



# Roker Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

**PLANNING GUIDANCE**



# Roker Park Conservation Area

## Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

Philip J. Barrett  
Director of Development and Regeneration  
Sunderland City Council  
PO Box 102  
Civic Centre  
SR2 7DN

Tel: (0191)553 1515  
Fax:(0191) 553 7893  
e-mail: [implementation@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:implementation@sunderland.gov.uk)

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If you require this document in an alternative (i.e. braille, large print, audio tape etc.), or in your own language, please contact Mark Taylor.

Telephone (0191) 5531515, fax (0191) 553 7893 or e-mail [mark.taylor@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:mark.taylor@sunderland.gov.uk)

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# Background

## Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are defined as "areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Local authorities are obliged to determine which parts of their district are of special interest and declare them Conservation Areas. Designation is dependent on the overall quality and interest of an area, rather than individual buildings, although it is common for such areas to contain a number of Listed Buildings. There are currently 13 conservation areas in the City of Sunderland, including City Centre areas, pre-conquest villages, the Victorian suburb of Ashbrooke and the coastal resort of Roker. Each conservation area has its own unique character and appearance. Designation as a conservation area has a number of implications. Most importantly, the Local Authority is required to give "special" attention to preserving or enhancing the conservation area in exercising its planning functions. Also, planning consent must be gained for certain types of development which are elsewhere classified as permitted development, such as various types of cladding, dormer windows, satellite dishes and radio masts / antennae. Consent is further required for the demolition of buildings within conservation areas. Designation also brings extra controls over works to trees.

## Historic Parks and Gardens

The historic value of certain parks and gardens is formally recognised through their inclusion on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. In Sunderland, Mowbray Park and Roker Park are included on the Register as Grade II entries. No additional statutory controls follow from the inclusion of a park on English Heritage's Register, however, the significance of such sites is recognised in the Government's Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 15 "Planning and the Historic Environment" which states that:

"Local Planning Authorities should protect registered parks and gardens in preparing development plans and in determining planning applications. The effect of proposed development on a registered park or garden or its setting is a material consideration in determining a planning application."

## Appraisal of Character

The protection of an area does not end with conservation area designation. PPG 15 urges Local Authorities to prepare detailed assessments of the special interest, character and appearance of their conservation areas. Local Authorities' performance in producing such character appraisals is currently monitored as a 'Best Value Performance Indicator' (BV219b). A character appraisal defines and analyses the special qualities and the architectural and historic interest which warranted the conservation area designation. PPG15 states that "the more clearly the special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation is defined and recorded, the sounder will be the basis for local plan policies and development control decisions, as well as for the formulation of proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of an area". Character appraisals should therefore provide a framework against which development proposals can be assessed for their appropriateness in the historic environment.

## Management of Conservation Areas

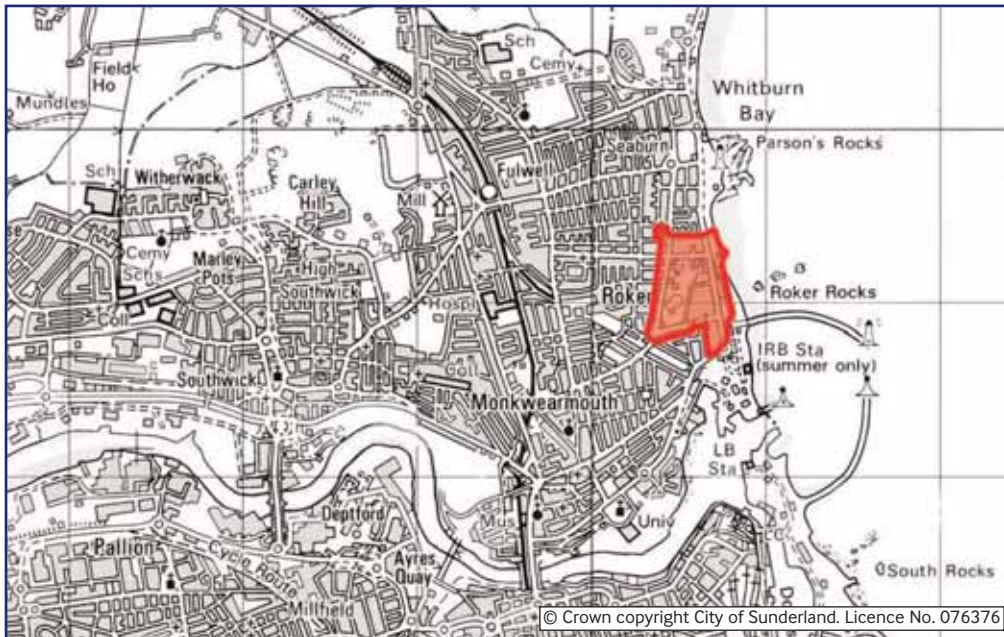
Local Authorities are under a duty from time to time to "formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas" (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (LBCA)) Act 1990, s. 71). This requirement is formalised in BV219c which monitors the percentage of conservation areas with published management proposals. English Heritage guidance on the management of conservation areas advises that such proposals should take the form of a mid-to-long term strategy, setting objectives for addressing the issues and recommendations for action arising from the character appraisals, and identifying any further and more detailed work needed for their implementation.

## Roker Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal / Management Strategy

This Character Appraisal / Management Strategy has been prepared in response to the guidance outlined above and, as such, discharges the Council's obligations and duties under the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, as well as complying with English Heritage guidance. Following a formal consultation process, the City Council has adopted the finalised document as Formal Planning Guidance in support of the City of Sunderland UDP and future LDF. The guidance will be a material consideration when considering applications for development within the conservation area.

# An Introduction

Roker Park Conservation Area was declared in 1995 in recognition of its architectural and historic interest. Centred upon a registered Historic Park and Garden, it displays many fine examples of Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing. It also contains several individual buildings of note and includes the seafront and promenade areas of Roker. All of these elements give it a diverse and unique character. This document combines an appraisal of the Conservation Area's character and appearance with management proposals for preserving and enhancing its special qualities. Part 1, the Character Appraisal, identifies and assesses those characteristics and features that give the Area its special architectural and historic interest and considers current issues which threaten its historic integrity. Part 2 of the document comprises a Management Strategy and contains a series of management objectives and proposals to address the issues raised in the Character Appraisal. This includes consideration of the resources needed, further work required and envisaged timescales to implement the management proposals.



**Location** - Roker Park Conservation Area encompasses one of the most striking and attractive environments in the City. It is situated on the coast approximately 2 miles north of the City Centre and covers an area of 25.24 hectares. The conservation area is irregular in shape. The existing boundaries are best defined to the east by Roker Beach and to the north by Rock Lodge Road. Elsewhere the boundary of the conservation area is less clearly defined, especially to the south east where it follows the former boundary of the Tyne & Wear Development Corporation area and is at its least discernible. There are several buildings and structures in this locality that are of historical significance to Roker but these are currently excluded from the Conservation Area. These are included in the following character appraisal and this part of the boundary is reviewed in part 2 of the document.

## UDP Conservation Policies

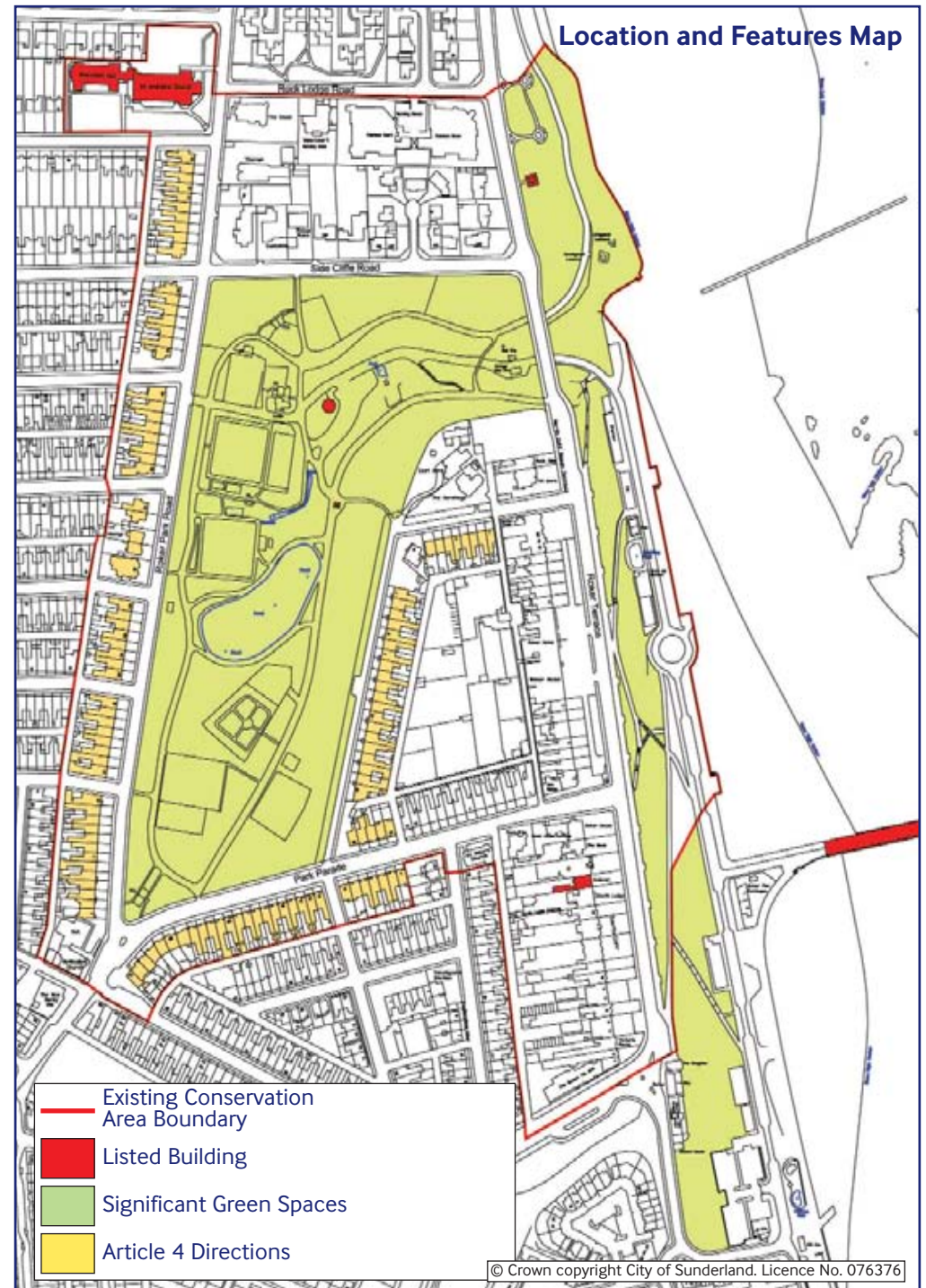
Policy **B4** of the City of Sunderland UDP states that: "All development within and adjacent to Conservation Areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character or appearance". Under this policy the Council is obliged to prepare supplementary guidance in the form of character assessments for each of its Conservation Areas. These will identify features and characteristics that contribute to the area's special interest, identify opportunities for enhancement and, where appropriate, establish design criteria for new development and restoration projects. The Roker Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal / Management Strategy is one of a series of such assessments that will cover all the City's conservation areas.

Certain buildings and structures within the Roker Park Conservation Area are Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and are thus protected by tight planning controls. Policy **B8** presumes in favour of the retention of Listed Buildings whilst policy **B9** aims to prevent these buildings from undergoing extensions and alterations that would adversely affect their architectural or historic character. Policy **B10** seeks to preserve the setting of Listed Buildings.

In order to protect unlisted buildings from inappropriate alterations, the Council can seek under policy **B6** to make Article 4 Directions where considered appropriate, requiring planning permission to be gained for development which is normally 'permitted' in the case of dwellinghouses. The policy also encourages the retention of open spaces, historic street patterns and plot boundaries and for the Council to exercise control over landscape features such as mature trees. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are a good example of this; they require the consent of the Council to be obtained before trees can be cut down, topped or lopped.

However, within Roker Park Conservation Area the gradual loss of features, both architectural and natural, gives cause for concern and raises the issue as to whether further measures should be introduced that would provide better protection for the Conservation Area. To this end, the Management Strategy in part 2 of the document expands upon existing UDP policy to give clearer guidance on issues of particular importance to Roker.

All UDP policies relating to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are re-produced in full in the appendix.





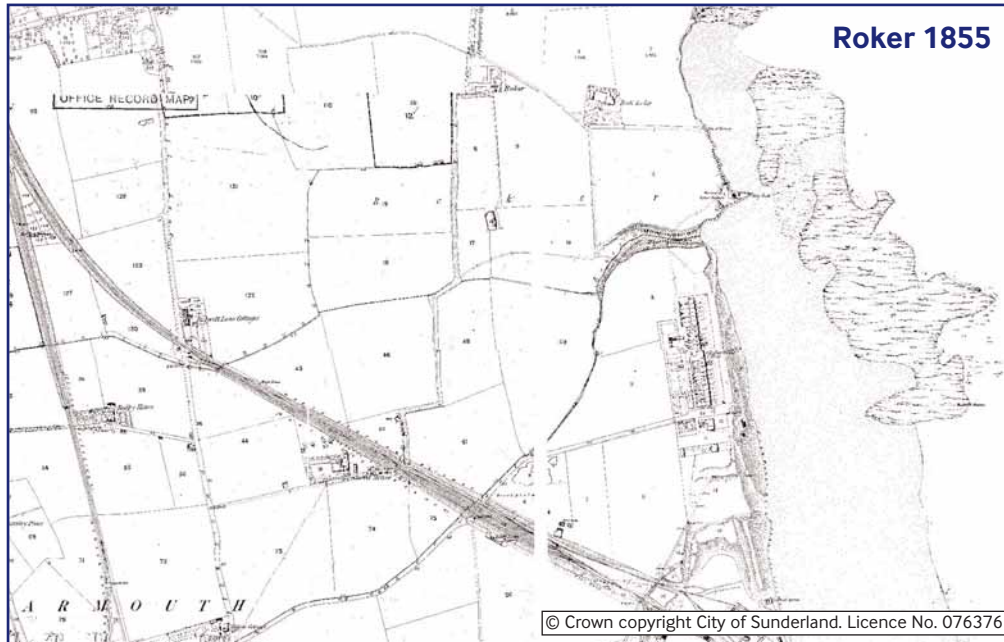
A scenic view of a pond in a park. The pond is in the foreground, with a paved path leading to it. In the background, there are several large, multi-story buildings with red brick and white window frames. The scene is framed by trees with green and yellow leaves, suggesting a spring or autumn setting. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

# **Part 1**

# **Character Appraisal**



# Historical Development

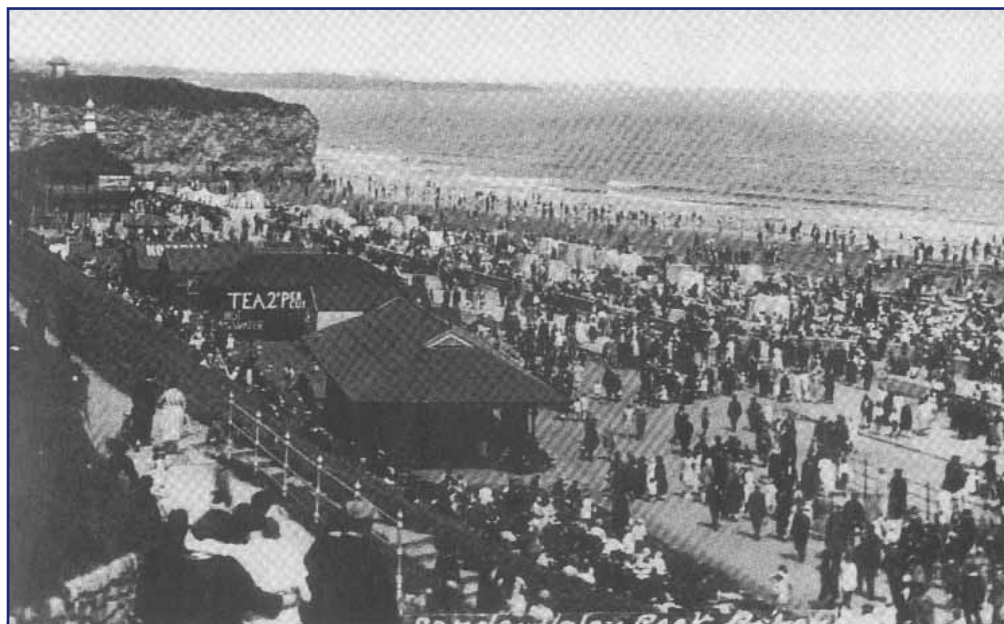


Until Victorian times, the Roker area was predominantly agricultural. The earliest building took place in the 1840's when Roker Terrace was built on the cliff tops, however, the suburb only began to develop after the opening of the Park in 1880. Until then the middle classes had preferred the developing leafy suburb of Ashbrooke. In 1880 Sir Hedworth Williamson and the Church Commissioners donated land for the development of a park based upon Roker Ravine, this provided the stimulus for the development of Roker. The donation of the park was on condition that the Corporation build a road bridge to span the Ravine thus opening up Williamson's lands to the north for development. Roker Park, like the road bridge, was opened in 1880 and served as a nucleus around which the late Victorian and Edwardian suburb developed. In 1885, the construction of Roker Pier commenced along the line of a natural rocky outcrop.

