

# JUNIPER GREEN CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL



THE JUNIPER GREEN CONSERVATION AREA  
CHARACTER APPRAISAL WAS APPROVED BY THE  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
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*CONTENTS*

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*INTRODUCTION* \_\_\_\_\_ 2  
Conservation Areas \_\_\_\_\_ 2  
Character Appraisals \_\_\_\_\_ 2

*HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT* \_\_\_\_\_ 4  
Origins and Development \_\_\_\_\_ 4

*ANALYSIS AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER* \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
Spatial Structure \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
Townscape \_\_\_\_\_ 10

*ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER* \_\_\_\_\_ 17

*ESSENTIAL CHARACTER* \_\_\_\_\_ 19

*OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT* \_\_\_\_\_ 19

*GENERAL INFORMATION* \_\_\_\_\_ 20  
Statutory Policies relating to Juniper Green \_\_\_\_\_ 20  
Implications of Conservation Area Status \_\_\_\_\_ 20  
Supplementary Guidelines \_\_\_\_\_ 22

*REFERENCES* \_\_\_\_\_ 23



## INTRODUCTION

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### *Conservation Areas*

Section 61 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, describes conservation areas as “...areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The Act makes provision for the designation of conservation areas as distinct from individual buildings, and planning authorities are required to determine which parts of their areas merit conservation area status.

There are currently 39 conservation areas in Edinburgh, including city centre areas, Victorian suburbs and former villages. Each conservation area has its own unique character and appearance.

### *Character Appraisals*

The protection of an area does not end with conservation area designation; rather designation demonstrates a commitment to positive action for the safeguarding and enhancement of character and appearance. The planning authority and the Scottish Ministers are obliged to protect conservation areas from development that would adversely affect their special character. It is, therefore, important that both the authorities and other groups who have an interest in conservation areas and residents are aware of those elements that must be preserved or enhanced.

A character appraisal is seen as the best method of defining the key elements, which contribute to the special historic and architectural character of an area.

It is intended that character appraisals will guide the local planning authority in making planning decisions and, where opportunities arise, preparing enhancement proposals.

**The character appraisal will be a material consideration when considering applications for development within the conservation area and applications for significant new developments should be accompanied by a contextual analysis that demonstrates how the proposals take account of the essential character of the area as identified in this document.**

## Designation

Juniper Green Conservation Area was originally designated on 19 November 1993, and has extended on 9 March 2007. The Article 4 Direction Order was confirmed on 10 June 1996. The classes covered by the Order are 38, 39 and 40.

## Location and Boundary

Juniper Green Conservation Area is situated 7 miles to the west of Edinburgh around the main Lanark Road. The conservation area is centred on the historic core of the village of Juniper Green, one of a number of villages, which have been absorbed into the City of Edinburgh. A recognisable village character still remains and the conservation area status was designated to protect that character. The boundary of the conservation area was revised in March 2007.

A population estimate indicates that there are approximately 920 people resident within the conservation area.



## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### *Origins and Development*

The origin of the name 'Juniper Green' is uncertain, although tradition has it that the name is taken from the juniper bush, which is said to have been prevalent in the district. However, at least one authority has questioned this theory. The Rev. John Walker stated in 'Walker's Collington' 1795, that he had been unable to find any juniper plants growing in the district at that time. Others contend that the name derives from a juniper, which forms part of the coat of arms of John Murray of Polmais, whose daughter married John Cunningham of Woodhall in 1677.

Juniper Green village is believed to have developed as a natural hinterland to the mills and numerous industries that formed around The Water of Leith to harness its power. Although it is known that mills were operating along the valley from at least the sixteenth century, Juniper Green did not develop as a distinct community until very much later. Adair's Map of 1735, shows the line of what is now Lanark Road passing through Curriemoor, but the only places of habitation shown



are, Baberton to the north, and Woodhall, to the south. The position had not altered much by 1766, when Laurie drew up his map, showing Baberton and Curriemuirend. It was not until well into the nineteenth century that the village took on anything like its present-day layout. The Free Church was formed in 1843, and in 1874, Juniper Green railway station, was opened by the Caledonian Railway Company. The railway greatly improved communications for passengers and



freight. Increased prosperity saw the construction of large detached houses along both sides of Lanark Road, many by eminent architects of the day. After the boundaries of Edinburgh were extended in 1920 to include Juniper Green, extensive bungalow development took place on the north side of the village.



