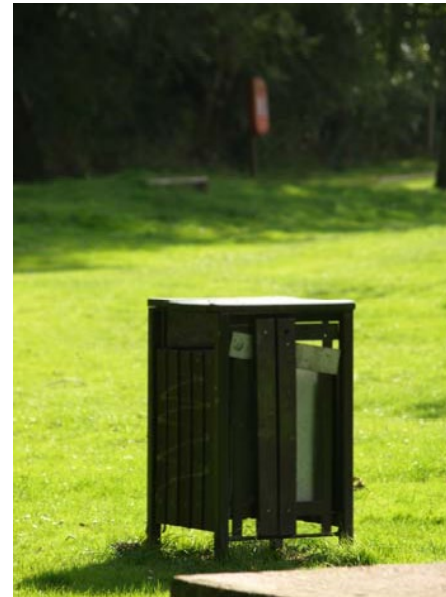
55 litre capacity



PS 525

950 mm overall height

80 litre capacity



Seating can follow the



recommendations elsewhere in the Guide.



Informal variations are appropriate for the setting.

Wooden post and rail is more appropriate than metal railings in this location, abutting the informal walkway. The appropriate surfacing for the walkway is referred to in the footway surfacing section above.



Bibliography

Planning for Town Centres: Guidance on Design and Implementation tools
ODPM, 2005

Civilised Streets, CABI SPACE, 2008

Manual for Historic Streets, English Historic Towns Forum, 2008

Manual for Streets Department for Communities and Local Government and
Department for Transport, 2007

Paved with gold: the real value of street design CABI, 2007

Streets for All South East, English Heritage, 2005

Tonbridge Conservation Area Appraisal, Tonbridge and Malling Borough
Council, 2008

Signing on Kent's Roads, Kent County Council, 2002

Photographs courtesy of Tonbridge Historical Society and Furnitubes
International Ltd