



## Conservation Area Appraisal

# Low Utley



This appraisal reviews Low Utley Conservation Area Assessment, which was published in 2005. The Management Proposals included in this appraisal are based on the outcomes and priorities established by the local community during the public consultation process for the Conservation Area Assessment.

The next appraisal of Low Utley Conservation Area will be undertaken by November 2012

**May 2008**

**City of Bradford MDC**

[www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk)

# What is a Conservation Area Appraisal?

**A Conservation Area Appraisal describes the character of a conservation area. It also describes the changes that have taken place in the conservation area over recent years.**

**The appraisal finishes with management proposals which will help to conserve and enhance the area's special character and improve decision making in the future.**

**The Government requires that all conservation areas have an up-to-date conservation area appraisal.**

**An up-to-date appraisal is one that has been undertaken within the past five years.**

The following work has been done to deliver this conservation area appraisal:

- A photographic survey of the buildings in the conservation area.
  - The assessment of the level of authenticity of most of the historic buildings
- An assessment of the issues facing the conservation area at present
- The survey and update of map data relating to the conservation area
- A review of the appropriateness of the conservation area boundary
  - An assessment as to whether new development has made a positive, negative or neutral impact on the character of the conservation area
  - The formulation of management proposals for the area

# What is a Conservation Area?

**A conservation area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).**

Low Utley Conservation Area was originally designated in 1977. A review of the boundary was undertaken in 2002 and then adopted in October 2005.

Conservation area designation brings with it extra controls. These controls cover:

- demolition of unlisted buildings;
- minor developments such as porches, extensions, satellite dishes and boundary walls; and
- works to trees.

The objective of these measures is to help preserve the special character and appearance of the area and maintain or improve its environmental quality. Whilst it is recognised that conservation areas must be allowed to evolve to meet changing demands it is important that this occurs within a framework of controlled and positive management.

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**Conservation Area Assessments:**  
[www.bradford.gov.uk/conservationassessments](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/conservationassessments)

**Listed Buildings:**  
[www.bradford.gov.uk/listedbuildings](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/listedbuildings)

# Background and Brief History



View into Low Utley from The Ridings

**Low Utley Conservation Area is a small but well-defined hamlet, which is situated on the floodplain of the River Aire to the north of Keighley and on the very edge of the town's urban area. The following timeline briefly summarises its development.**

### Pre 1086

Utley is mentioned in the Domesday Survey indicating its origins as a settlement of some antiquity.

### 13th century

Low Utley came into existence as a hamlet consisting of one or two farms dependant on the Manor. In 1316 a Richard de Utley, a Norman noble, was lord of the manor and Gilbert Kyghley de Utley, whose monument still resides in Keighley church, was probably the lord of the manor in the later part of the 14th century before it became entirely absorbed into the manor of Keighley.

### 17th century

The existing hamlet of Low Utley probably developed in the 17th century following the construction of Utley House, a high status building constructed for the Smith/Clapham family.

### 18th century

Little is known of the form or size of the settlement until the first reliable

maps of the 18th century were drawn. However it is likely that it consisted of a cluster of farmhouses and cottages which worked the fertile lands in the vicinity.

Residents' occupations tended to be from agriculture rather than weaving or spinning. The location of both High and Low Utley on particularly fertile meadowland to the south of the River Aire meant that agriculture was by far the dominant occupation and this prevailed throughout the 19th century, as the settlement did not become industrialised.

### 20th & 21st century

The OS Map from the late 19th and 20th centuries show how little the historical heart of the village has changed, with few new properties appearing within the conservation area boundary. However, many of the cottages and terraces on the periphery were demolished to make way for the later housing developments which surrounded the village.



# Key Characteristics

The following summarises the key elements of the character of Low Utley conservation area:

- A mix of building ages and types reflecting different periods of development.
- Traditional natural building materials.
- Presence and size of gardens relates to original status of dwellings.
- The village clearly illustrates the social and historic development of Low Utley's agricultural past. Predominantly domestic, rural development and architecture.
- A mixture of housing types from terraced to detached.
- Important views across the valley.
- Fine grain of development.