In the decades about the turn of the century, development intensified considerably as Roker grew in popularity. By the mid 1890's Roker Terrace had extended southwards along the seafront and development had moved inland with the erection of St George's Terrace and some of the properties on Roker Park Road. A group of large villas had also been developed in their own grounds directly to the north of the park. In the years up to 1905 a number of terraces were built about the Park - Roker Park Road, Park Parade, Roker Park Terrace and Ravine Terrace. This period also saw the construction of three churches in the area of which one, St Andrews, a Grade I Listed Building, is an exemplar of the Arts and Craft Movement and often dubbed the Cathedral of the Arts and Crafts.

By 1907 the conservation area as it exists today was largely complete and Roker had become a thriving seaside resort popular with local people. The development of the tram system was fundamental to its popularity, providing an important link to the resort from the suburbs south of the river. On busy days trams serviced the resort every two and a half minutes from the Town Centre. Visitors found the Park a focus for leisure activities such as tennis and bowls and there was a lake over which four white swans presented by the King presided. The promenade and sands were also an obvious attraction and were often crowded with visitors, as was the long anticipated Roker Pier which had opened in 1903 after 18 years in construction.

Development all but ceased after the Edwardian period. In the latter part of the 20th century some infill of gaps in terraces and limited redevelopment of villas and their grounds to provide modern bungalows has occurred. Although Roker remained a holiday resort well into the 1960's, it now tends to attract day trippers rather than long stay holiday visitors. Consequently, traditional seaside uses, such as hotels and guest houses, are less viable and under pressure for conversion into residential use.



Roker Beach in the 1920's. Source: O'Brien & Gibson (1997)



# Fundamental Character

The fundamental character of Roker Park Conservation Area, and indeed the main reason for its designation, derives predominantly from the Park itself and the attractive late Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing which encloses and faces onto it. The intimate relationship between the Park and the surrounding terraces gives the core of the conservation area an especially distinctive and striking character to be admired and enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.



The close relationship between the Park and the surrounding terraces is mutually reinforcing. The Park provides an extremely pleasant setting for the buildings which, in turn, act as the perfect backdrop to the Park.

The remainder of the conservation area contains several buildings of note, St Andrew's Church being an outstanding example of its period and one of the finest buildings in the City, featuring the work of several of the most notable exponents of the Arts & Crafts Movement. The more varied styles of individual buildings along the seafront adds considerably to the area's special interest, whilst the harsh cliff faces and fine golden sands of Roker beach contrast starkly with the green and luscious landscape of Roker Park, to which it is linked by the dramatic ravine. This contrast, combined with the cohesive strength of the core, gives the conservation area its diverse and unique character.

## Layout

The layout of the conservation area has been largely unaltered since its completion in the early 20th century. The predominance of terraced housing provides common building lines and boundary walls to create a strong townscape edge of linear form to the street pattern. The majority of properties either face the Park to take advantage of the pleasant outlook it provides or towards the seafront to benefit from spectacular views over the sea. An additional road has been formed off Side Cliffe Road to serve a newer cul-de-sac development. These properties do not follow the historic development pattern, are much more introspective, and fail to contribute to the Area's special character.



The historic street pattern of Roker has been retained. However, the trams which at one time ran regularly along the seafront are long gone and the coast road, above, now caters for motor vehicles and cyclists.

## Built form

The scale and massing of the terraced housing is typical of domestic buildings of the period. The terraces surrounding the Park are 2 to 3 storeys with tall narrow frontages, and are deceptively large due to their considerable depth. Properties on Roker Terrace are generally more substantial due to the nature of the seaside uses for which they were built, with many being 4 storeys and/or of greater width such as the Roker Hotel. Much of the newer development has not responded to the historic built form and often appears bulky in comparison, for example, the nursing homes on Rock Lodge Road.

## Architectural Style

The dominant form of architecture in the Conservation Area is strongly influenced by the Arts & Crafts Movement, reflecting the Area's relatively short construction period at the turn of the 20th century. St Andrew's Church is a true expression of this movement, whilst the quality of craftsmanship and level of detailing and decoration that characterises this style is also very evident in the Edwardian housing, such as Roker Park Terrace and several notable villas.

Earlier development, such as Roker Terrace and St George's Terrace, is much less elaborate and more indicative of early forms of Victorian architecture. Many of these properties have been inappropriately altered and their frontages bear little resemblance to their original form.

Later forms of development found mainly off Side Cliffe Road and Rock Lodge Road are devoid of the craftsmanship and detailing that gives the conservation area its special interest. Most of these buildings are uninspired and typical of the bland appearance of many forms of modern architecture, and have a negative impact on the area's character.

## Building materials

An attractive range of high quality natural materials is a significant characteristic of the conservation area. Red brick, in various shades, is the principle building material, ranging from the rough reddish-brown brick along Roker Park Road to the brighter more glazed bricks of Park Parade. Many buildings along Roker Terrace have rendered or painted front elevations, which is not uncommon for seafront properties. Such treatment provides added weather protection for exposed building frontages but can be damaging to the underlying brick if applied incorrectly or if a poor choice of material is used (usually cement). The roofscape is predominantly characterised by Welsh Slate, brick chimneys, and is often enhanced by decorative clay ridge tiles and carved gutter brackets. Boundary walls and gateposts are generally brick to match the buildings they enclose. Railings were originally in a range of styles and materials, some being quite innovative. Most of these were removed during the Second World War.

The late Victorian/Edwardian houses facing the Park display an attractive and complementary mix of heavy timber features and sandstone or terracotta detailing between and within individual terraces, adding considerably to the Area's distinctiveness. The use of timber features was a consequence of the abundance of high quality timber for the local shipbuilding industry. This industry also resulted in the widespread use of Welsh slate in Roker.



The use of local limestone sets St Andrew's Church apart from adjacent buildings and provides interesting contrast in the street scene.

Some variation in materials is evident in the Conservation Area. Local Marsden limestone rubble, a remarkable white stone, was used in the construction of St Andrew's church and its boundary walls, creating genuine local distinctiveness.

## Landscape

The contribution that the Area's landscape and natural features make to its special interest should not be underestimated. Roker Park, itself, is the centrepiece of the Conservation Area and arguably its most defining characteristic. Its many fine mature trees, gardens, bowling greens, lake and water features, are of immense local historic significance and set the Conservation Area apart from surrounding areas when viewed from above.

The marked change in topography and natural form as one passes through the ravine to the promenade is quite staggering and illustrates the contrast that makes the area so special. The imposing cliff faces featuring fossils and the famous "cannonball" rock are an instantly recognisable landmark when viewed from the sea and from distant points along the coastline.

## Usage

The Conservation Area has been used historically for residential purposes and a focus for leisure activities. For many years the Area was a vibrant seaside resort and supported a range of commercial and leisure uses. Nowadays, traditional seaside uses are increasingly under pressure from residential development and the area has become predominantly a residential suburb. There is scope, however, to introduce additional commercial and leisure related uses along Marine Walk.

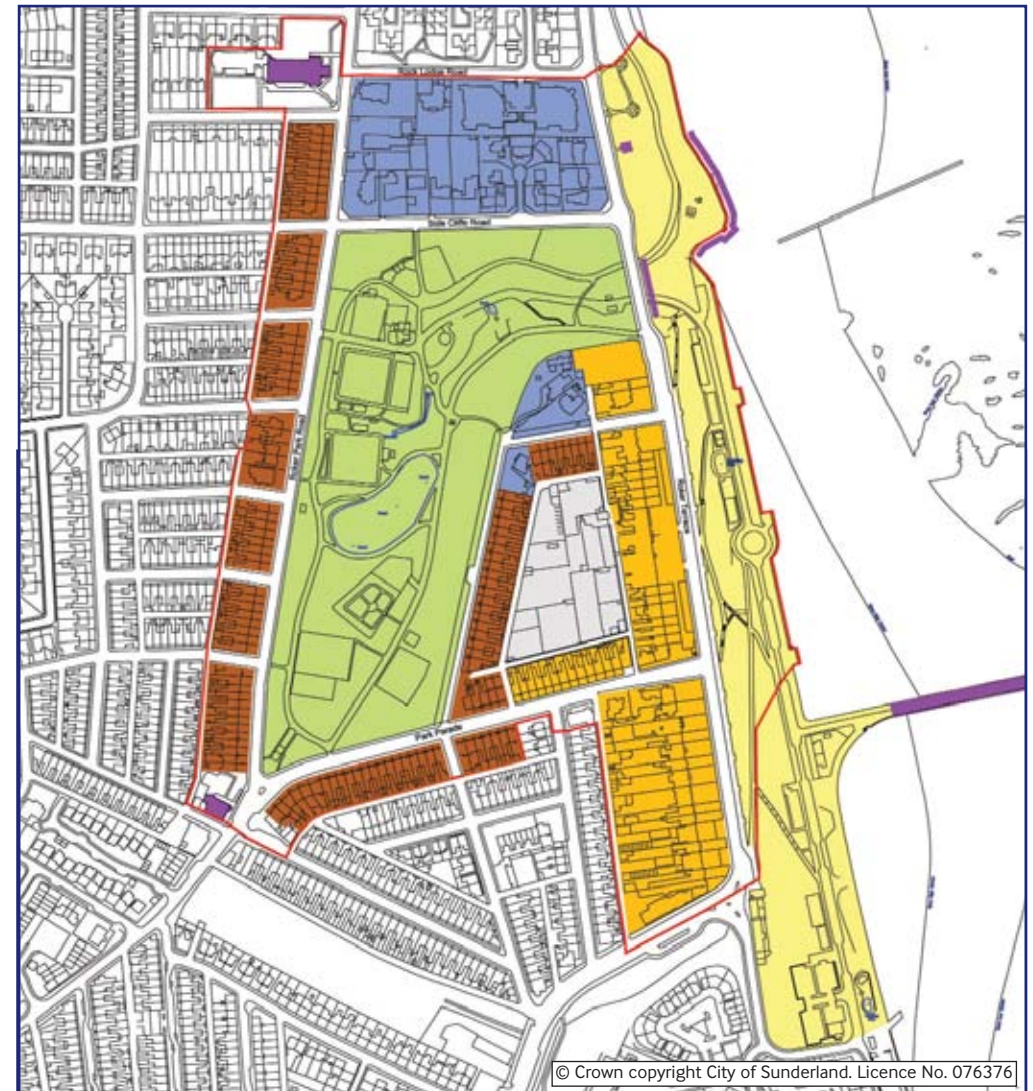
### Fundamental Character of Roker Park Conservation Area Comprises:

- ❖ A centrepiece Victorian municipal park, registered as an Historic Park and Garden.
- ❖ Collection of some of the finest and most elegant examples of Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing in the City and region.
- ❖ St Andrew's Church, a Grade I Listed Building, and shining example of the Arts & Crafts Movement.
- ❖ Attractive variety of late 19th and early 20th Century villas.
- ❖ Strong influence of the Arts and Crafts Style in the area's architecture.
- ❖ Complementary mix of high quality natural materials.
- ❖ High level of craftsmanship and decoration evident in architectural features.
- ❖ Imposing natural landform features of the cliff faces and ravine.
- ❖ Surviving historic street pattern with strong linear townscape edge.
- ❖ Superb panoramic views out to sea, along the coastline and into the conservation area from the sea.

All the above combine to give high degree of local distinctiveness.

## Key Components of Character

For the purposes of a more detailed study of its character, Roker Park Conservation Area can be divided into six categories which, with the exception of the first category, take the form of either common building types or broad sub-areas.



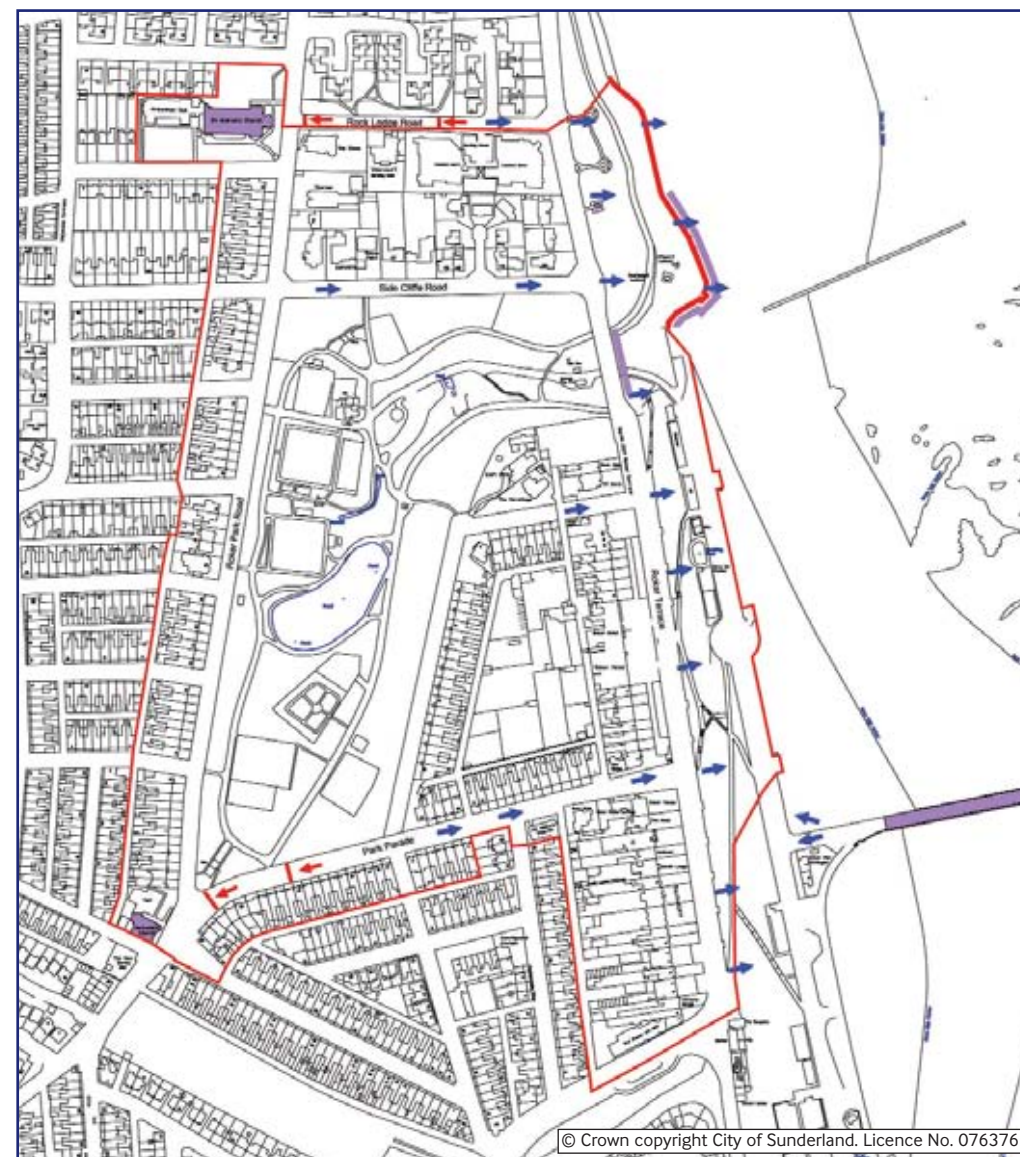
- |   |                                     |               |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 Landmarks                                   | 4 Villas                            | Backland Area |
| 2 Roker Park                                  | 5 Coastal Zone : Seafront           |               |
| 3 Late Victorian / Edwardian Terraced Housing | 6 Coastal Zone : Promenade / Cliffs |               |

# Landmarks, Views & Vistas

Roker contains a range of buildings and structures, as well as natural features, which act as readily identifiable landmarks that give the Conservation Area a strong sense of location within the City of Sunderland. A handful of churches are of considerable townscape value, most spectacularly St Andrew's, towering above surrounding buildings and punctuating the skyline. Coastal structures, natural and man-made, are also significant features of the conservation area. As with many seaside locations, Roker is notable for its fine views, both out to sea and into the conservation area from the sea and Roker Pier.

