

**FULL 31 03 09
ITEM 5**

COUNCIL MEETING – 31 MARCH 2009

QUESTION FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

“Bearing in mind the Council's own policy on conservation (attached), how can the Albion Square project even be considered in its present form?”

Mark Mallard
2 Woodbine Villas
Whitehaven

The following was taken directly from Copeland Council's own website.

Conservation

The Council encourages the sensitive repair and maintenance of Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas, together with the enhancement of the built environment, as a means of facilitating regeneration. There are 709 Listed Buildings and 9 Conservation Areas in the Copeland Planning Area [including Ravenglass which is in the Lake District National Park].

The Conservation Areas can be found in:

- Whitehaven:- Town Centre, Corkickle, Hensingham, High Street
- Cleator Moor
- Egremont
- Beckermest
- St Bees
- Ravenglass

Conservation work has been a true success story in the Borough, especially in Whitehaven Town Centre which is a member of the English Historic Towns Forum, and in 2001 received national awards from the British Council for Shopping Centres and the Royal Town Planning Institute.

What do we mean by Conservation?

In terms of planning, conservation does not mean preservation where no change should take place. It does however call for change to be controlled carefully and high standards of design, materials and detailing should be sought. Any alterations or new development should respect the scale of existing buildings and surrounding development and should also incorporate traditional materials and design features.

Why is the Conservation of our built heritage important?

Preserving and enhancing our built heritage is increasingly being viewed as a useful tool in the regeneration of deprived areas. A greater sense of place, and pride in that place can improve quality of life through mechanisms such as improving the environment and encouraging inward investment. The increasing significance placed on heritage issues is reinforced by the Governments recent publications.

Conservation-led Regeneration

Whitehaven, Egremont and Cleator Moor all have existing Town Centre Conservation Areas. Within these areas conservation-led regeneration has been central in bringing life back into the town.

The award winning Whitehaven Town Centre has greatly benefited from many years of conservation-led regeneration schemes, from the Town Scheme set up in the mid 1970's to the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS), which came to an end in 2005.

In Egremont over £200,000 has been invested in the town centre between 1999 and 2002 via a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme. In Cleator Moor, a Townscape Heritage Initiative supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Cleator Moor SRB, European Regional Development Fund and Copeland Borough Council is facilitating comprehensive improvements to Cleator Moor over the next three years.

All of the above schemes have provided grant assistance for the sensitive repair and restoration of historic buildings. The projects have allowed many vacant historic buildings to be brought back into use and assisted with job creation. A HERS scheme in Millom came to an end in March 2006.

If you live in a Conservation Area the Council has extra controls over Proposals for Demolition. It will not normally be permitted where this would be to the detriment of the character of the area. If demolition is to be allowed then the Council must ensure that the buildings will be replaced by those which enhance the townscape of the Conservation Area.