## ANALYSIS AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER

### *Spatial Structure*

Juniper Green is located along Lanark Road and is reached after passing through the outer residential suburbs of the City. The conservation area comes at first almost as a continuity of the large detached traditional villas in generous plots facing onto the main road, similar to those passed beforehand, though now this continuity is bisected by the city bypass. The first impression of Juniper Green is that its form is very much that of a linear village stretching along the main road. The road is located on a ridge which follows the line of the river, the Water of Leith, in a wooded valley below.

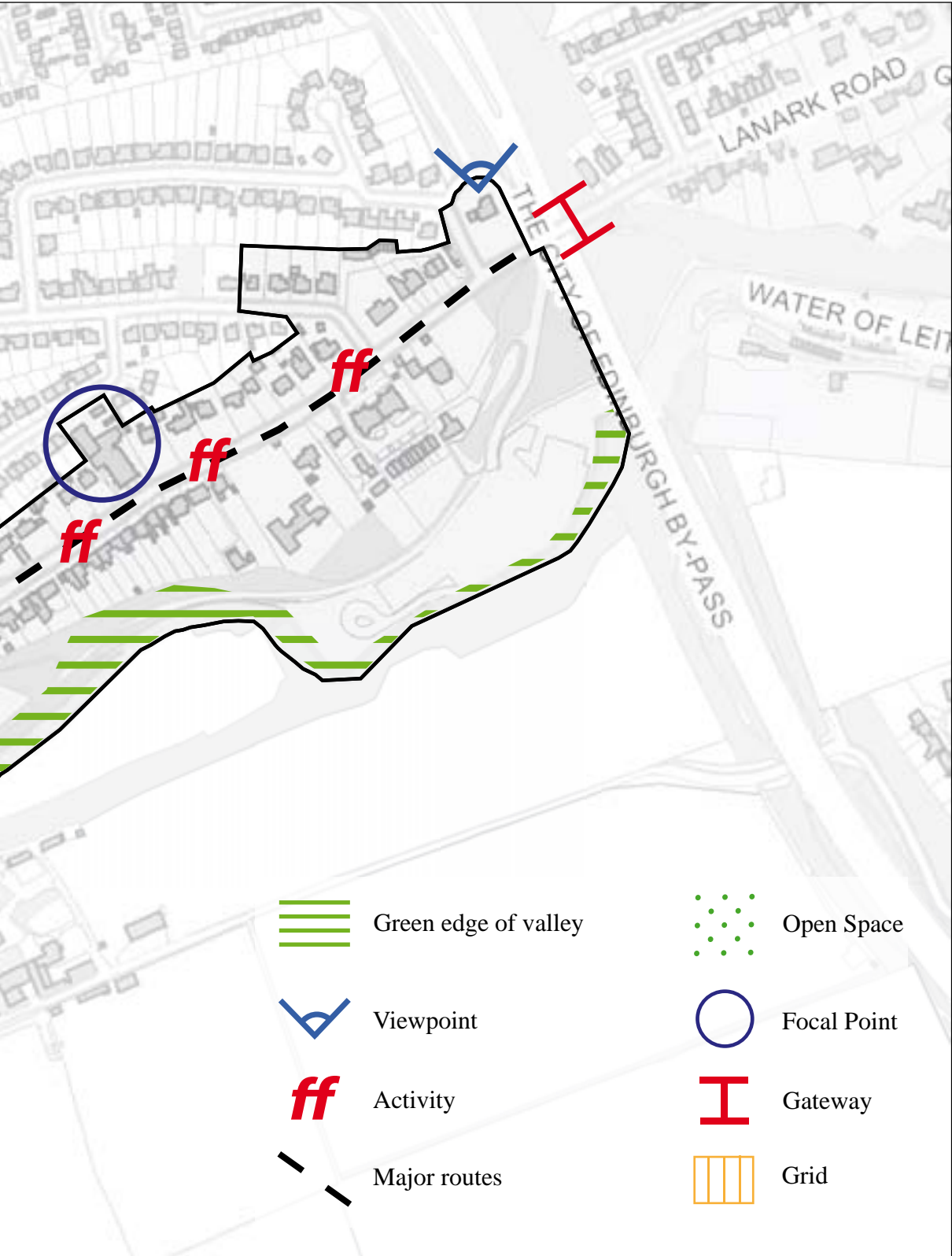


Here the pattern of villas in large plots gives way to a more built up street frontage, either through short terraced forms or individual properties, with narrower frontages and spaces between. These occur at first on the south of the road, where the slope of the ground down to the river is more gradual and where the building plots have the appearance of the old rigg ownership pattern. Gardens and plots gradually taper in size, especially where they are restricted by the short distance between the road / ridge line to the top of the steeply sided river valley.