## Key Characteristics of Roker's Landmarks, Views & Vistas

- ❖ Variety of prominent and readily identifiable built and natural landmark features.
- ❖ St Andrew's Church, renowned as one of the finest buildings of its time and a greatly admired local landmark.
- ❖ Striking and imposing qualities of cliff faces and key coastal structures.
- ❖ Superb panoramic views out to sea, along the coastline and into the Conservation Area.
- ❖ Positive termination of vistas along Rock Lodge Road and Park Parade.



Landmarks



Views out to sea and into conservation area



Positive termination of vista



## St Andrews Church



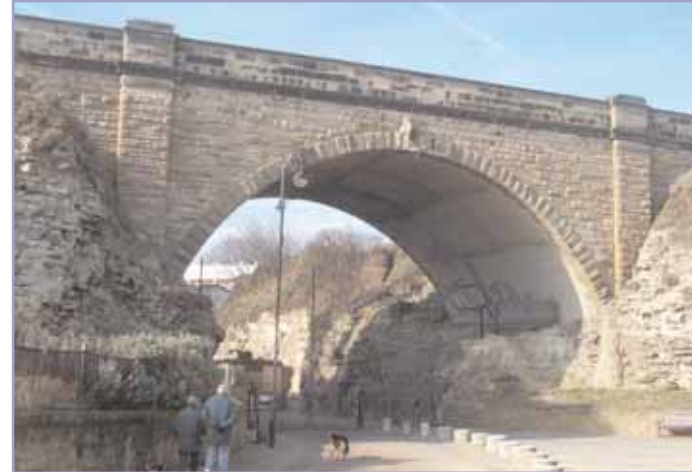
St Andrew's Church is Grade I listed and one of Sunderland's finest buildings. The Church was built in 1906/7 and is the most distinguished of the City's modern ecclesiastical buildings. It was designed by noted architect Edward Pryor who was closely involved with William Morris' Arts and Crafts Movement. St Andrew's is said to be Pryor's finest Church and it has been described as the "Cathedral of the Arts and Crafts Movement". The style is an adaptation of Gothic, its appearance simple and its construction derived from medieval practices. Internally, the Church is quite remarkable and said to resemble an upturned ship. Furnishings are by various members of the Arts and Crafts Movement, including William Morris & Co. The Church terminates the vista along Rock Lodge Road particularly well. It's bold tower and the use of local magnesian limestone make it a readily identifiable local landmark, especially when viewed from the seafront. Local limestone was also used to construct the boundary walls to the Church.

## Roker Methodist Church



Whilst not as renowned as St. Andrew's, the Methodist Church displays quality in its own right. Opened in 1905, it now provides an attractive gateway feature to those entering the conservation area from the south west and nicely terminates views along Park Parade. Its spire also helps to identify the area from distant viewpoints.

## Coastal Landmarks



The road bridge, opened in 1880, is one of the conservation area's earliest man-made structures and was instrumental in the area's development. Spanning the ravine, it is an impressive sandstone composition, especially when viewed from lower ground as one passes from the beach to the Park. St Bedes Cross, above right, was erected on the cliff tops in 1904 as a memorial to the Venerable Bede, a learned monk and much revered Anglo-Saxon historian known to many as "Sunderland's greatest son". The Cross is a prominent feature on the coastal landscape.



Roker Cliffs themselves are an imposing landform. The rock face is magnesian limestone and features a unique formation nicknamed "cannonball rocks" found nowhere else in the world, adding to the uniqueness of the area. On the cliff edge sits Roker Battery, the most northern of Sunderland's two gun batteries, which date from the Napoleonic Wars and which were used during the First and Second World Wars. The cliffs here became known as Battery Point.

## Views

Roker Terrace commands superb views over the sea and towards Roker Pier and Lighthouse, which are significant landmarks in themselves. Views back from the Pier reveal the relationship between the townscape and landscape of the seafront.



# Roker Park

Roker Park is a registered Historic Park and Garden in recognition of its special historic interest. It displays all the characteristics of a typical Victorian Municipal Park and is the centrepiece of the Conservation Area. The Park has largely retained its original layout which is fairly simple but unusual in that it is built within a ravine, Roker Gill, which leads down to the beach at Roker Rocks. Its range of features, both natural and man-made, give it a stamp of local identity which enhances its popularity and provides the area with much of its distinctive qualities. However, although generally well-maintained, like many urban parks some of its original character has been gradually eroded and many of its best-loved features are in poor condition or lost altogether. The Park also acts as an important habitat for local wildlife, notably birds.

## Key Characteristics of Roker Park

- ❖ A Victorian municipal park, registered as an Historic Park and Garden.
- ❖ Abundance of mature trees and attractively laid-out gardens and landscaped grassed areas.
- ❖ Attractive central lake feature and variety of other interesting water features.
- ❖ Architecturally significant structures in the shape of the bandstand and water fountain, both listed buildings.
- ❖ Range of formal sports and play facilities.
- ❖ Dramatic, steep-sided ravine connecting the Park to Roker Beach.



## Mature Trees and Gardens



The Park enjoys a generous cover of mature trees and shrubs, many were planted deliberately around the boundary to ensure that visitors' attention was not distracted by features outside the park. The trees also provided shade, an important requirement for Victorians who shunned direct sunlight. The management of trees approaching old age is a key issue for the park. The space around the lake is generally broken up into lawns with particularly attractive floral displays, intersected by serpentine paths.

## Water Features



The Park contains an impressive range of water features. The lake is the central feature of the park and is a focal point for visitors, especially miniature boat enthusiasts, as well as varied bird populations. The Park also features a stream and a small waterfall in a grotto. These add considerably to the Park's character and interest

## Built Features



The bandstand is one of the park's most popular features. Its characteristic shape was influenced by Chinese style garden buildings, popular in Europe in the mid 18th century. The present structure replaced the original uncovered stand in 1904. The tradition of brass bands has recently been re-introduced by the City Council. However, the hardstanding about the bandstand requires enhancement. The drinking fountain was erected in 1880 to commemorate the opening of the park. Both these structures are listed buildings. Other important features, such as the 'babbies' sculptures, have long been lost.

## Formal Sports/Play Facilities

Formal leisure activities have always been a feature of the park. The first bowling green, illustrated opposite, was completed in 1902 and the tennis courts a few years later. Additional sports pitches have since been laid out to the south and a play park and miniature railway at the northern end, enhancing the park's popularity with all ages, although some pitches/courts are deteriorating and in need of improvement.



## Ravine



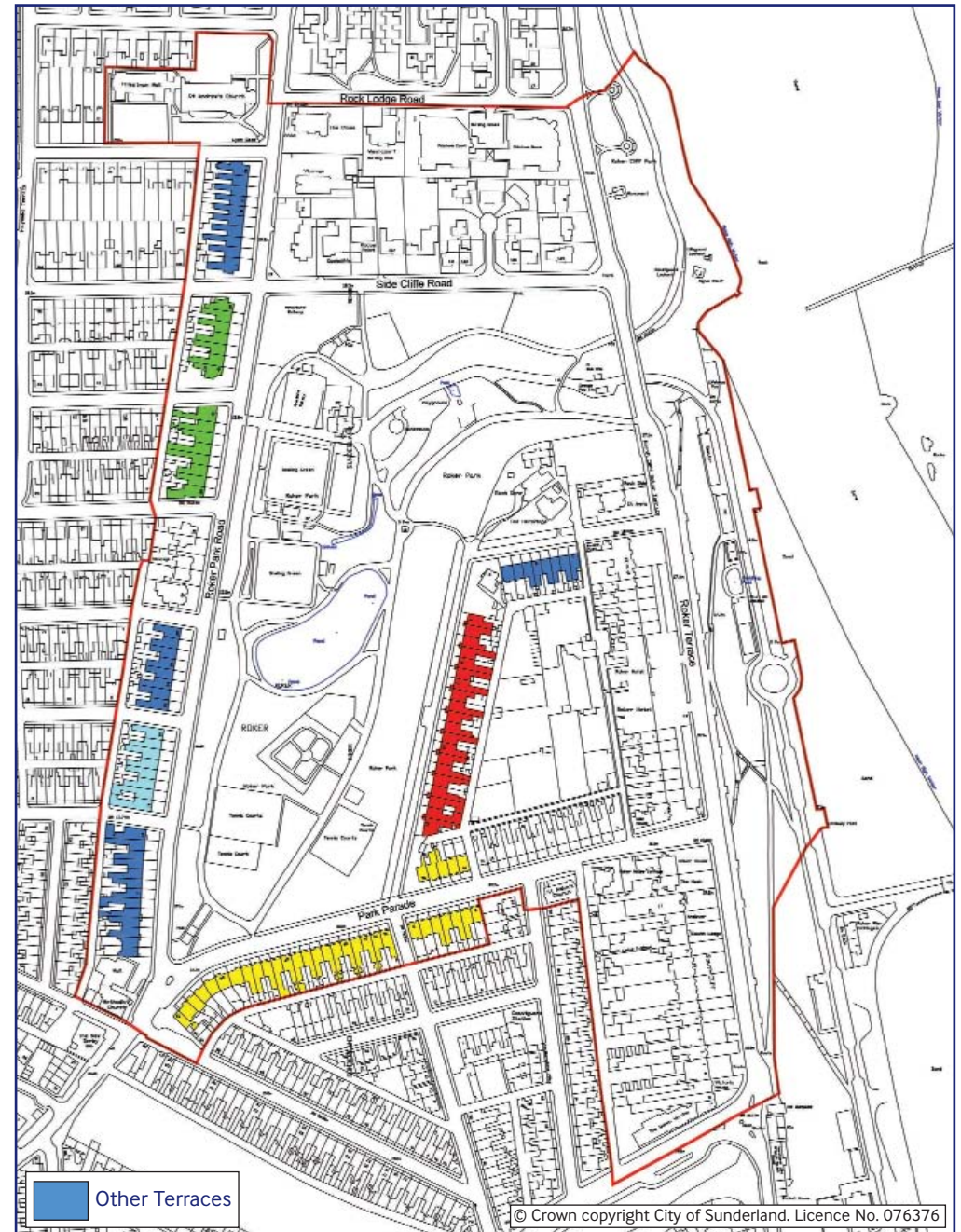
The character of the park's landscape changes dramatically as one enters the ravine. Its steep rock sides, albeit softened with shrub planting, dwarfs those passing through it and provides a strong feeling of enclosure. The drama of the ravine can also be appreciated from the painted-white footbridge above. In the sides of the Ravine beneath the bridges there are several caves, secured for safety reasons. The substation, as well as the w.c. block in the south west corner of the park, is a negative feature and detracts from the park's character.

# Terraced Housing

Terraced housing is the dominant form of building type in the conservation area. The elegant terraces built facing the Park around the turn of the 20th century are splendid examples of their period and, along with Roker Park itself, give the conservation area its essential character. The terraces vary in scale from the grand late Victorian residences in parts of Roker Park Road to the less substantial, but equally impressive, Edwardian houses of Park Parade. Many of the terraces, such as Roker Park Terrace, are strongly influenced by the Arts & Crafts Movement and exhibit elaborate timber features. Indeed, one of the most outstanding attributes of the area is the subtle variation in style and architectural detailing between each terrace.

## Key Characteristics of Roker Park Terraced Housing

- ❖ Variety of splendid late Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing facing Roker Park.
- ❖ Uniformity and rhythm within individual terraces.
- ❖ Impressive quality and subtle variation of architectural styles, giving a high degree of local distinctiveness.
- ❖ Strong Arts & Crafts influence reflected in high quality of craftsmanship and elaborate architectural features.
- ❖ Common building lines and boundary walls create strong townscape edge of linear form.



## Roker Park Road



The first terraces facing Roker Park were built in the early 1890's opposite its main entrance along Roker Park Road. These grand properties display carved timber features and are generally more substantial than later terraces. The terraces along Roker Park Road are all well preserved, with each terrace being slightly different from the next in terms of the detailing around the doors and windows. The terrace above has elegant stone dressings around the windows and doors.

## Roker Park Road



The variation in styles is particularly evident in this impressive Edwardian red brick terrace which features some fine terracotta work around house entrances. These properties are not typical of the main genre of terraced housing and add considerably to the area's character.

## Roker Park Terrace



Roker Park Terrace is particularly well preserved and one of the most attractive and decorative terraces in the City. These Edwardian houses sit behind a private road and feature elaborate porches, half-timbered gables and sliding sash windows. The repetition of features such as bays and gables creates a pleasing rhythm in the terrace when viewed obliquely.