*Below left: Allotments that are located in the setting of the Low Utley conservation area.*  
*Bottom: Natural building materials used both for the property and boundary wall.*  
*Below: Traditional layed setts remain in situ on the main road through Low Utley.*





## Current Condition

### AUTHENTICITY 74%

- Each historic building in a conservation area will have originally had features and details which contribute to the character of the conservation area.
- The level of authenticity is based on an assessment of each building to ascertain the level of retention of original features.
- Features assessed are: chimneys, roofs, rainwater goods, walls, windows and doors, boundary walls, porches, bargeboards, bay windows and shopfronts. Not all buildings will have all the above features and the scoring sheet is adjusted to take this into account.
- Only residential, commercial and civic buildings built prior to 1956 are scored.
- 32 properties were assessed for the purpose of the study; this is 97% of all properties within the conservation area.
- The listed buildings had an average authenticity rating of 74%.



## Summary of important features and details

Features and details contribute to the essential character of the conservation area:

- Original / traditional architectural detailing and stylisation of houses reflecting past architectural styles, particularly the local vernacular.
- Boundary walls to most buildings.
- Stone street surfaces (where these remain in situ).
- Lack of alteration / modern engineering to some streets.
- Views to the north and west are principally rural while the south and east are urban.
- Organic permeable layout of old farm buildings in the core of the village.
- Road and lanes delineated by buildings and boundary walls.
- Traditional roofscape of stone slate roofs and chimneys.
- Clusters of development give a picturesque quality.
- Streets and lanes of varying lengths and irregular widths create views and vistas.
- Streets and lanes bounded by buildings and boundary walls.



*Top right: 9 Keelham Street is a barn conversion that has successfully retained its original character.*

*Top left: Croft House Lane shows the lack of alterations to the street scene. Above: Traditional sash windows remain in several properties within the village.*



A breakdown of the authenticity assessment shows which features and details in particular are being retained and/or maintained and where there are the greatest threats.

# Strengths

- A significant number of the buildings have retained a significant proportion of their traditional features and details
- The street pattern has changed very little
- Significant areas of traditional streetscape materials are still in situ
- Key open spaces maintain their traditional character
- Strongly traditional roofscape and skyline due to retention of chimneys and original roofing materials
- Traditional views and vistas have been maintained where the gaps between the houses that have not been in filled
- Listed buildings retain an above average number of traditional features and details
- The large majority of the boundary walls remain in situ and retain their traditional character
- Very few/no vacant buildings or sites
- Definite sense of place
- Survival of garden spaces around buildings originally of high status
- Buildings generally retain high group value



*Keelham Street has a strong sense of place and the buildings have retained a high group value.*

# Weaknesses

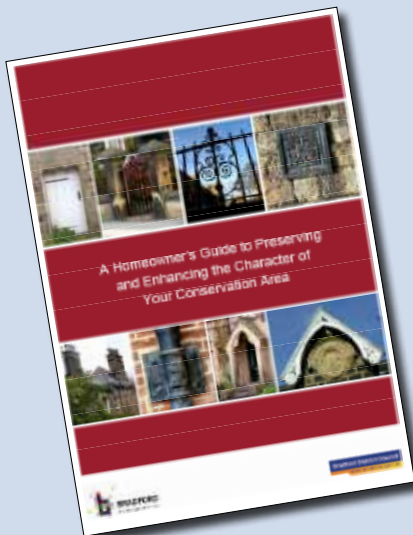


- Alterations to wall materials with the use of render or paint instead of natural stone is detracting from the street scene
- Most traditional windows and doors have been lost
- Houses with large amounts of clutter on buildings detract from the street scene
- The neglect of certain roads in Low Utley has left them unsightly and in need of improvements
- Houses have a mixture of traditional and modern rainwater goods

*Keelham Lane has several properties with painted elevations that can detract from the street scene.*

# Opportunities

- Better decisions by all stakeholders (property owners, the Planning Service, Highways) through reference to the Conservation Area Assessment and this review and subsequent workshops and more communication with the Design and Conservation Team.
- Recently published Repair and Maintenance Guidance should help property owners make better informed decisions.



- Enforcement action against unauthorised development and works to trees
- Redevelopment of buildings and sites currently detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area



*Tudor Cottage - Skye side*



*View from Croft House Lane to the rear of the houses on Keelham Street.*

# Threats

- Continued removal of traditional features and details from buildings.
- Poor decisions concerning planning applications, enforcement cases, listed buildings, highway management, and trees.
- Loss of historic street surfaces and traditional character of public realm.
- Continued vacancy and underuse of buildings and sites.