Spatial Structure & Townscape







The (19th century) extension of the village to the north over the plateau becomes apparent between main street and the former Bloomiehall farm. The spatial structure turns from linear village to a square layout which gives a planned and formal appearance. The village plan may have been the result of rationalisation, prompted by earlier agricultural village improvements which encouraged the introduction of more formal geometric layouts. There is some evidence for this in the considerable mix of property types, from larger estate houses to smaller cottages and tenements. This, together with their complete construction in stone ( rather than the brick used for later villas ) indicates that these properties were built earlier and were incorporated into the layout.



Off the main road, along both side avenues and Belmont Road the incorporation of such earlier development into a formal layout may have also established a tradition of ‘back land’ development along the back of long rigg plots. There is considerable repetition of long access ways bound by stone walls passing between frontage properties. Some are unmade up lanes or driveways wide enough for a car, but many are pathways suitable only for pedestrians.



Most later houses located behind the frontage building keep the same orientation and are separated by mature planting and/or stone walls eg. Juniper Terrace.



These elements tend to break up the length of riggs into small courts. Today, this apparent courtyard pattern is reminiscent of agrarian dominated cultures which have houses in courtyards or in small holdings and reinforces the rural character. This pattern is clear from plans and its attraction apparent when walking round the village.

The mix of property and plot type has now been extended by modern developments. The demands for a higher density and road layouts to modern standards are the principal reasons for these developments breaking the prevailing traditional structural and spatial patterns.



Seen from its surroundings, the conservation area's boundaries are presently tightly drawn round its walled edges to north and south and, with the exception of the villas lining Lanark Road, round those older properties to east and west. These boundaries do not include more modern developments which in places occur at the village edge. However, a wider interpretation for the village's setting and natural elements is important as they continue to play an important role, both in terms of appreciating the village's physical character and use by its residents. From the west and north the fields which served the farm and the park still separate the village from surrounding suburban development, and while recognising links to the city to the east, these fields and the river valley much enhance the 'separateness' which is typical of village character.



The gradation from close knit structure of the village core above the enclosed river valley to the more dispersed character at its west and north edges offers contrasting impressions between dense hilltop village to small rural settlement, in both cases there is a clear distinction between village and countryside. The eastern edge by contrast, though dissected by the bypass, typified by the continuity of attractive and well spaced traditional villas set in mature gardens which extend along Lanark Road towards the city.



Juniper Green is distinctive by its mix of plot sizes and shapes, in comparison with the uniformity and often smaller size of those of surrounding settlements, and by the way in which many of these are still accessed down long lanes or pathways between stone walls. They pass behind frontage development with a pedestrian priority and human scale. Whilst more of a residential suburb by use, it still retains the structure of a village.

### *Townscape*

The west and east gateways to the conservation area are signalled by gaps in the built up frontages along Lanark Road. On approaching from the east, the city bypass now cuts through a strip of farmland that once separated Juniper Green from Colinton. The opening up to wider views at this point of a rural landscape including the former farm house, Woodhall Mill in the river valley and the Pentland Hills above marks a brief visual transition between town and country before villas continue along the main road. To the west, farmland at Muirwood Field, under similarly intrusive power lines, and the remains of a garden nursery in the river valley, separate Juniper Green from Currie.





The impact of the bypass is quickly crossed over, and for a short distance Lanark Road continues between a generous setting of traditional villas to either side. Those on the north side of the road are well set back on their plots, so that their front and main gardens face south. This setback also allows houses to be more practically set on flatter land at the ridge rather than steep slopes, providing greater amenity by providing views to the hills over properties opposite and by separation from the noise of the busy road. Front gardens allow greenery to come into the street scene, which together with generous plot size helps to give landscape continuity from the river valley and reinforces the rural character. This set back also enables the Parish Church, which comes almost to the pavement, to predominate at this point, though some of the villas themselves are of considerable presence. Before entering the main part of the village, there is an apparent increase in density from detached to semi-detached villas.