## Park Parade



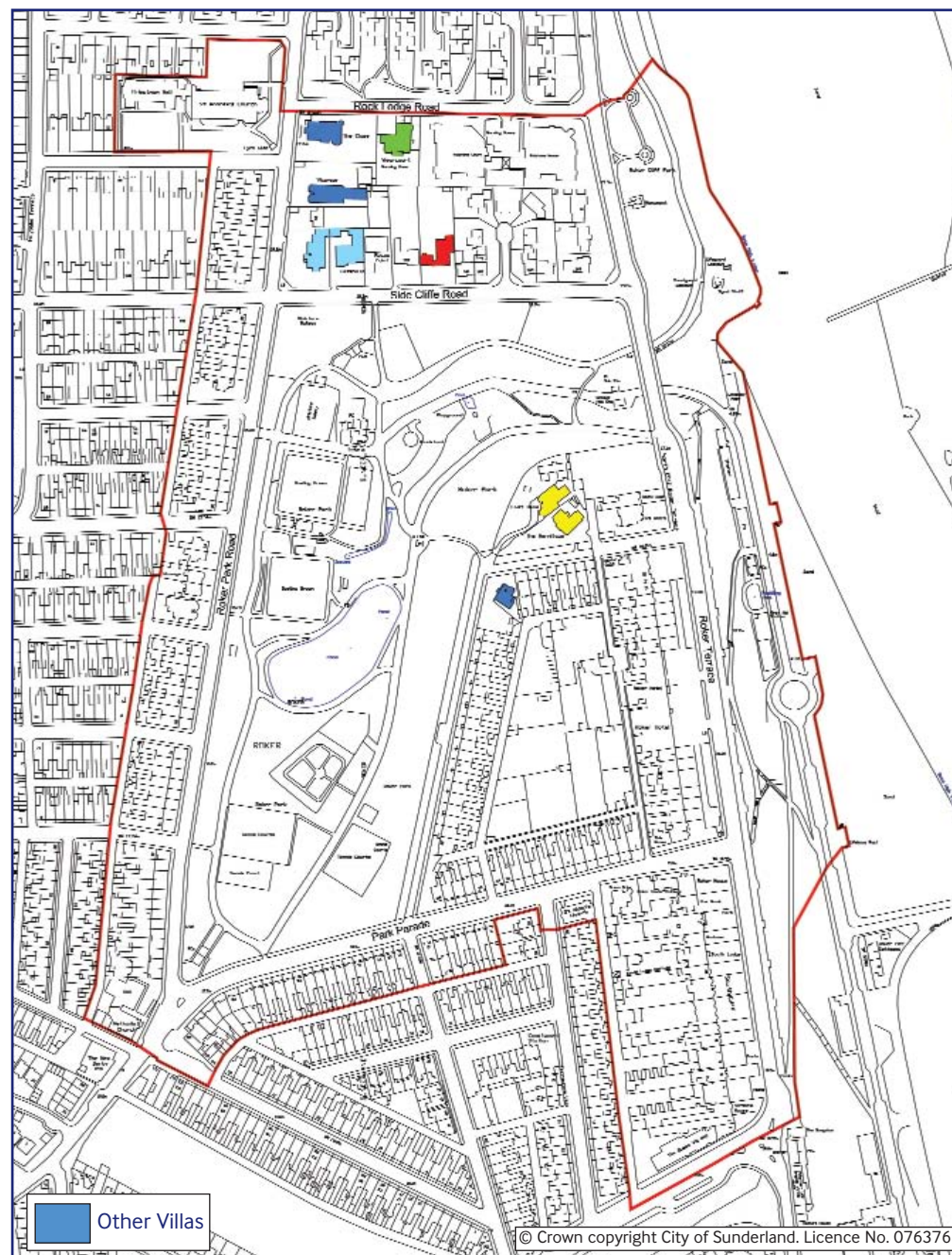
Park Parade is a particularly notable terrace with unusual rectangular shaped brick bay windows complemented by terracotta mouldings. However, the harmony of the terrace has been spoiled by the installation of replacement uPVC windows in almost half of the properties

# Villas

The development of villas in Roker was largely concentrated in a block between Side Cliffe and Rock Lodge Roads, giving this part of the Conservation Area a quite distinct character. Elsewhere, the more isolated construction of villas overlooking the Park adds considerably to the variation of building styles in the conservation area. Unfortunately, the largest villas have long since gone, having succumbed to pressure from developers wishing to capitalise on the prominent seafront locations they occupied. Many of the remaining villas are no longer suitable for their original residential use and have been converted into nursing homes or hotels. However, the ability of these buildings to continue to accommodate uses such as nursing homes is questionable due to recent changes in building and disabled access regulations and they are increasingly coming under pressure for demolition and new development.

## Key Characteristics of Roker Park Villas

- ❖ Large villas in substantial plots, many set within attractive landscaped gardens.
- ❖ Impressive variety of architectural styles, influences, detailing and materials.
- ❖ Several fine examples of Arts and Crafts style buildings.
- ❖ Number of late 20th century villa-type bungalows erected on sites formerly occupied by Victorian villas.



## 2 Park Avenue / Eastcliffe



The above Villas are prominently located facing the Park and amongst the best preserved villas in the Conservation Area. Both resemble the style of nearby Victorian terraced housing and display attractive entrance features. The corner property, until recently the Parkside Hotel, is of particular local interest, being built for Sir James Marrs, a local ship building magnate. The interior of this property is particularly well preserved and of high quality; many very distinctive and unique features are in evidence. It is important that such features are retained and in this respect it is encouraging that both properties are currently the subject of sympathetic proposals to return them to residential use.

## Wearcourt



Wearcourt, in contrast, is an attractive Arts & Craft style Edwardian building and quite distinct from surrounding development. It has, however, been substantially extended to accommodate its current use as a nursing home, detracting from its outward appearance. The future ability of historic buildings to accommodate such uses is in doubt and there is a danger that villas such as Wearcourt will ultimately become vacant. In such circumstances imaginative conversion schemes need to be promoted to secure the future of these buildings

## East Dene / The Hermitage



These two white stucco houses with attractive ornamentation, including oriel turret windows, balconies and glazed porches, have considerable character and a very distinct identity which sets them apart from surrounding buildings. Some of the materials used in their construction are not found anywhere else in the conservation area, such as the rosemary clay roof tiles.

## Modern Villas

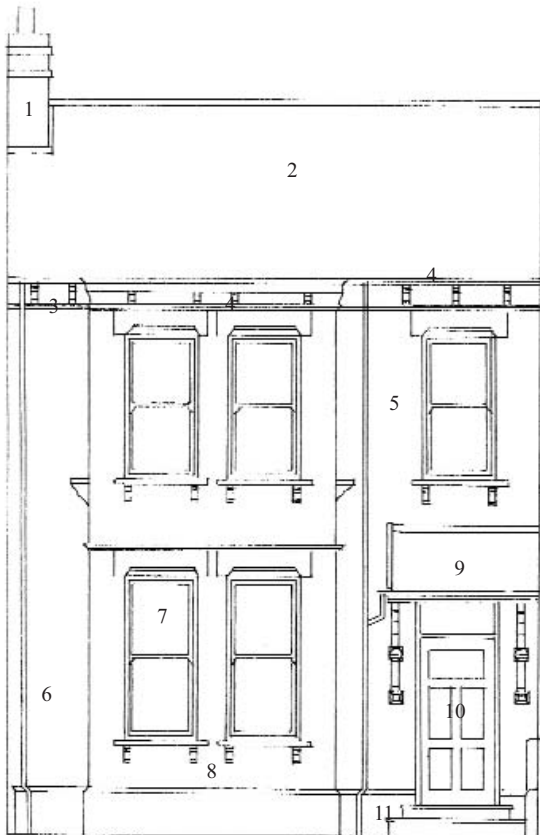


Several modern villa-type houses, such as the one opposite, have been erected on sites formerly occupied by Victorian villas. These houses generally take the form of large bungalows and do not respect historic plot boundaries or the scale, style and materials of the surrounding Victorian / Edwardian townscape. As a result, these buildings do not make a positive contribution to the essential character of the Conservation Area.

# Typical features of Roker Park Housing

This page identifies some of the typical features of the terraced housing and villas around Roker Park. These features should always be retained as they reflect elements of the history of the area and significantly enhance its appearance. Roker displays a high degree of local distinctiveness, afforded to it in many ways by the strong Arts and Crafts influence in the area's architecture. This is reflected in the quality of craftsmanship and level of decoration evident in features throughout the terraces, particularly in relation to doors and windows.

## Typical Features To Be Retained On A Terraced House In Roker



1. Chimney stacks and pots
2. Welsh roof slates
3. Cornice / eaves detailing
4. Timber guttering and brackets
5. External brickwork
6. Cast-iron downpipes
7. Sliding-sash windows
8. Bay window
9. Canopy / porch
10. Panelled door
11. Stone steps

## Attic Gables / Dormers



The terraces facing Roker Park are particularly notable for the range and attractiveness of their attic gables and dormer windows, giving the roofscape a striking appearance. Several of the terraces are characterised by front-facing gables; the end houses of these terraces often distinguished by larger and more elaborate gable features. Dormer windows are less common but can be quite unusual (see above right). Remarkably, the rhythm and uniformity of the roofscape has been largely uninterrupted, with the addition of modern dormers few and far between.

## Windows



Bay windows in a variety of styles, many extending from the ground to eaves height, are a characteristic feature of the terraces. The rectangular shaped bays of Park Parade with their decorative terracotta mouldings, illustrated in the centre, are especially unique and add considerably to the local distinctiveness of the area. The retention of original sliding-sash window frames contributes significantly to the character of the buildings. Many of these contain delicately designed top lights featuring a variety of colourful stained glass patterns/art work. It is essential such features are retained



## Doors, Doorcases and Porches



The quality and variety of door surrounds in the terraces is quite superb and typical of the quality of craftsmanship in the area. The stone doorcase to the left is an unusual variation of the classical pilastered doorcase; the doors behind contain some very attractive stained glass work. The elaborate timber porches of Roker Park Terrace, illustrated in the centre, are among the most attractive examples of Arts & Craft inspired work in the area. To the right, this imposing brick porch features a large archway with some fine terracotta detailing.

## Other Features



Such attractive features are not limited to the terraced housing about the Park. Several villas also exhibit features of admirable quality which are often quite unique to the property concerned.

## Boundary Walls and Railings



Original boundary walls are generally brick and feature a variety of copings, ranging from the half-rounded bricks displayed above, to the more common stone copings found on top of many front garden walls. The latter would have traditionally had decorative wrought or cast-iron railings set into them, such as those above right. Unfortunately, most original iron railings were removed as part of the war effort and are now a rarity in the Conservation Area. It is especially important that those that have survived are retained. Traditional Royal Mail Letter Boxes, such as the one fixed into the above wall, are a cherished feature in themselves and add considerably to the character and appearance of an area.

## Gates and Gateposts



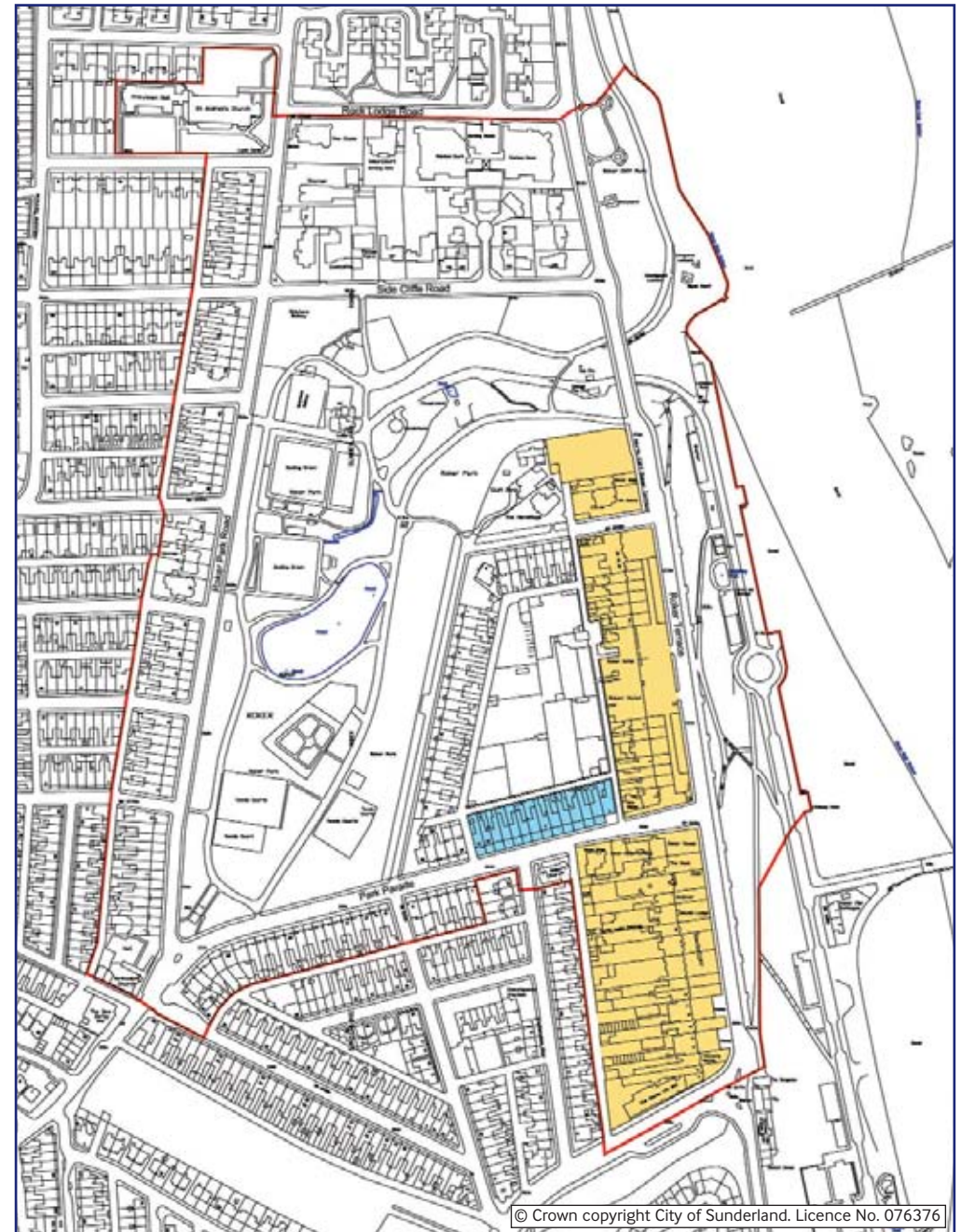
Timber gates are characteristic of the period and style of the buildings and are a particular feature of the conservation area, although only a handful of originals now remain. These must be retained, repaired where necessary, and not replaced with a modern design. The gateposts and wall to the left feature attractive terracotta copings to match the style of the building they enclose.

# Coastal Zone - Seafront

The origins of Roker Park Conservation Area are rooted firmly in its coastal location. Originally developed as a seaside resort, the earliest buildings in the Conservation Area were erected on the seafront in the mid 19th century. The style of the individual buildings along Roker Terrace is more varied than elsewhere in the Conservation Area, although the terrace is unified to some extent through the continuity of characteristic boundary walls. However, there is an air of dilapidation about many properties and those containing traditional seaside uses, such as Hotels and Guest Houses, are increasingly under threat from developers wishing to take advantage of their attractive seafront location for residential purposes.

## Key Characteristics of Roker's Seafront

- ❖ Range of commercial, leisure and residential uses.
- ❖ Variety of building forms and types and architectural styles.
- ❖ The Roker Hotel, a rare surviving example of a spa baths / hotel and a building of considerable local significance.
- ❖ Distinctive stone / brick front boundary walls.
- ❖ Poor levels of maintenance and insensitive alterations to frontages.
- ❖ Several modern infill developments.
- ❖ Loss of front gardens to hard-surfacing for car parking.
- ❖ Long, narrow plots in southern section of Roker Terrace.
- ❖ Residential conversions of former coach houses.



## Roker Terrace



Roker Terrace dates from the 1840's and was, in part, designed by renowned Newcastle architect John Dobson for the Abbs family who owned much of the land around Roker. The terrace is of a domestic scale and contains a variety of building styles, including several buildings of note. Due to the exposed seafront location, the longevity of original timber features has been brought into question and they are generally under threat from unfortunate, and often unnecessary, alterations in attempts to provide added weather protection. In many cases, a lack of regular maintenance has accelerated the deterioration of historic fabric and features and compounded the problem. The distinctive front boundary wall is a particularly strong feature of the seafront, although car parking to the front of properties has spoiled vistas and further diminishes the street scene.

The Roker Hotel, designed by Dobson, was originally called the Roker Baths Hotel because the owner pumped sea water into the buildings in order to provide hot and cold showers and steam vapour baths for guests. Although much altered, the Roker Hotel is a very interesting and increasingly rare surviving example of a spa/baths/hotel, an important building type in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It is also one of the few traditional seafront uses that has remained popular. Given its historical and architectural significance, it is important this building is retained in its present use and any original features protected from insensitive alteration.



The style of buildings in the southern section of Roker Terrace is highly individual. Much authentic detail has been lost and replaced by poor quality products, most notably windows and doors, but many interesting and attractive features remain and much can readily be restored and reinstated. Some infill developments have occurred that are not as complementary as they might have been. Properties in this section of Roker Terrace are characterised by having long narrow rear gardens, some of which have been blighted by inappropriate forms of modern development. At the rear end of several of these garden plots, facing the back lane, a number of former coach houses have been converted into residential use such as those illustrated above right. This area is also beginning to attract new developments of single dwellings alongside converted coach houses and this is gradually creating a street frontage along the back lane giving it a particularly distinctive and unique character.