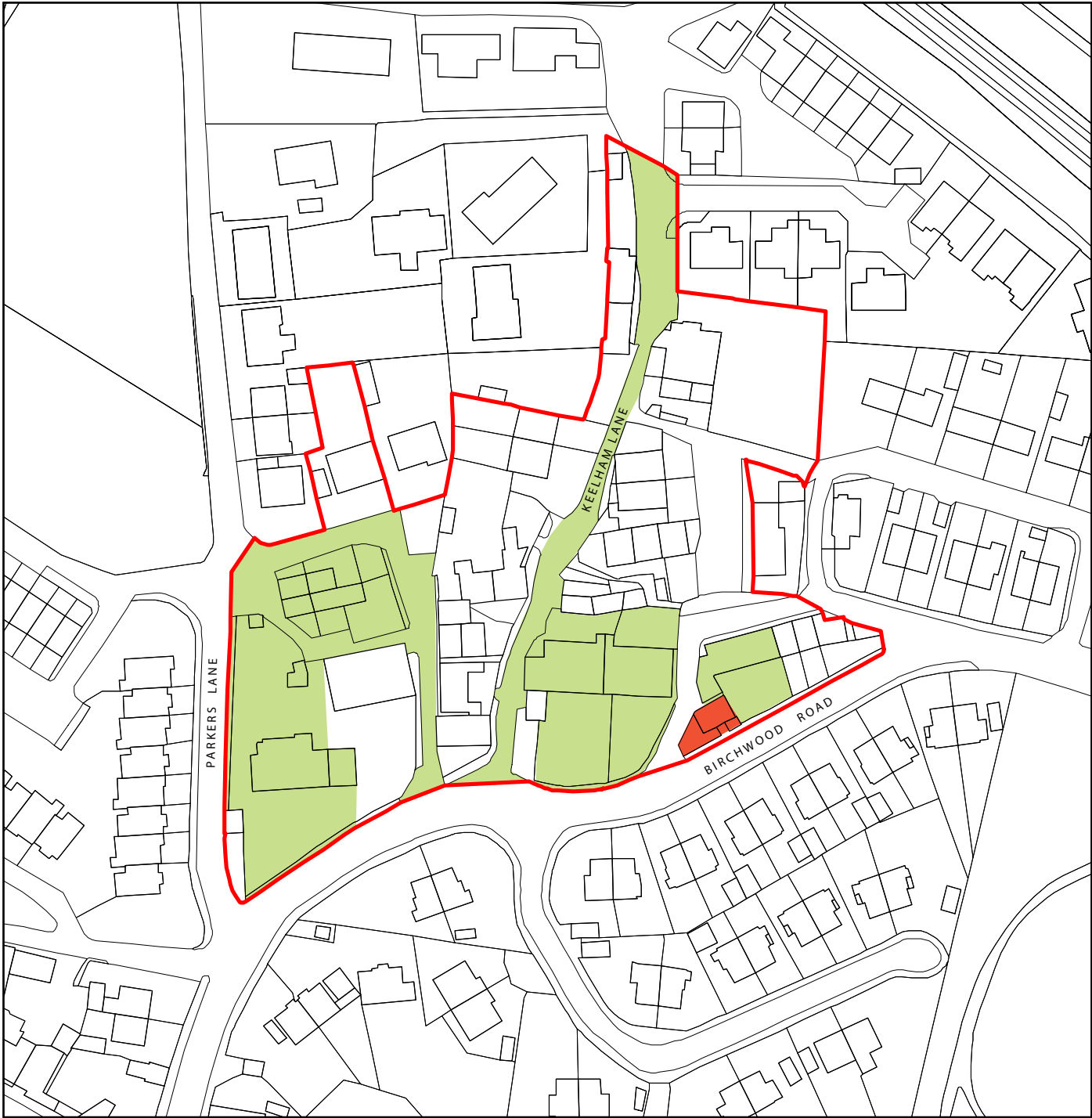


*Poor maintenance of the traditional road surfaces could see the loss of a key historic feature in Low Utley*



# Low Utley Conservation Area

## Character Contributions



### Key

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Areas providing a **positive** contribution to character
- Areas providing a **negative** contribution to character
- Areas providing a **neutral** contribution to character

NB The 'positive', 'negative' and 'neutral' areas relate to the contribution the site/building currently makes to the character of the Conservation Area. The classification in no way means that the site/building has no special architectural, historic or archaeological interest.