Before entering the main part of the village, there is an apparent increase in density from detached to semi-detached villas. On the south side of the road there are more semi-detached houses which have a more constant building line. The building form then becomes terraced, the road width narrows, the depth of front gardens decrease, until many properties are at the heel of the pavement. All this focuses views towards the village centre and creates a more intimate character. This becomes increasingly evident in the ways spatial structure and built form relate, both within the village and at its edges.



Along this 'high street' section of Lanark Road there is a greater density and mix of traditional and modern built forms and uses. The majority are traditional properties and many still have long sheds behind which may have been small dairies, byres or stables. There is also some recent development: a four storey sheltered housing block, two linked three storey red brick flatted blocks and a small supermarket. Seen from the river below, the continuity of stone boundary walls and high fences, terraced building forms and back land development behind the main road give the village an appearance of a fortified settlement. This theme is also evident to the north side where a high stone wall encloses the village from the park. A sense of enclosure and protection behind the wall facing the park is reinforced by the way in which two houses half way along it, and which were originally in alignment with it, now step over it and extend into the park.



Again, it is possible to extend this enclosed quality of village character to the 'outer' sides of the Avenues, i.e. the west side of Juniper Avenue and the east side of Baberton Avenue. These have almost continuous frontages of terraced forms set to the edge of the pavement and with only very narrow and a limited number of gaps for access. This is in stark contrast to the set back and semi-detached forms on the 'inner' sides of these avenues. This extends the sense of the defensive edge, offering introspection rather than views out to the countryside. Whilst to the west there are some old dispersed properties and a recent flatted development beyond the avenue there remains a clear field boundary and edge between village and countryside. Where these clear edges occur, they reinforce the sense of enclosure from external views.



Whilst the street pattern looks like a large scale grid arrangement on plan, the actual appearance is not as formal. There is a variety of building forms and of relationships of buildings to street with no obvious composition to terminate vistas, mark corners or suggest hierarchies of building types. The main road and side roads are like linear villages in their own right, consisting of a mix of building forms and means of access. From them lead narrow lanes, pathways and alley ways to houses behind. This range of access ways, many of which remain to demonstrate the original development of the village, are still very much in use and many are either not capable or have resisted any attempt for widening to take cars.

Behind the main road, the relationship of buildings to lanes or pathways creates an ambiguous air for the visitor, of intimacy and interest through their diversity and lack of clear destination, but also one of privacy and trust as they pass through neighbouring properties, behind houses and between gardens. It is surprising that



in such a small area there are so many of these routes, that they still remain intact and that back land development is so frequent. Where this occurs, the character is one of human scale and pedestrian emphasis which is more associated with smaller and remoter villages.



There are places, especially where back land property is set at right angles to the street frontage as in Grove Place, where views cross neighbouring gardens. Whilst this could give problems of privacy according to today's standards, overlooking might be somewhat mitigated by the length of the gardens to either side, or as in this particular example, by screening provided by small orchards, fruit canes and vegetable plots. In contrast to the intimate qualities described above, this example is set in long plots dominated by greenery right in the middle of the village. This offers to the west a feeling of being in the countryside.

A gradual pace of expansion in the village from an earlier era of farm/mill occupations to that of a residential suburb is reflected in the range of property types, from small groups of cottages and rural tenements to later detached, semi-detached and terraced villas all of which are almost exclusively one or two storeys high. The lack of wide differentiation in house size provides a unity through this



part of the village. This is accentuated by the lack of any landmark building, the nearest remaining example being the school which though only two storeys sits at the highest point of the village, its bellcote and steeply pitched roof visible over those of the surrounding houses. St. Margaret's church and tall spire were demolished in the 1970s. There have also been recent residential developments



of greater house density, in one case of 3 storeys, another of 4, with modern road layouts. These are, despite the lack of respect for traditional groupings and changes in scale, for the most part quite well tucked away or do not immediately dominate except for St. Margaret's Court, largely built over the site of the former church.