## St. George's Terrace

Whilst not facing onto the seafront, the concentration of Guest Houses in St. George's Terrace is typical of seafront properties. All properties in this terrace have been subject to numerous alterations and the buildings now bear little resemblance to their traditional appearance. Indeed, it is almost impossible to ascertain the terrace's original form. The use of render is very intrusive and has destroyed the harmony of the terrace.

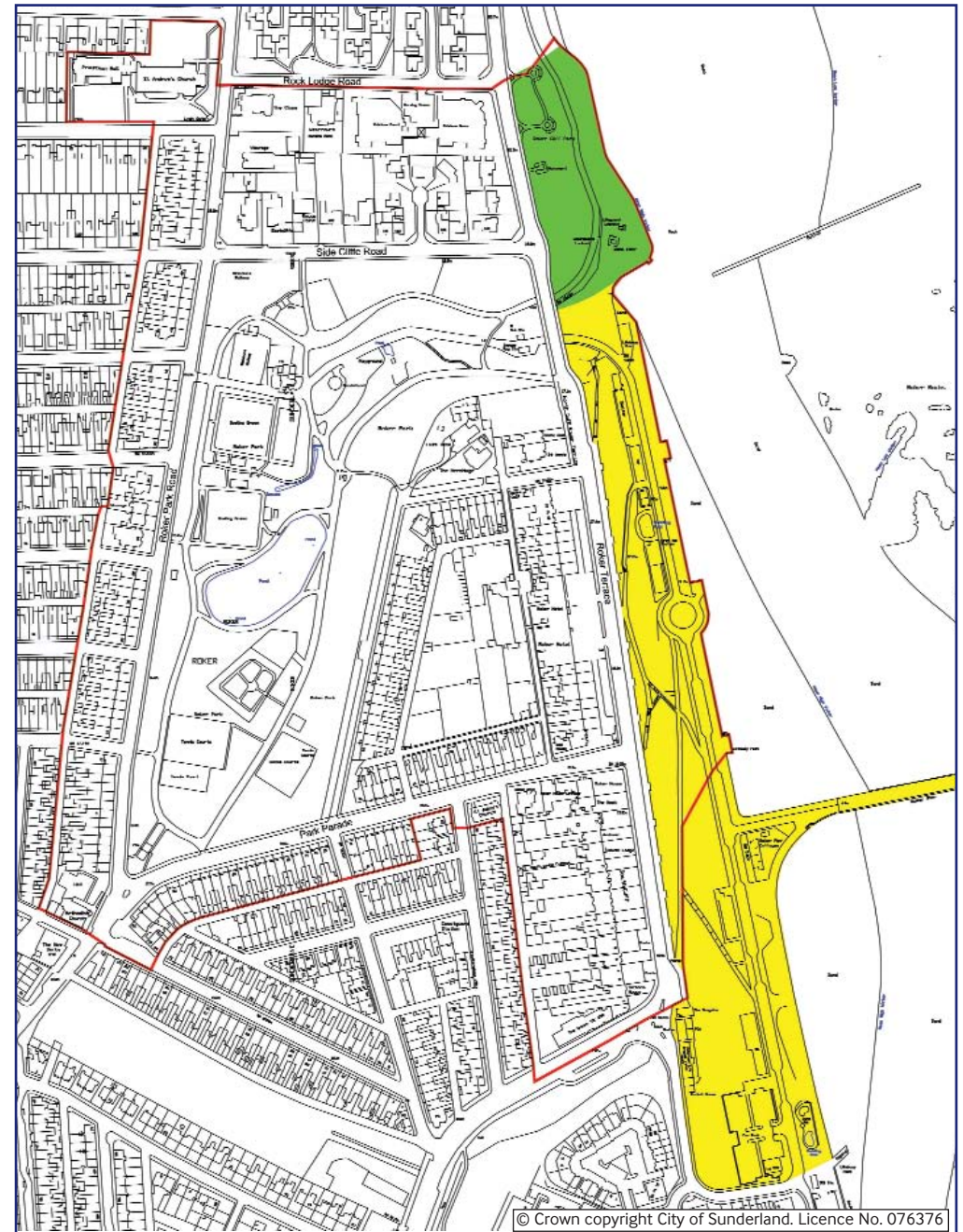


# Coastal Zone - Promenade and Cliff Tops

The lower promenade was developed by the Corporation as an employment creation scheme during the recession of 1885-6 and was very popular amongst locals and visitors alike. With the decline of Roker as a holiday resort, the Promenade is no longer as vibrant as it once was but has inherent qualities and provides significant enhancement opportunities to rejuvenate Roker as a vital seaside destination. The land on top of Roker Cliffs forms part of Cliff Park and is a valuable natural resource, important to informal recreation with super vantage points for panoramic views along the coastline.

## Key Characteristics of Roker's Promenade and Cliff Tops

- ❖ Late 19th century promenade, historically a focus for a range of leisure activities and a major visitor attraction, now vastly underused.
- ❖ Cluster of historic and modern buildings associated with Sunderland's coastal heritage and marine activities.
- ❖ Characteristic early timber buildings replaced by poor quality modern developments.
- ❖ Opportunities for sympathetic redevelopment and environmental enhancement works.
- ❖ Steep grassed embankment separating the lower promenade from the seafront.
- ❖ Roker Cliff Park, a significant open green space used for informal recreation and facilitating superb panoramic views.



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## Promenade / Marine Walk



In its heyday the lower promenade was the focus for a range of leisure activities and entertainment shows. It was often covered in tents and stalls and crowded with visitors. Nowadays, the promenade is underused and would benefit from new facilities and further enhancement works to complement previous improvements to the north end of Marine Walk, including additional pedestrianisation and upgrading of surface materials. The timber framed structures that were characteristic of early buildings on the promenade have since been replaced by poor forms of modern development. These sites provide potential opportunities to stimulate the revival of the area through sensitive redevelopment that complements its natural beauty.



Roker Pier Cottages are, as the name suggests, situated at the beginning of Roker Pier. They were built in the early 20th century to house the lighthouse keepers. At the end of Roker Pier stands Roker Lighthouse, a grade II listed building. The lighthouse is built from red and white granite and originally contained the most powerful port light in the country, which is now housed in the City Museum.



The Bungalow Café, shown to the left, is a well known landmark and has remained popular with locals since it first opened almost 100 years ago. It occupies a prominent position on top of the embankment overlooking Roker Pier, offering patrons fantastic views out to sea. The Volunteer Life Brigade Watch House can just be seen to the far right.

## Cliff Tops



The grassed spaces of Roker Cliff Park provide opportunities for passive recreation and support to major events such as the air show. These areas of green space should be protected from built development and their essential open character preserved and enhanced for leisure purposes. The cliff tops also facilitate superb panoramic views along the coastline and out to sea, as well as into Roker.

# Current Issues and Possible Solutions

Roker Park Conservation Area's historic and architectural integrity is under threat for a variety of reasons. Poor levels of maintenance are symptomatic of many properties on the seafront, while ill-considered and insensitive methods of repair and alteration work are widely evident in the Conservation Area. Continuing pressure for new development is threatening the very existence of certain buildings and their settings. Increased requirements for in-curtilage parking are very destructive of garden spaces and a particular problem. The protection of mature trees and other natural features is another important issue, especially in the park. There is, however, a range of possible options to address these issues. These are outlined below. The Management Strategy in part two of this document considers in more detail many of the following issues and establishes a series of objectives and proposals for the future management of the Conservation Area.

## Boundary

### Issue:

- ❖ The south-east boundary of the Conservation Area is currently very artificial in that it follows the line of the former boundary of the Tyne & Wear Development Corporation, whose activities in the area ceased a number of years ago. Thus, half of Marine Walk falls within the Conservation Area whilst the other half falls outside it. This division is particularly contrived as it excludes from the Conservation Area several structures and buildings historically significant in the development of Roker as a coastal resort.

### Solution:

- ❖ The Council proposes to extend the Conservation Area to the east and to the south to include Roker Pier and Lighthouse and the remainder of Marine Walk. The full extent of the proposed boundary extension and the justification for it is given on page 32.

## Building Maintenance and Alterations

### Issues:

- ❖ In parts of Roker Terrace, in particular, buildings are suffering the symptoms of a general lack of maintenance which, in many cases, is leading to the degradation of historic fabric and features. Properties on the seafront are particularly vulnerable to decay and damage from weathering and therefore require more regular maintenance. Unfortunately, owners are reluctant to devote the necessary resources to maintain their premises to a standard befitting their architectural or historic importance, especially where the viability of businesses is increasingly marginal.



The above property, prominently located at the southern end of Roker Terrace, has been substantially altered from its original form and is in a state of disrepair. This is an unfortunate sight at the main gateway into the Conservation Area from the south and portrays a negative image of the area.

- ❖ The proliferation of relatively minor building alterations is threatening the integrity of many of Roker's historic buildings and gradually eroding the character and the appearance of the conservation area. Many modern alterations appear harsh and can be very damaging to historic building fabric.
- ❖ Many properties on the seafront have been subject to unfortunate and often damaging alterations in the past to provide added weather protection, such as the installation of double glazed windows and rendered frontages. Elsewhere, several terraces around the park have also been marred by the replacement of original features with inappropriate and poor quality modern fittings, usually in PVC. The replacement of timber sliding-sash windows with UPVC double-glazed units is a particularly common problem and cause for much concern. Other important features threatened by insensitive alteration work include traditional roof covering materials, clay chimney pots and stacks, rainwater goods and boundary enclosures. It is important, therefore, that occupiers adopt the right approach to repairs and the replacement of features.

### Solutions

- ❖ In the first instance, regular maintenance should be carried out to prevent or at least delay the need for repairs. Repairs should only be undertaken where considered strictly necessary to slow down the process of decay without damaging the character of the building. A guide on how to assess the maintenance needs of historic buildings is available from the Council's Conservation Team



The installation of UPVC units, as illustrated above, fail to match the slender proportions and detailing of the traditional sash windows, detracting from the character of the property concerned and the terrace as a whole.

- ❖ Where repairs are considered, a traditional approach should be adopted, replacing decayed material on a like-for-like basis. In certain circumstances, the fabric may be beyond repair and the replacement of features necessary. It is imperative, however, that the unnecessary loss of historic fabric is avoided. In some cases, such as above, original windows have been replaced when they could have been more appropriately repaired. The discrete insertion of modern draught seals can greatly enhance the performance of sash windows in respect of heat retention and ease of use. There are local contractors that can undertake such work far cheaper than the cost of replacement.
- ❖ Design guidelines for residents on the general approach to be taken when contemplating repairs and alterations are set out in appendix 2. Owners and occupiers should, however, always seek the advice of the Conservation Team before carrying out works to their buildings. Consent is sometimes required.
- ❖ The effectiveness of design guidance is often dependent on the willingness of residents to observe it. Most minor alterations to unlisted dwelling houses do not require permission and the results often compromise their historic interest and architectural integrity. The Council has therefore placed

Article 4 Directions on the terraced houses around the park requiring owners to get permission for certain types of development. Disturbingly, however, householders have continued to carry out alterations to their properties without gaining the necessary consent and several are subject to enforcement action by the Council. The Management Strategy in part 2 includes proposals that aim to establish clarity and consistency in the operation of the Direction.

## New Development

### Issues:

- ❖ New development is a significant threat to the historic environment of Roker, both built and natural. The Conservation Area was largely laid out by the early 20th century and, as a result, almost no space was left-over for subsequent development. Where new development has occurred it has normally involved the loss of a more attractive historic building and has generally failed to respect its traditional surroundings. There remains a disturbing and potentially destructive pressure to redevelop existing buildings and/or their grounds. Developers are particularly keen to secure Villas and their garden space for new development, normally for purpose built flats. Properties on the seafront are similarly under pressure from developers seeking to utilise these prominent sites for more intensive redevelopment.

### Solutions:

- ❖ New development can make a positive contribution to the conservation area but not normally if it involves the loss of historic buildings of significance. A building or feature that is contemporary with the 19th / early 20th century development of Roker will, in the vast majority of cases, contribute to the area's special interest and, hence, proposals to demolish it will be generally resisted in accordance with UDP policy. The following map identifies those buildings which make a positive contribution to the architectural or historic character of the conservation area and will not normally be considered by the Council for redevelopment. It also identifies buildings that have a negative impact on the area's character where appropriate redevelopment may enhance the area and the few remaining vacant sites with development potential.
- ❖ One such site with potential for development comprises the area of backland to the rear of Roker Terrace, identified on the map on page 9. This is a particularly sensitive site with a range of issues and constraints that require a very imaginative and well-considered design approach. The following Management Strategy considers the future of this site in more detail, identifying the key design requirements against which development proposals will be assessed.



The above developments on the seafront involved the loss of two of the largest Victorian villas built in the Area. The villas had been set within extensive grounds before the land was more intensively redeveloped for residential purposes. As with much modern development in the area, these buildings have failed to respond as well as they could have to their context.

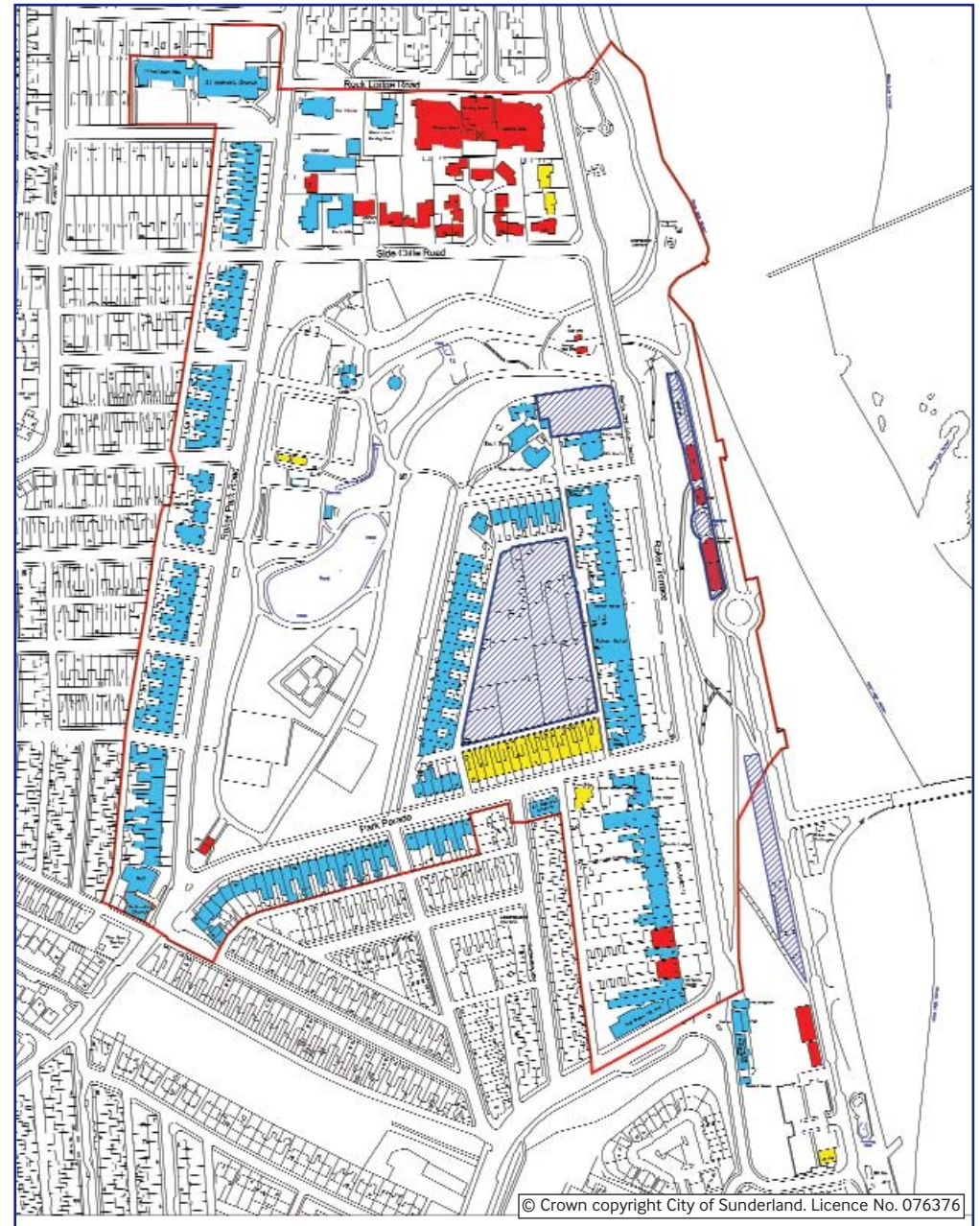
## Roker Park, Trees & other Landscape Features

### Issues:

- ❖ Roker Park has lost some of its original character and charm, with many of its best-loved features in a state of dis-repair i.e. the water fountain or lost altogether, such as the 'babbies' sculptures.
- ❖ Mature trees are under threat generally, despite being protected, due to their age, vulnerability to disease, and potentially also as a result of unlawful and damaging lopping and felling. Whilst the majority of trees are situated in Roker Park, other important clusters are found in the grounds of St Andrew's Church and several villas, contributing immensely to the settings of these buildings.