# Low Utley Conservation Area

## Open Spaces, Trees, Views, Listed and Key Unlisted Buildings



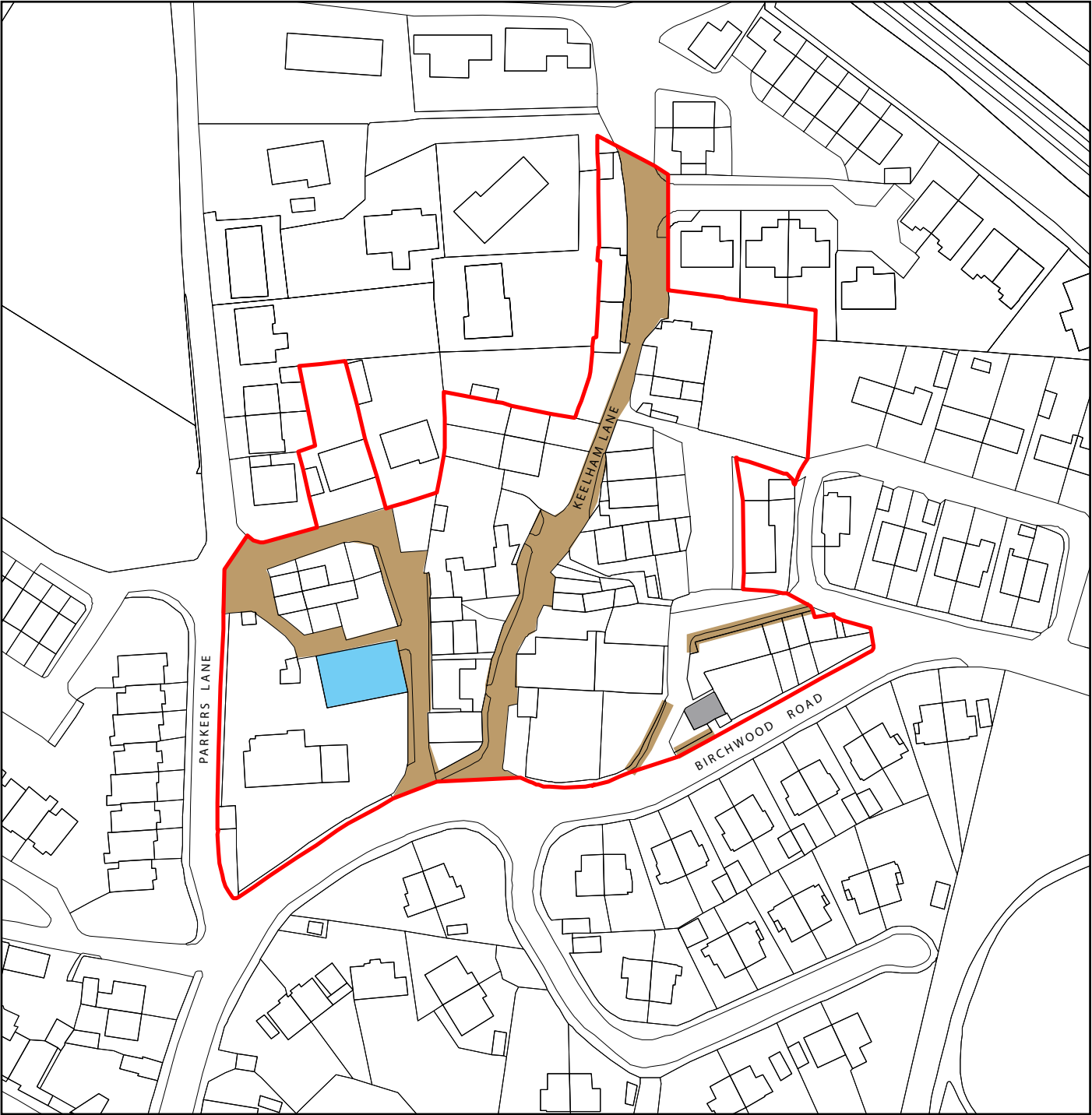
### Key

	Conservation Area Boundary		Listed building
	Key open space		Key unlisted building
	Important tree(s)		
	Key view or vista		

**NB** This map does not identify key trees individually, but merely indicates where there is at least one important tree.