There are few open spaces visible from the street and they include the tennis courts opposite the school and play area at the village hall. The school seems to have restricted playground area though it is not far from Bloomiehall Park. Perhaps this apparent lack of open space is compensated for by the spectacular views to the hills in the south, over the Forth estuary to the north and the sense of surprise on arrival at the wide area of the park, reached after passing down narrow lanes. Behind the main street a bowling green is well set back, which reinforces a sense of privacy. There are glimpsed views down lanes and into gardens, but it is important that remaining open space is retained.





To the south, the valley of the Water of Leith and the mill area, once a source of water power for the former mills which served the farms, then a route by which the railway could serve the mills and enable village expansion, remains an important element as part of the natural heritage, amenity and wildlife which is an integral part of the rural character. It is important to retain generous riverside pathways to reinforce links with adjoining areas. The basic brick built warehouse at the former railway station location is obtrusive and with heavy vehicle access down into the valley forms development that is not sympathetic to the natural surroundings. From the other side of the valley, the village skyline is one of mature trees and varied roofscapes stretching along Lanark Road and punctuated by the Parish Church's façade and bell tower.



Whilst now a residential suburb, it still retains much of the character of a rural village, self contained and clearly separated from other development along Lanark Road. Juniper Green still retains to a great degree much of its original structure and a built form. From within, the variations in access pattern and house style

and size gives human scale, variety and interest. When seen from without, it has the skyline of a rural village with gable ends, garden walls and greenery framing views to the surrounding countryside. It is the extent and special character of lanes and apparent court yard development which still reflects a sense of close knit community and which makes Juniper Green a quite unique village for Edinburgh.

## ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

The architectural form and character of Juniper Green Conservation Area is varied, reflecting its development over the years. There is a variety of styles in Juniper Green - Georgian and Victorian buildings on Lanark Road, Edwardian terraces at Woodhall, workers cottages on Belmont Road and modern developments at Baberton Park and Juniper Grove. The spacing and street pattern is especially interesting; particularly the properties to the north of Lanark Road, which have pedestrian, access only directly to the property.

The main buildings of note are:

### **Lanark Road**

No.491: Lorimer House Nursing Home: Category C(S). Listed building by Sir Robert Lorimer, 1896, detached harled house, formerly known as 'Torduff', now a nursing home. Extended in the 1960s, but still distinctly recognisable as Lorimer's work set back from the building line in spacious garden ground.



No.533, Juniper Cottage: Small late Georgian single-storey cottage house, circa 1830, with Roman Doric pilasters and Grecian profiles. This building is very distinctive in the townscape and is listed category C(S).



No.547: Gowanlea: Former dower house dating from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, later remodelled in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The building later became a manse and has several distinctive features, including twin single-windowed canted oriels on massive corbelling with a two-storey and attic rear, in the style of Sir Rowand Anderson. It is listed category B.





No.476: St.Andrew’s House: Former Free Church Manse. This building has a very prominent location on the eastern edge of the conservation area. Dating from 1844, it is a 2-storey, 3-window square plan classical villa set in a large garden, with later addition at the rear and some alterations, circa 1913. It is listed category B.



No.500: Castlebank: 2-storey square plan house, dating from 1845. Distinct features include a gothic screen wall, an arched loft doocot and entry flanked by blind sunk quatrefoil features. It is listed category C(S).



No.502: Mount Pleasant: Small single-storey villa, circa 1810, enlarged circa 1820/40, with Roman Doric pilastered doorpiece. It is listed category C (S). Thomas Carlyle rented this property for a while.



No.538: A simple 2-storey Georgian house, dating from 1815, which has a prominent position on the corner of Lanark Road and Baberton Avenue. The property was remodelled, circa 1850 and has a broad boldly projecting ashlar canted bay with stone gablet dormer heads. It is listed category C(S).



Although not listed, they are a number of other buildings of interest in the area, namely, Baberton Golf Clubhouse, the brick terraces, properties on Belmont Road, including a small terrace of workers’ cottages built in brick, and some modern developments sprinkled throughout the centre of the conservation area.