### Solutions:

- ❖ The Council could work more closely with local amenity groups developing projects to secure the repair and reinstatement of key features in the Park. This is discussed in more detail on page 33 in the Management Strategy.
- ❖ In Roker Park the Council will continue the careful management of the tree population and the thinning and replacement of over-mature landscaping to protect important natural features and restore views.



### Impact of Buildings on Conservation Area





- ❖ Elsewhere, the tree canopy can be maintained through direct action by the Council making Tree Preservation Orders where warranted, and by penalising those who fell trees unlawfully through fines and/or the requirement to plant suitable replacements.

## Seafront

### Issues:

- ❖ Increased requirements for off-street parking, particularly where properties on the seafront have been converted into apartments, have had unfortunate effects on the streetscape and setting of historic buildings. Formerly attractive landscaped garden spaces have been replaced by hard surfacing, distinctive brick and stone boundary walls being removed in the process.



In this section of Roker Terrace almost all front gardens have been removed to accommodate car parking, detracting from the setting of these seafront properties.

### Solutions:

- ❖ Seas of car parking to the front of properties should be avoided and alternative options considered. Parking should as far as possible be provided in the rear yards.
- ❖ Design guidance for owners to follow in repairing and reinstating traditional forms of boundary enclosures is given on page 38.

## Telecommunications

### Issues:

- ❖ The paraphernalia of equipment, masts etc associated with telecommunications installations can often be very visually intrusive. Whilst the Council has an obligation to facilitate the growth of telecommunications networks in all parts of the City, the impact of such installations can be particularly damaging in historically sensitive environments such as Roker.

### Solutions:

- ❖ In all circumstances, the least conspicuous sites available should be identified for telecommunications installations so as to minimise their visual impact. As a general rule, installations should as far as possible be located outside the conservation area. Where this is not possible they should be 'disguised' within an existing structure, such as a flag pole, lighting column or chimney stack, but ensuring that the height requirement does not lead to an unduly incongruous feature and that no damage will be caused to historic building fabric in the process.



A photograph of a row of red brick terraced houses. The houses have multiple stories, white window frames, and some have bay windows. A brick fence with a metal gate runs along the front of the properties. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

**Part 2**

**Management Strategy**



## Management Strategy: Introduction

Part 1 of this study has identified and appraised the special characteristics and features of Roker Park Conservation Area. Part two, the 'Management Strategy', addresses in more detail the issues raised in the Appraisal. It establishes a number of management objectives and proposals to facilitate the more sensitive and proactive management of the conservation area, thus ensuring its special interest is better preserved and enhanced into the future. Measures through which the objectives and proposals may be achieved are discussed and an agenda is established that will be pursued, as resources allow, to secure the future conservation of the Conservation Area. Its primary objective may therefore be expressed as follows: -

**PRIMARY OBJECTIVE: To ensure that the special architectural or historic interest of the Roker Park Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations and for the enrichment of the City's built heritage.**

### Management Objectives and Proposals

The Primary Objective sets out the overarching vision of the Management Strategy, that is the sustained conservation of the heritage assets that make up Roker Park Conservation Area. The following Strategy, like the preceding Character Appraisal, is divided into the sub-areas identified on the map on page 9. Each sub-area has a Management Objective which establishes the broad vision for that area, followed by several Management Proposals which are the means by which the Objective may be achieved and which will be pursued as resources allow. The Proposals seek to address the key issues which threaten the integrity of the Conservation Area and vary in their nature, ranging from measures to ensure the future preservation of key buildings and architectural features, including the repair and restoration of historic structures in the Park, to enhancement proposals for the lower promenade. These proposals form the basis of a mid-to-long term strategy for the future management of the Conservation Area and are summarised in the final section of the study, which also discusses the factors that will affect their implementation and the envisaged timescales involved.

N.B. The Management Strategy has been devised as planning guidance to assist the Council in preserving and enhancing the 'special architectural and historic interest' of the conservation area. It is not a management plan for the area in a wider sense. For example, it does not contain proposals for the general management of Roker Park in terms of nature conservation, wildlife habitats etc., nor does it consider social issues in the area such as crime and antisocial behaviour. Such issues are outside the scope of this document.

# Management Objectives & Proposals: Review of Conservation Area Boundary

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 1:** To make the extent of Roker Park Conservation Area more meaningful so as to encompass related heritage assets and areas intrinsically linked to the special interest of the Conservation Area.

**PROPOSAL 1:** The Council will seek to extend the boundary of Roker Park Conservation Area eastwards to include Roker Pier and Lighthouse and southwards to include the whole of Marine Walk and land to the east of Pier View. The precise line of the extended boundary is shown on the map opposite.

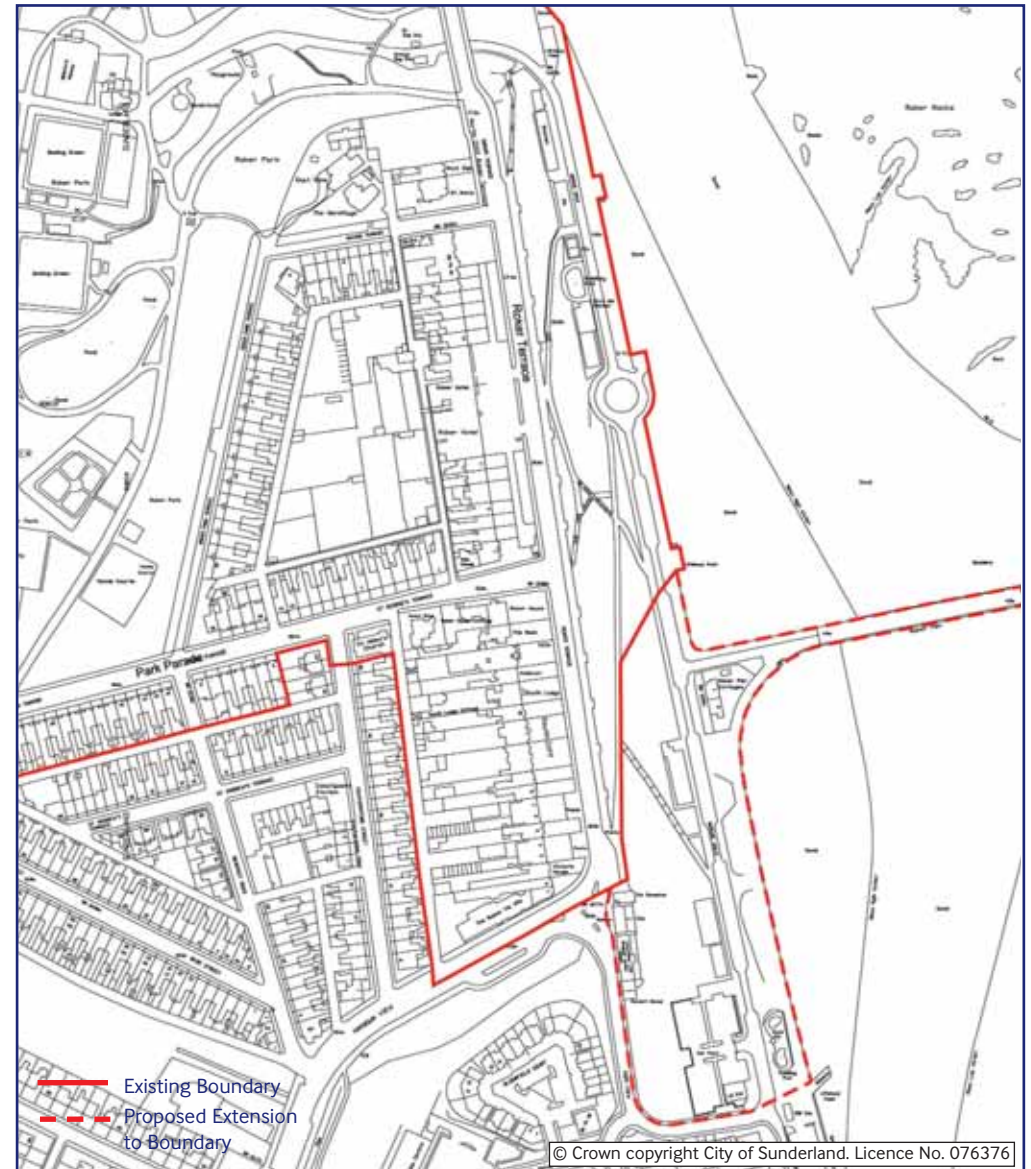
## Justification for Boundary Extension

The existing south-eastern boundary of Roker Park Conservation Area was drawn to correlate with the boundary of the Tyne & Wear Development Corporation area so as to avoid any potential conflict with their regeneration activities along Sunderland's riverside. Thus, it was not, as is normally the case, based on any identifiable historical cohesiveness and as a result the boundary in this area is very artificial, excluding a number of buildings and structures of historical significance that were originally intended to be included in the Conservation Area.

Given the demise of the activities of the Development Corporation, the Council has reviewed the boundary and intends to rectify the situation by extending this part of the Conservation Area eastwards and southwards to include Roker Pier, the remainder of Marine Walk and the east side of Pier View. These areas contain buildings and structures historically significant in the development of Roker as a seaside resort and Sunderland's coastal heritage in a wider sense. Thus, this will incorporate into the conservation area, Roker Lighthouse, Roker Pier Cottages, the Bungalow Café and several historic buildings associated with Sunderland's marine heritage. The latter includes the Volunteer Life Brigade Watch House and in more recent times Sunderland Lifeboat Station and the new Marine Adventure Centre. The significance of these buildings is identified in the preceding character appraisal.

The resultant extended boundary will give this part of the Conservation Area a more well-defined and cohesive character and appearance. The extended boundary will be much more identifiable and visible on the ground, rather than just a notional line on a map as at present. It will give the buildings referred to above a level of protection previously not afforded whilst situated outside the Conservation Area and thus satisfy their conservation needs. It is therefore

considered that the additional area proposed to be included is of sufficient special architectural or historic interest to warrant inclusion in the Conservation Area and to benefit from the extra controls that conservation area designation brings.

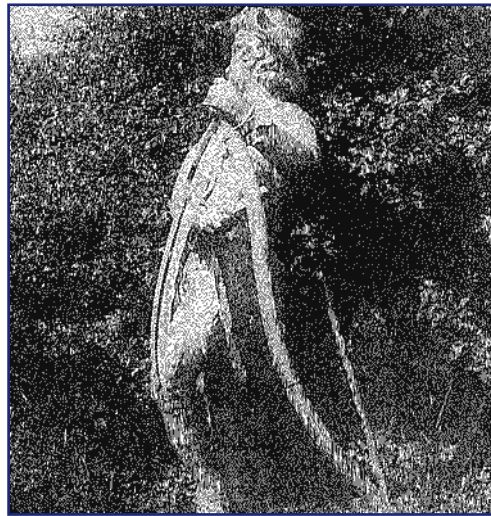


# Management Objectives & Proposals: Roker Park

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 2:** To manage and enhance the special historic interest of Roker Park in accordance with its 'Registered' status whilst allowing it to reach its full potential as a valued urban park and sea front attraction.

**PROPOSAL 2a:** The Council will investigate, in conjunction with local amenity groups, sources of funding to assist with the repair, restoration and reinstatement of features of historic interest to the Park

The inclusion of Roker Park in English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, one of only two in the City, gives it a special status that warrants particular care being taken in its management and development. The dilapidated condition and loss of important historic features from the Park detracts considerably from its special historic interest. The 'listed' water fountain is in a particularly poor state of repair, suffering from severe stone erosion and the adverse effects of inappropriate cement repairs. The fountain is in need of comprehensive repair and restoration works to restore its original appearance. Sources of funding are currently being investigated by a local charitable organisation, with assistance from the Council, to enable such a project to be implemented.



O'Brien & Gibson (1997)

The Park originally featured statues of a countryman and a country maiden on either side of the Ravine called "The Babbies" (the man shown above). These were

removed in 1940 to be melted down for their lead as part of the war effort. A project to recreate these sculptures, or modern interpretations of them, and reinstate them in the Park would be strongly encouraged by the Council. There are various external funding agencies that could feasibly be approached to support public art projects of this nature, including for instance the Arts Council and Northern Rock Foundation.

**PROPOSAL 2b:** The Council will seek to upgrade and rationalise street furniture in the Park using an appropriate and consistent design approach that sits comfortably with its natural and built features.

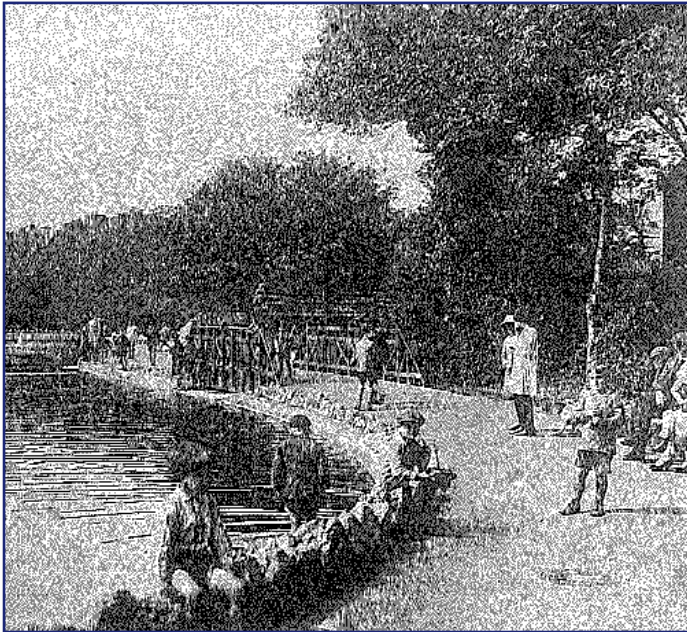
The aesthetic quality and historic character of the Park has been compromised by the installation of varying styles of street furniture and lighting over the years. The style of seating in particular is inconsistent and generally inappropriate for a historic park. For example, modern perforated aluminium benches, as illustrated below left, do not sit well within the Park's historic landscape. However, some of the seating, such as the 'heritage' style benches around the lake (below right), is more sympathetic to its surroundings and could be used as a basis for upgrading and rationalising seating



Whilst there have been attempts to rationalise street lighting in the Park in the past through the installation of Victorian style lanterns, other forms of poor quality modern lighting were introduced into certain areas in support of the Sunderland Illuminations. Although these are now redundant, their unsightly columns of have been left in situ and clutter-up parts of the Park. It should be ensured that all redundant structures are removed from the Park as a matter of course, unless they contribute to its historic interest.