# Low Utley Conservation Area

## Land Use and Highway Materials



### Key

- |  |                                |  |                     |
|--|--------------------------------|--|---------------------|
|  | Conservation Area Boundary     |  | Stone setts / flags |
|  | Retail / commercial building   |  | Tarmac / concrete   |
|  | Other non residential building |  |                     |
|  | Residential                    |  |                     |



Any changes that have had a significant impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area since the previous assessment in 2005 are detailed below.

# Changes affecting the Conservation Area

## New Development

**13 Birchwood Road** received planning permission in 2005 to convert the existing garage/store and extension to form single dwelling. This is uncharacteristic of the building and the conservation area.

### NEGATIVE IMPACT

**LESSON:** The extension should respond to their setting and be designed with conviction. Applicants and planners should refer to conservation area appraisal.



## Trees and Open Space

No trees of amenity or townscape value have been lost in the conservation area since the publication of the conservation area assessment. The tree mentioned had been felled with consent.

### POSITIVE CHANGE

## Buildings

There are no buildings which have become vacant since the Conservation Area Assessment was written

### POSITIVE CHANGE

There are no buildings which were vacant when the Conservation Area Assessment was written and remain vacant.

### POSITIVE CHANGE

## Works to Highways

There have been no major works to highways or replacement of street lighting or street furniture in the conservation area since 2005.

### NO CHANGE

## Boundary

Low Utley conservation area boundary is deemed to be appropriate at present.

# Negative Impacts

As part of the review of the conservation area a number of properties displaying inappropriate alterations and additions have been noted.

Whilst a minority are considered to have a severely negative impact on the character of the conservation area, there are a number of properties displaying relatively minor visual detractors, such as reduced or removed chimneys, inappropriate porches, or inappropriately pointed elevations and modern windows and doors. The Council will look to ways of mitigating these works and will actively discourage the occurrence of similar situations arising within the conservation area in the future. Design guidance on the repair and maintenance of historic properties has recently been published and is available on the Council's website at [www.bradford.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/repairs)





# Management Proposals

**The overall aim of the Conservation Area Management Proposals is to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area, by ensuring that the Council and the community work together to maintain historic features and details and limit the loss of character.**

The objectives aim to:

- improve service delivery.
- raise awareness and understanding about the special character of the conservation area.
- improve decision making so that all repair, development and alteration result in a positive contribution to the character of the place.

The objectives of the Management Proposals are based on the issues identified in the Low Utley Conservation Area Assessment and prioritised by members of the community who took part in the Low Utley Conservation Area Assessment public consultation.

	Objective	Actions	Timescale
1	Design and Conservation Team to maintain contact with the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yearly newsletter about conservation area issues</li> <li>• Design and Conservation website to be made as informative, user friendly and up-to-date as possible</li> </ul>	Yearly 2006 - 2014
2	Improved communication between Council officers and key partners in the conservation area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of a conservation area forum</li> <li>• Workshops</li> </ul>	Monthly As required
3	Improve the quality and amenity value of the public realm, open spaces and highway materials in Low Utley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closer working relationship between Design and Conservation and other Council Departments</li> <li>• Production of design guidance for the enhancement of the public realm</li> </ul>	Continual  As resources permit
4	Maintenance of footpaths and boundary walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closer working between the Design and Conservation Team, property owners, Highways and the Rights of Way Team</li> </ul>	Continual
5	Preserve and enhance features and details that contribute to the character of Low Utley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance for the repair and maintenance of historic buildings will be published by the Design and Conservation Team in 2007.</li> </ul>	Review guidance periodically
6	Promote good quality new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of guidance on appropriate sympathetic design to suit the character of the conservation area.</li> <li>• Production of design briefs where appropriate.</li> </ul>	2006 - 2014  As resources permit
7	Ensure all investment is contributing to the character of the conservation area and its activities.	Maintenance of links and discussions between Design and Conservation Team and partners outside of and within the Council.	Continual
8	Monitor Planning Applications to add value to the historic environment	Design and Conservation Team to work more effectively within the wider planning service.	Continual
9	Address illegal works to listed buildings and unauthorised development	Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Planning Enforcement Team	Continual
10	Retain important trees	Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Trees Team	Continual
11	Monitor Change loss/gain and feedback to local community and Council officers working in the conservation area.	Design and Conservation Team to review Low Utley Conservation Area every five years in line with Best Value indicators 219a	Review by December 2011

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