## ESSENTIAL CHARACTER

- *Traditional village character built up around the industrial processes on the Water of Leith to form a linear settlement, still retaining elements of rural character.*
- *Unique pattern of pedestrian access/lanes to courtyard properties, established from the original lang-rigg pattern and reminiscent of agrarian communities.*
- *'Green buffer' surrounding the conservation area to the north, Bloomiehall Park and Baberton Golf Course, to the south, the Water of Leith and its wooded setting.*
- *A wide and interesting mix of architectural styles and form ranging from original farm buildings with vernacular construction, to Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian and modern developments.*
- *Terraces play an important part and there are several within the conservation area, such as the small range of brick built workers' cottages on Belmont, and the more spacious terrace of Edwardian villas on Woodhall Road.*

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

### **Water of Leith and Walkway**

The Water of Leith is well used on the stretch which is included within Juniper Green Conservation Area. There is possible scope for cleaning up the river itself, improvements to the path, and woodland management. There are also parts of the stone dwarf boundary walls in need of repair.

### **Inappropriate Alterations**

Juniper Green has suffered from some poor (inappropriate) alterations and extensions, which have been detrimental to the architectural and historic character of the area.

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There is scope to try to reverse the trend of inappropriate replacement windows and doors, roofing materials and repairs.

It is important that the existing historic fabric in Juniper Green is maintained appropriately and that best practice is employed.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### *Statutory Policies Relating to Juniper Green*

The South West Edinburgh Local Plan, Written Statement and Plan (adopted March 1993) identifies proposed boundaries of the Juniper Green Conservation Area. This was a new conservation area, formally designated in November 1993.

Juniper Green local shopping centre, which is identified as a suitable location for further retail development, lies within the conservation area. It contains a number of defined shopping frontages which should be retained in predominantly retail use.

The conservation area is bounded to the south by the Water of Leith, the Edinburgh Green Belt, an Area of Great Landscape Value and an area of nature conservation interest. The adopted Local Plan includes policies relevant to these designations.

### *Implications of Conservation Area Status*

Designation as a conservation area has the following implications:

- Permitted development rights under the General Development Order are restricted. Planning permission is, therefore, required for stonecleaning, external painting, roof alterations and the formation of hard surfaces. The area of extensions to dwelling houses, which may be erected without consent, is also restricted to 16m<sup>2</sup> and there is additional control over satellite dishes.
- Under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, the planning authority can seek approval of the Scottish Government for Directions that restrict permitted development rights. The Directions effectively control the proliferation of relatively minor

alterations to buildings in conservation areas that can cumulatively lead to erosion of character and appearance. Development is not precluded, but such alterations will require planning permission and special attention will be paid to the potential effect of proposals. Juniper Green Conservation Area is currently covered by one, for the following range of permitted development classes:

- 1 enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house**
- 3 provision or alteration of buildings or enclosures within the curtilage of a dwelling house**
- 6 installation, alteration or replacement of satellite antennae**
- 7 erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure**
- 38 water undertakings**
- 39 development by gas suppliers**
- 40 development by electricity undertakers**

- Special attention must be paid to the character and appearance of the conservation area when planning controls are being exercised. Most applications for planning permission for alterations will, therefore, be advertised for public comment and any views expressed must be taken into account when making a decision on the application.
- Buildings, which are not statutorily listed, can normally be demolished without approval under the Planning Regulation. However, if a building is of historic interest, it may be worthy of protection and through the listing process. Within conservation areas the demolition of unlisted buildings requires conservation area consent.
- Proposals for work on trees must be notified in writing to the Council, six weeks in advance of commencing works.
- Alterations to windows are controlled in terms of the Council's policy.
- Trees within conservation areas are covered by the Town and Country (Scotland) Act 1972, as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland)



Act 1997. The Act applies to the uprooting, felling or lopping of a tree having a diameter exceeding 75mm at a point 1.5m above ground level, and concerns the lopping of trees as much as removal. The planning authority must be given six week's notice of the intention to uproot, fell or lop trees. Failure to give notice render the person liable to the same penalties as for contravention of a Tree Preservation Order.

### *Supplementary Guidelines*

The Council also produces supplementary planning guidance on a range of development control issues. These are contained within the Development Quality Handbook.



## REFERENCES

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'A Water of Leith Walk', John Tweedie, published by Juniper Green Village Association, 1974

'The Place Names of Edinburgh', Stuart Harris, 1996

Village History Book, Scottish Women's Rural Institute, 1966

Adair's Map of 1735

Laurie's Map of 1766

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