**PROPOSAL 2C:** A range of potential improvements will be identified by the Council to restore and revitalise the Park's lake.

The Park's water features i.e. the lake and waterfalls have lost much of their original charm and beauty. The lake, in particular, is a pale shadow of its former splendour. Many of its original features have been lost and the brick retaining wall bordering the lake, illustrated below, is a poor means of treating the water's edge and appears as an obtrusive structure around the central feature of the Park. The removal of this wall and the reinstatement of a more traditional verge / border based on historical research would be highly desirable. Photographic evidence below suggests that up until the 1930's the edge of the surrounding path simply formed



source: O'Brien & Gibson (1997)

the border to the water's edge, although there was also a small wall made of large stones around a lengthy section of the lake. The re-introduction of a timber footbridge would further restore the lake to its original form.

Safety considerations would be taken into account in any improvement scheme for the lake and the Park's Model Boat Club would need to be consulted on any proposals.

**PROPOSAL 2d:** The Council will continue to carefully manage mature trees within the Park to ensure that a desirable tree canopy is sustained and important views are not obstructed.

Roker Park contains an abundance of attractive mature trees which are not only an essential feature of the Park but also the Conservation Area as a whole. Many of the Park's trees are strategically planted around its perimeter to ensure the attention of visitors is focused on the attractions of the Park and not distracted by features outside it. Views within, out of and into the Park play a very important role in appreciating its finer qualities.

The Council will continue the careful management of the tree population and the thinning and replacement of over-mature landscaping to retain and restore views. It is important that the heavy tree canopy around the perimeter of the Park is maintained at a level that retains its sense of enclosure but whilst also facilitating glimpses through the trees of the historic terraces facing the Park to give visitor's an appreciation of its built surroundings.

**PROPOSAL 2e:** The Council will seek to undertake environmental improvements to enhance the setting of the 'listed' bandstand and sustain it as a focal point for events in the Park by providing a more usable and attractive space.



The large unsightly area of tarmac around the bandstand detracts considerably from the setting of this listed structure and the attractiveness of the Park as a whole. Originally, the bandstand was surrounded by a much more extensive area of grassed landscape with trees and shrubbery. The reinstatement of its landscape setting and original pattern of paths about the bandstand would be highly desirable. The installation of more appropriate forms of seating, as described above, would further enhance the space and its usability.

**PROPOSAL 2f:** Measures will be investigated to improve the appearance of the substations at the Ravine entrance to the Park in order to enhance its image to visitors.

The substations within the Ravine currently create a very poor first impression of the Park for visitors entering from the lower promenade and beach. Whilst their removal is not feasible due to the essential function they perform, measures to improve their appearance, such as re-facing the external walls in more appropriate materials, would help to portray a more positive image of the Park.



# Management Objectives & Proposals: Terraces (Article 4 Directions)

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 3:** To ensure the preservation of the architectural integrity of the terraces around Roker Park for the future.

## Article 4 Directions

Article 4(2) Directions can be imposed by local authorities to control certain alterations to dwellings and other works that would otherwise be automatically granted consent by the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Thus, for example, the replacement of windows, doors, roof coverings etc. can come under planning control, the object being to refuse permission for works that are considered to be damaging or inappropriate to the historic fabric and features of the buildings. Such Directions only apply to properties in use as dwelling houses.

Policy B6 of the UDP states that the Council will preserve the character and appearance of conservation areas by seeking, where appropriate, to control development by the use of Article 4 Directions. To counter the loss of important features in Roker, the Council in 1996 placed Article 4(2) Directions on all terraces around the Park - Roker Park Road, Roker Terrace, Ravine Terrace, Park Parade and Park Avenue requiring planning permission to be gained for the types of development listed below.

### Classes of Development covered by Article 4(2) Directions in Roker Park Conservation Area:

- ❖ Enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse to the public face of the building, including replacement windows and doors.
- ❖ Cladding of any part of the exterior with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles.
- ❖ Addition or material alteration to the shape of the roof of a dwellinghouse.
- ❖ Erection or construction of a porch outside the external door of a dwellinghouse.
- ❖ Provision within the front curtilage of a dwellinghouse of a hard surface for car parking.
- ❖ Installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna.
- ❖ Erection, construction, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.
- ❖ Painting of the exterior masonry of any building.

Unfortunately, since the Article 4(2) Direction was made some householders have replaced original features with inappropriate modern fittings without applying for the requisite consent. The following guidance note has been prepared to inform residents of the Council's standard practice in response to householder enquiries and planning applications to replace historic fabric and features on properties subject to the Direction. The note is intended to establish consistency and clarity over the Council's general principles in the use of the Direction in Roker Park Conservation Area.

## Guidance on the application and use of the Article 4(2) Direction

In all scenarios, where alterations are proposed or are to be enforced, the following practice note will be applied. The Conservation Team will in all cases be afforded the opportunity to require or encourage the reinstatement of original features and materials.

### Historic Fenestration

| Scenario  | Action   |
|---|--|
| Original windows have survived and are in situ.   | Require retention and repair/refurbish as necessary. Installation of replicas acceptable if originals beyond repair. Modifications may be incorporated to improve ease of operation and heat retention.  |
| Original windows lost, existing are in timber but of poor form.                                     | Encourage reinstatement of timber sashes using surviving sashes in street as a model for pattern of glazing bars etc. UPVC sliding-sashes may be acceptable as last resort when designed with regard to original format. Note: to be acceptable they must operate as sliding-sashes. Hinged casements are not acceptable.  |
| Original lost, UPVC put in place pre-designation of Conservation Area.                              | Encourage reinstatement of timber sashes using surviving sashes in street as a model for pattern of glazing bars etc. UPVC sliding-sashes may be acceptable as last resort when designed with regard to original format. Note: to be acceptable they must operate as sliding-sashes. Hinged casements are not acceptable.. |
| Original lost. UPVC put in place post-designation of Conservation Area and Article 4 (2) Direction. | Enforce to reinstate original where this was, at time of designation, the desired timber sliding-sash. Can only enforce to return fenestration to its form at the time of the making of the Article 4(2) Direction (i.e. 7th February 2006).   |

### Roofing Materials

| Scenario  | Action  |
|---|---|
| Original Welsh slate roof   | Require retention, if replacement necessary use Welsh slate wherever possible but a natural slate of matching size, colour may be acceptable. |
| Tiled roof, not in Welsh slate.                                       | Replacement using Welsh slate wherever possible but a natural slate of matching size and colour would be acceptable.                          |
| Householder proposes to recover roof in synthetic slate e.g. Eternit. | Few synthetic slates can replicate the appearance and weathering of natural slate - proposals will therefore always be refused.               |

### Rainwater Goods

| Scenario   | Action   |
|--|--|
| Original timber or cast iron gutter and cast iron downpipe in situ | Require retention and encourage repairs where necessary. If irreparable, replace using exact replicas i.e. timber box / cast-iron gutter and cast-iron down pipe.  |
| Originals lost. UPVC gutter and/or downpipe in place.              | Encourage reinstatement of timber / cast iron elements as appropriate. Cast aluminium may be an acceptable alternative to cast iron provided it matches the dimensions, colour and profile of the original guttering / downpipe. |

**PROPOSAL 3a:** The Council will survey and monitor all properties in the terraces subject to the Direction on a yearly basis and maintain a photographic and statistical record of all building elements covered by it. Any unauthorised alterations will be identified, investigated and appropriate action initiated where deemed necessary.

Maintaining up-to-date survey records of all properties covered by the Article 4 Direction is fundamental to the successful and equitable operation of the Direction. Photographs of the front of each property will be taken on a yearly basis and surviving original building fabric and features noted i.e. sliding-sash windows, timber doors, Welsh roof slates etc. In this way, a comprehensive database of the architectural and historic integrity of the core of the Conservation Area will be established and monitored regularly in accordance with recommendations in the English Heritage document 'Guidance on the management of conservation areas' (August 2005). The table below provides a sample of the statistical information compiled from the last survey (Aug 2005) of properties subject to the Direction.

The photograph record and statistical database of the Article 4(2) properties will be used to measure change at the heart of the Conservation Area and help the Council to effectively manage the impact of changes on its character and appearance. In particular, it will enable unauthorised alterations to be identified and appropriate action initiated as necessary. The Council's enforcement team is currently taking action against the owners of several properties for carrying out unauthorised works. In one particular case, the owner is being required to comprehensively reinstate timber sliding-sash windows and Welsh roof slates to the front of the property, these having been replaced with uPVC units and Eternits respectively without planning permission and in contravention of the Article 4 Direction.

| <b>Sample results of survey of Article 4 Properties - 4th-5th August 2005</b> |             |                          |             |             |                          |             |
|---|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| Street  | Window type | (%Properties in terrace) |             |             | Roof Covering            |             |
|   |             | Timber casement          | uPVC        | Metal       | (%Properties in terrace) |             |
|   |             | Timber                   | uPVC        | Metal       | Welsh Slate              | Eternits    |
| Park Parade   | 48.5        | 11.75                    | 36.75       | 3           | 97.5                     | 2.5         |
| Roker Park Rd   | 40          | 35.5                     | 22.5        | 2           | 100                      | -           |
| Park Avenue   | 30          | 40                       | 30          | -           | 100                      | -           |
| Roker Park Tce  | 62.5        | 4.5                      | 15          | -           | 100                      | -           |
| Ravine Tce  | -           | 56                       | 44          | -           | 44.5                     | 55.5        |
| <b>Overall%</b>   | <b>42</b>   | <b>28.75</b>             | <b>27.5</b> | <b>1.75</b> | <b>88.4</b>              | <b>11.6</b> |

Thus, through regular survey work a continuous cycle of monitoring, review and action will be established and used to sustain the distinctive character of those terraces subject to the Direction. When resources allow, the remainder of the Conservation Area will also be surveyed and a comprehensive photographic record of the whole area created which will similarly be regularly updated, although not with the same frequency as the Article 4(2) Direction properties.

**PROPOSAL 3b:** The Council will actively investigate sources of funding to provide grant assistance for repair and restoration works to properties subject to the Article 4(2) Direction and to encourage their appropriate enhancement where possible.

The Council recognises that the extra controls imposed by the Article 4(2) Direction can, in some cases, result in additional costs being incurred by owners in properly maintaining and improving their properties to a standard befitting their architectural and historic interest. For example, the costs of replacing like-for-like a timber sliding-sash window typically significantly exceeds the cost of installing inappropriate, modern alternatives such as uPVC double glazed units. As a result, in the past residents have on the grounds of affordability regularly opted for the cheaper, non-traditional products, which are often damaging to historic buildings, or opted not to fully address their property's maintenance needs, leaving important features at risk from continued deterioration.

Whilst the Article 4(2) Direction can now prevent further losses of architectural features from the terraces concerned, it does not require owners to properly maintain these features or reinstate those lost prior to the Direction being put in place (Feb 1996). Many residents have expressed a desire to undertake restoration works to their properties, but unfortunately have not had the resources to do so.

The Council will therefore endeavour to make grant assistance available to residents to offset the additional costs involved in the repair and restoration of architectural features. It must be noted, however, that the ability to provide grant is often dependent on the Council making successful bids to funding partners such as English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Funding. In most cases, the Council must provide 50% of the funding for the grant scheme's budget. Thus, the provision of a grant scheme in the area is by no means guaranteed and it may take a number of years before funding can be secured.

## Management Objectives & Proposals: Villas

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 4:** To preserve the historic integrity and garden settings of villas within Roker Park Conservation Area.

**PROPOSAL 4a:** The Council will resist proposals for the redevelopment of historic villas and their grounds in the interests of preserving the key contribution they make to the area's built and landscape character.

A number of large villas dating from the late 19th / early 20th century were demolished in the latter 1900's to make way for higher density housing developments between Rock Lodge Road and Side Cliff Road. These redevelopments have significantly eroded both the built and landscape character of this part of the Conservation Area with impressive Victorian and Edwardian houses set within large gardens replaced by typical 1970's suburban detached and semi-detached houses and 1990's apartment blocks of inferior architectural quality.

Several large villas survive in Roker, some still set within attractive private landscaped grounds containing many fine mature trees. An example is shown opposite. These garden spaces make a key contribution to the landscape character of the area; they provide extremely pleasant settings for the buildings and are historically significant, being part of the original settlement pattern of the area. It is especially important, therefore, that they are retained in order to preserve the distinctive character of the conservation area.

Unfortunately, villas and their garden spaces remain under pressure from developers seeking to capitalise on these large sites for more intensive wholesale redevelopment or additional accommodation in the gardens. The Council will however resist proposals for the redevelopment of historic villas in the Conservation Area, these being identified on the map on page 16, or any proposals that would compromise their historic integrity and garden setting or that would be detrimental to the area's landscape character.



## Management Objectives & Proposals: Seafront and Lower Promenade

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 5:** To secure the conservation of historic properties and features on Roker Seafront to preserve and enhance its essential character as a Victorian seaside resort.

**PROPOSAL 5a:** The Council will encourage proposals to restore, adapt and convert historic properties along Roker Terrace and South Cliff into acceptable alternative uses, particularly where this includes the restoration of building facades.

There is a presumption in favour of retaining buildings and spaces that contribute to Roker Park Conservation Area's special interest. Almost all properties along Roker Terrace and South Cliff are contemporary with the mid 19th - early 20th century development of Roker as a seaside resort and generally represent the earliest phase of development in the Conservation Area. Thus, they are historically very significant and proposals to redevelop these buildings will therefore be resisted in accordance with UDP policy.

The conversion of such buildings into alternative uses is a much more sustainable and ecologically sound option than demolition for redevelopment and will always be favoured. Building conversions are an effective and proven means of securing the futures of historic buildings in a suitable use, allowing much of their original character to be kept and preventing them from falling into disuse. Contrary to the perceptions of many developers, most historic buildings are capable of being adapted into new uses without contravening building regulations or the Disability Discrimination Act 2004.

Conversion schemes which involve the restoration and reinstatement of historic fabric and features such as natural slate roof coverings, stone dressings and sliding-sash windows will be viewed particularly favourably by the Council and will be strongly encouraged.

Where original sash windows have been lost previously, more favourable consideration may be given to installing uPVC sliding-sash windows than elsewhere in the Conservation Area due to the adverse effects that the more inclement weather conditions experienced at the seafront can have on the longevity of modern timbers. However, uPVC sliding-sashes must not be installed at the expense of surviving timber sash windows and will only be considered if designed to the highest standard and to reflect the pattern and slender proportions of

traditional timber sashes. The following illustrations show the quality of windows expected in such instances, although this particular pattern may not always be appropriate.



**PROPOSAL 5b:** The Council will require the retention and, wherever possible, seek to secure the reinstatement of characteristic brick/stone boundary walls and gateposts along Roker Terrace and South Cliff in the interests of preserving and enhancing the special character and distinctive appearance of the seafront

Traditional boundary walls along Roker Terrace and South Cliff are highly distinctive and a particularly strong feature of the seafront. The unusual construction of these walls, which typically feature a rubble sandstone or brick base, heavy stone plinths, brick walling and heavy stone copings, give them a unique character. Large sections of these walls survive. In some cases where they have been lost, good quality re-productions have been built generally using the same corresponding layers of materials. The Council will require the retention of such characteristic boundary walls, both original survivals and modern re-productions. These are identified on the following map; examples are illustrated overleaf.



**PROPOSAL 5c:** The Council will seek to protect and, wherever possible, secure the reinstatement of front gardens to properties along the seafront in order to preserve and enhance their landscape settings and the historic street scene.

Traditionally, all properties in Roker Terrace and South Cliff / North Cliff were set behind landscaped front gardens, which provided pleasant settings to fine historic buildings. Unfortunately, many of these gardens have been lost to car parking, as discussed on page 23, and this has had a hugely detrimental effect on the historic character and appearance of the seafront.

