

## **PROPOSED ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION TO CONTROL THE PAINTING OF BUILDINGS IN CHESTERFIELD TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA.**

### **Summary**

Whilst the problem has not been acute to date, there has been some erosion of the character of Chesterfield town centre by the painting of previously unpainted buildings or changes to strong or garish colours. The proposed Article 4 Direction would effectively halt this process. In case of notable buildings painted before the coming into force of the Direction, the co-operation of owners will be sought to remove existing paint from their buildings.

### **Recommended reason for decision**

- To protect the character of Chesterfield Town Centre Conservation Area.

### **Justification Statement**

1. Chesterfield town centre has a rich architectural building stock. Together the buildings contribute significantly toward creating a positive image of the town centre.
2. Most of the properties within the town centre of Chesterfield consist overwhelmingly of brick and stone. This homogeneity is largely responsible for town centre's highly attractive character and for its designation as a conservation area.
3. In some degree the character of the Chesterfield town centre has already started to be eroded by the painting of buildings facades with garish and strong colours, presumably, in the case of buildings in commercial use, essentially for advertising purposes. The painting of the buildings, fortunately not carried out extensively to date, detracts from the essential homogeneity mentioned above. It is considered that not to take any action could lead to further owners deciding to paint their buildings. Whilst it is difficult to predict how far this trend could develop, if allowed to continue unchecked, it could undoubtedly have an incremental adverse effect on the character or appearance of the town centre.
4. Whilst listed buildings are protected against painting, proportionately few buildings in the town centre are listed. This leaves more buildings susceptible to painting. Whilst the Direction is not retrospective it is the minimum action to secure the objective.
5. The initiative for taking action to prevent the painting of buildings has come from not only the appraisal exercise of the Conservation Area, but also from complaints from the public. These concerns are fully shared by officers.
6. The legal powers to bring the painting of buildings under planning control have been investigated and it is clear that this is a matter that is capable of being brought within the planning control.

7. The process to make Article 4 Direction was agreed in principle by the Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2007.
8. The suggested boundary of the area to be made subject to the Direction will be confined to the boundary of the Town Centre Conservation Area