Elsewhere in the Conservation Area, protection is afforded via the Article 4(2) Direction to front gardens in recognition of their importance to the historic street scene. Several gardens do remain along the seafront, mainly in South Cliff. These are identified on the preceding map. The Council considers it important that all surviving front gardens are preserved and will therefore require car parking for future conversion schemes to be provided to the rear of properties wherever possible. This approach will leave existing gardens untouched and characteristic boundary walls intact, thus preserving the distinctiveness of the seafront.

Where gardens have been lost in the past, the Council will seek their reinstatement by requiring / encouraging developers to submit a landscaping scheme for the front garden area as part of their proposals. Such schemes should include a large element of soft landscaping in order to re-create garden settings to the buildings.

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 6:** To secure the appropriate enhancement of the lower promenade as an area of activity and distinctive character.

**PROPOSAL 6a:** The Council will seek to secure high quality and innovative building designs and high quality, co-ordinated environmental improvements in all development proposals for Marine Walk.

The Council's Seafront Strategy proposes the Marine Walk area as an 'activity zone' where additional commercial and leisure related uses will be encouraged, such as café bars, restaurants and specialist shops to promote its use as a promenade. There are several redundant or underused buildings and sites along Marine Walk that detract from the appearance of the promenade. These provide key opportunities to stimulate the revival of the resort through appropriate redevelopment. The relationship of new buildings to the surrounding landscape and townscape will be an important factor in the promenade's redevelopment. One such site has recently



This development on Marine Walk responds well to the surrounding landscape and displays a quite innovative design that is appropriate for its beach front location.

been developed with the construction of the Sunderland Marine Adventure Centre, illustrated above. The general scale, height (at 2 storeys) and building line of this development should set a pattern for future developments along Marine Walk, although a range of distinctive building forms and styles will be appropriate.

Thus, the Council will require an innovative approach to the design of new buildings that reflects and reinforces the area's distinctive character and beach-front location. Designs could suitably draw inspiration from the timber framed buildings that characterised original forms of development on the promenade as a reference to the area's history, albeit in a contemporary design approach.

The Council will endeavour, as resources allow, to implement an environmental improvement scheme to help create an attractive "café-life" ambience and restore the area as a valuable promenade. This may include the partial or full pedestrianisation of additional areas of Marine Walk and associated upgrading and rationalisation of surface materials, street furniture and lighting using co-ordinated design themes. Improvement works will need to be designed to take into account the on-going need for essential sea-defence.

# Management Objectives & Proposals: Backland Area

**MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 7:** To ensure the survival of key historic features in any development proposals for the Backland Area and to secure distinctive forms of buildings that enhance the area.

**PROPOSAL 7a:** The Council will require a comprehensive, co-ordinated and innovative design approach to the development of the backland area. Proposals for development must satisfy the design requirements listed below: -

## Design Requirements for development of Backland Area

- ❖ New buildings to be predominantly laid-out around the perimeter of the site looking inwards into communal courtyards.
- ❖ Buildings around perimeter to be no more than 1½ storeys high, and 2½ storeys elsewhere.
- ❖ Retention and reinstatement of high brick/stone boundary walls around perimeter of site.
- ❖ Retention of limestone walls within the site.
- ❖ Retention of existing mature trees or replacement with suitable species.
- ❖ Distinctive and cohesive building designs that reinforce the architectural quality and character of the area.
- ❖ Proposals to develop any part of the site must make provision for access to the remainder of the site to allow for future development.

The land to the rear of Roker Terrace, Roker Park Terrace, Ravine Terrace & St George's Terrace (identified on the map on page 9) originally comprised walled gardens for the surrounding houses. Although the plot boundaries have been largely retained, few of the plots remain in use as gardens and the site is now a muddle of car parking, garages and vacant land. It does retain extensive stretches of original limestone / brick boundary walls, particularly around the perimeter, and a number of mature trees, but few of the plots are properly maintained and large parts of the site appear untidy and derelict. Consequently, while the pattern of plot boundaries has some historical significance that may be desirable to retain, it is highly unlikely the plots will be brought back into use as private gardens. It is considered, therefore, that this backland site has more potential for enhancement through sympathetically and imaginatively designed development, providing that problematic issues of access and complex ownership issues can be resolved.



It is essential that development proposals are designed to incorporate surviving features of historic interest, such as brick and limestone walls (illustrated above). The magnesian limestone used in the construction of many of these walls is of immense local historic significance and a very distinctive feature of the area. Whilst still quarried locally, the limestones no longer feature the fossilised remains that historically characterised them. Thus, where the partial removal of limestone walls within the site is absolutely necessary for reasons of access, the stones should be carefully dismantled and set aside for re-use in the reinstatement of boundary walls elsewhere. Mature trees should also be retained wherever possible, or suitable replacements planted where losses are unavoidable to sustain the tree canopy.

Complex land ownership issues may mean that only part of the site can be developed at one time. Such piecemeal development is not desirable as it could result in uncoordinated forms of development. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that the development of any part of the site does not preclude the development of the remainder of it. Thus, proposals to develop a particular section of the site will be required to be shown within a wider sketch layout and design concept for the whole / larger part of the site. Applications to develop a single plot or a small section of the site in isolation will not normally be accepted.

# Management Proposals: Summary and Recommended Action

| <b>Management Strategy: Summary of Objectives</b>   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Proposals</b>                                    | <b>Timescale:<br/>short (1-3yrs)/<br/>mid-long (3-10yrs)</b> | <b>Financial<br/>Sources/Implications</b>   | <b>Recommended Action</b>   |
| 1a. Boundary Extension                              | short  | None  | Consult & Implement   |
| <b>Roker Park</b>                                   |  |   |   |
| 2a. Repair / restoration of features                | Short - Mid  | Public / partnership funding required       | Further research. Charitable group currently investigating funding sources with assistance from council |
| 2b. Rationalisation of street furniture.            | Mid-long   | Public funding required                     | Identify suitable products. Investigate funding sources.  |
| 2c. Revitalisation of water features                | Mid-long   | Major public / partnership funding required | Further research and initial design work. / Investigate funding sources.                                |
| 2d. Protection of trees and views                   | Continuous   | On - going maintenance budget               | Continuation of careful management of tree population   |
| 2e. Enhancement of setting of bandstand             | Mid-long   | Public / partnership funding required       | Further research and initial design work /investigate funding sources.                                  |
| 2f. Enhancement of sub-stations                     | Mid-long   | Public / private investment required        | Initial design work / investigate funding sources   |
| <b>Terraces (Article 4(2) Direction)</b>            |  |   |   |
| 3a. Monitoring & Enforcement of Direction           | Continuous   | None  | On-going monitoring and action  |
| 3b. Grant assistance                                | Mid-long   | Partnership funding required                | Identify and pursue funding options.  |
| <b>Villas</b>                                       |  |   |   |
| 4a. Protection of villas and their grounds          | Continuous   | None  | On-going control, advice and guidance   |
| <b>Seafront &amp; lower promenade</b>               |  |   |   |
| 5a. Restoration & conversion of seafront properties | Continuous   | Private investment                          | On-going control, advice and guidance   |
| 5b. Protection / reinstatement of boundary walls    | Continuous   | Private investment                          | On-going control, advice and guidance   |
| 5c. Protection / reinstatement of front gardens     | Continuous   | Private investment                          | On-going control, advice and guidance   |
| 6a. Enhancement of lower promenade                  | Mid-long   | Major public & private investment required  | Research and initial design work. On-going control, advice and guidance                                 |
| <b>Backland</b>                                     |  |   |   |
| 7a. Enhancement of backland area                    | Mid-long   | Major private investment required           | On-going control, advice and guidance   |

Whilst the Council can effectively manage and improve aspects of the Conservation Area and achieve certain management objectives through direct physical measures, its development control function and providing advice and guidance; the implementation of many proposals will be dependent on factors outside its direct control.

## Financial Implications

Many of the proposals will require significant public and/or private investment to facilitate their implementation. For example, the provision of a grant scheme in the area will be dependent on the Council making a successful bid to English Heritage for partnership funding and the availability of match funding from the Council's budget. In both these respects, the number of bids / projects always exceeds the resources available and schemes have to be prioritised. Unfortunately, it is often the case that conservation-based projects do not receive a high priority when competing for limited public funds against essential services such as health and education.

Restoration works to Roker Park are also likely to require significant partnership investment and could feasibly be the subject of a bid for funding to Heritage Lottery Fund under its Urban Parks/Parks for People Initiatives. The comprehensive restoration of Mowbray Park, the only other Registered Historic Park in the City, was undertaken under this funding initiative and has proved immensely popular. Roker Park could similarly reap huge benefits as an historic asset and visitor attraction for the City from such a scheme, albeit on a smaller scale to Mowbray Park.

Building conversions and new developments in the area are largely reliant on investment from private developers. In recent years the Conservation Area has attracted significant private development, most notably through the conversion of seafront properties into apartments, although this flow of investment is susceptible to changing market conditions and cannot be assured.

## Further Work Required

Further and more detailed work will, in addition to securing funding, be required to bring forward certain proposals. In particular, further research will be necessary to inform the design work that will be needed to develop restoration and enhancement schemes in Roker Park. Such work should be based on thorough historical research of original designs, patterns and materials. For instance, investigations should be made as to the original form and construction of the timber footbridge around the lake and whether castings were taken of the Babbies statues before they were removed to ensure the possible reinstatement of such features is properly informed.



**Envisaged Timescales**

The timescales indicated in the table for the implementation of the management proposals are deliberately vague due to the uncertainty surrounding the factors they are dependent upon. Some of the proposals may not be achieved in the next 10 years, whilst others might be implemented sooner than envisaged. In the final analysis, the availability of financial support will be the key factor in expediting most proposals.

# Appendix 1 - City of Sunderland UDP Conservation Policies

## Conservation Areas

B4 All development within and adjacent to Conservation Areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character or appearance. To this end the Council will issue planning/design guidance for the various areas from time to time.

B6 The Council will preserve and enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas; measures will include:-

- (i) Encouraging the retention of existing buildings and the improvement Of features, open spaces, historic street patterns and plot boundaries
- (ii) Encouraging the retention of existing mature trees;
- (iii) Introducing controls over the display of advertisements;
- (iv) Seeking, where appropriate, to control development by the use of Article 4 Directions;
- (v) Giving special attention to the preservation of important views into and out of the area;
- (vi) Restoring highways and verges by use of appropriate materials and planting, encouraging utility companies to respect such works;
- (vii) Reducing the impact of traffic where possible by diversion and traffic calming measures; and
- (viii) Promoting environmental improvement and enhancement programmes.

B7 Applications for demolition of unlisted buildings in a conservation area will be determined by the extent to which the integrity, character and appearance of the area is affected, taking into account any replacement proposals. Where unlisted buildings make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area, the criteria in Policy B8 which concern the demolition of listed buildings will apply.

## Listed Buildings

B8 There will be a presumption in favour of retaining listed buildings. Demolition in whole or substantive part will only be given consent when all other avenues for retention (including preservation or enhancement in charitable or community ownership) have been explored and found not to be feasible or it is considered that redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition. Consent will only then be given when planning permission for an acceptable replacement development has been granted, which will also be subject to conditions requiring the letting of a contract prior to demolition.

B9 The City Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character and qualities of those buildings listed as being of special architectural or historic interest:-

- (i) Refusing permission for extensions or alterations which would adversely affect their architectural or historic character;
- (ii) Giving financial assistance (where available) for appropriate works of restoration or repair in accordance with City policies;
- (iii) Giving favourable consideration to a wider range of uses than might normally be appropriate to help bring otherwise vacant buildings back into beneficial use, providing these do not adversely affect the architectural character or setting of the building or amenity of nearby residents;
- (iv) The acquisition and restoration of important buildings, particularly in Conservation Areas, if this is the only way to secure their preservation.

B10 The City Council will seek to ensure that development proposals in the vicinity of listed buildings do not adversely affect their character or setting.

## Appendix 2 - Repairs and Alterations

### Guidelines for External Repair and Alteration Work

- ❖ **Roofs:**

The replacement of roof slates should be carried out re-using sound existing slates and/or new natural slates laid in courses to match the existing. Reclaimed and new materials should not, however, be mixed together on the same pitch. The slates should be appropriate to the conservation area. In Roker, Welsh slate is the predominant type of roof covering material.
- ❖ **Chimneys:**

Chimneys requiring repair should be reinstated or rebuilt accurately to the original height and profile, in materials to match the existing which, in most cases in Roker, is brick. Original clay chimney pots should be replaced appropriately or reinstated where necessary.
- ❖ **Rainwater Goods:**

Generally, any new or replacement rainwater goods required should be in cast iron, to the original pattern. Timber gutter boxes are a particular feature of Roker and should be repaired or replaced accordingly, lined in lead or, more economically, in bitumen.
- ❖ **Re-pointing and Rendering:**

Brick and stonework re-pointing, and rendering where appropriate, should be carried out using a suitable lime-based mortar. Advice on mortar mixes and methods of application and finishing should be obtained from the Council or an approved independent expert. Cement mortars will often accelerate the deterioration of brick and stone.
- ❖ **Windows and Doors:**

Existing windows and external doors should be retained and carefully repaired wherever possible; it is important to retain and repair early surviving casements. In Roker, most original windows are of a timber sliding-sash design. If replacement is unavoidable, new windows should be accurate replicas to the original design, in both pattern and detail. PVC frames will fail to do this.
- ❖ **Ironwork**

Decorative ironwork, such as balconies, canopies or railings, should be retained and carefully repaired or, if absolutely necessary, reinstated accurately to the original pattern and detail, in a similar material, usually wrought or cast iron. Replacements in mild steel often corrode very quickly.
- ❖ **Boundary Treatment:**

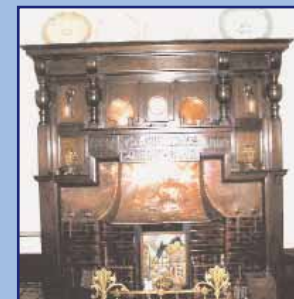
Original walls, fences, railings and gates should be repaired to match the existing, or reinstated to the original design wherever possible.

### Internal Alterations

The sub-division of historic properties into flats can often result in extensive damage to the internal fabric and features of the buildings. It is important, therefore, that a sensitive approach is taken when carrying out works to adapt the interiors of such properties. As a general rule, alterations should be kept to a minimum and internal features retained as far as possible in order to preserve the integrity of the buildings. Where alterations are inevitable, they should be easily reversible without damaging the existing fabric. It is often the case that the desire to conserve features will conflict with the requirements of current Fire and Building Regulations. However, Part L of the Building Regulations 'Conservation of Fuel and Power' (DTLR, 2001) acknowledges the special requirements of historic buildings in satisfying energy conservation requirements. It recognises that there is a need to strike an appropriate balance between historic building conservation and energy conservation. There are products and techniques that can satisfy both requirements and avoid the unnecessary destruction of features in most instances. These should be researched carefully before irreparable damage is done.

### Important Internal Features

- Staircases
- Fireplaces
- Doors and door handles
- Architraves
- Cornices
- Dado rails
- Skirtings
- Shutters
- Panelling
- Decorative plasterwork, brass/copper work
- Decorative tiles, mosaics



Owners/occupiers of listed buildings should be aware that any alterations which affect the character of both the interior and exterior require consent from the Council. It is a criminal offence to undertake work without first obtaining consent from the Council.

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For further details and copies in large print and other languages please contact:

Conservation Team  
Development and Regeneration Services  
Civic Centre  
Sunderland  
SR2 7DN

Tel: (0191) 5611515

Fax: (0191) 5617893

e-mail: [implementation@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:implementation@sunderland.gov.uk)

[www.sunderland.gov.uk/characterappraisals](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/characterappraisals)