

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Consultation on a number of draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans has now been completed. This report presents the results of that consultation and seeks Member approval for the adoption of these reports as evidence base documents, subject to the changes set out in the annex to this report.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Rochford District Council commissioned Essex County Council to produce a number of Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans. Draft versions of these documents have been produced and have been made available for public consultation. The arrangements for this public consultation on the documents were agreed by the Executive Board on 7 June 2007 and this included seeking the views of the appropriate Area Committees. This report presents the results of that consultation, officer responses and recommended changes, and seeks Members' approval to adopt the appraisals as evidence base documents, subject to the changes set out in the annex to this report, and to amend the conservation area boundaries, as recommended in the reports.
- 2.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans subject to consultation covered the following areas:-
- Battlesbridge
 - Canewdon Church
 - Canewdon High Street
 - Foulness Churchend
 - Great Wakering
 - Paglesham Churchend
 - Paglesham Eastend
 - Shopland Churchyard

3 PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 3.1 The draft conservation area appraisal and management plans were made available to view on the Council's website, on the Council's online

consultation system, and made available for inspection at the Council's offices. Copies of the documents were circulated to all District Council Members on 7 June 2007 and copies of the appraisals were also despatched to the relevant Parish Councils. Representations were accepted by paper, email or through the LDF online consultation system. The representations received, officer responses and recommended changes to the documents are included as an annex to this report. A breakdown of the numbers of representations received is shown below.

Numbers of Representations Received

Document	Respondents / Objectors	Submission Method			Support / Object			Total
		Web	Email	Paper	Support	Object	Comment	
Canewdon Church	1 / 0	0	0	5	0	0	5	5
Shopland Churchyard	2 / 0	0	0	5	1	0	4	5
Great Wakering	0 / 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foulness Churchend	0 / 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Canewdon High Street	1 / 0	0	0	3	0	0	3	3
Battlesbridge Conservation	0 / 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paglesham East End	0 / 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paglesham Churchend	1 / 0	0	3	0	0	0	3	3
Totals:	4 / 0	0 (0%)	3 (18.8%)	13 (81.3%)	1 (6.3%)	0 (0%)	15 (93.8%)	16

4 AREA COMMITTEES

- 4.1 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans were also considered at the relevant Area Committees. With the exception of Battlesbridge, all of the appraisals were considered by the East Area

Committee on 25 July 2007. The following comments were made by the Committee:-

- With regard to Canewdon High Street, the Planning Manager advised that the specific detail relating to improvements to enhance the public realm would be investigated once the appraisals were accepted.
- The changes to the boundary of the Canewdon High Street conservation area proposed in the report could be supported by the Committee. In the paragraph headed Re-Development, the statement that infill in the gardens, particularly on the north side of the High Street, should be avoided, should be more strongly worded.

Officer Comments: It is recommended that paragraph 7.5 of the report is amended to state that gardens are an important part of the character of the area and infill on the North side of the High Street will normally be unacceptable.

- Rochford District Council was investigating whether it would be appropriate to re-introduce the Local List.
- Funding in respect of Shopland Churchyard was desperately needed for the continued upkeep of this Norman church, which was falling into disrepair. All gravestones in the churchyard needed to be shored up as they were dangerous. The suggestion in the report that the churchyard be re-used as a burial ground was regarded as unacceptable.

Officer Comments: Paragraphs 5.5 and 6.0 of the report note the problems with the gravestones and upkeep of the churchyard. When adopted into the evidence base the document will be useful to support applications for funding.

- With regard to the Foulness Churchend Conservation Area Appraisal, it was suggested by Members that the wording on future development of the conservation area be strengthened to the effect that new development must be avoided. The Planning Manager advised that general planning policy would deal with this point.

Officer Comments: Planning policy on new development will be set out by the Core Strategy, Allocations and Development Control Policies Development Plan Documents.

- 4.2 The Battlesbridge conservation area appraisal and management plan was discussed at the West Area Committee on 18 July 2007. The following comments were made:-

- The draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Battlesbridge was unique in that it had been jointly prepared with

Chelmsford Borough Council, since the Conservation Area straddled the boundary between the two districts.

- Members observed that great care had been taken with the appraisal and that Battlesbridge attracted more tourists from greater distances than any other area within the District.
- There was a general consensus that advertising was a sensitive issue as signs could detract greatly from the appearance of the Conservation Area. Highways signs, in particular, did little to enhance the Conservation Area. It was also stressed that at the weekends signs were placed on the footpaths, creating a hazard. The view was expressed that there should be some form of standardisation for advertising signs and that the number of signs should be controlled, particularly on highways land.

Officer Comments: Paragraph 7.20 notes the potential for signs to be detrimental to the area. It is recommended that paragraph 7.20 is amended to note that signs placed on the footpath have the potential to cause a hazard and that a greater level of control on advertising signs may be beneficial.

- Attention was drawn to the lack of co-ordination between the two Local Authorities with respect to the 2 different sides of the river generally and that the Council's applied planning legislation relating to Conservation Areas separately on each side of the river. It was felt that there would be merit in officers exploring with Chelmsford Borough Council the possibility of establishing a joint Committee for the Battlesbridge Conservation Area.

Officer Comments: Comments noted. It is recommended that this issue is given further consideration, perhaps investigating the possibility of setting up a forum dealing with Battlesbridge Conservation Area issues. It is recommended that section 8 of the report is amended to make reference to the possible benefits of increased co-ordination and joint working.

- The importance of trying to re-open the sea wall between Battlesbridge and Hullbridge to walkers was emphasised as this had been denied to residents for many years and would help attract more tourists to the area. Currently walkers wishing to walk into Battlesbridge from Hullbridge had to do so via Beeches Road.

Officer Comments: Enhancement opportunity 1 (page 37) highlights the importance of increasing river access. It is recommended that this paragraph is amended to state that the sea wall south of the River between Battlesbridge and Hullbridge also offers potential for enhancement and that improved access would benefit local residents and help attract tourists.

5 CHELMSFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON THE BATTLESBRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 5.1 The Battlesbridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been jointly prepared with Chelmsford Borough Council, since the Conservation Area straddles the boundary between the two districts. No comments relating to the Battlesbridge Plan, other than those received through the West Area Committee, were received by Rochford District Council. To encourage consistency between the documents, and to help ensure that the views of the residents of Battlesbridge have been adequately considered, it is recommended that the following changes are made to the Battlesbridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as a result of comments received by Chelmsford Borough Council.

Comment	CBC Response	Recommended Action
Mr. R. Hart, Battlesbridge Harbour		
The water mill is a tidal undershot not a breast shot	The water mill is a tidal undershot	Amend Document
The tidal gates are no longer in danger	At present the gates are on the ECC buildings at risk register	No amendment required
No mention of conifers at Telford's, Conifers are excellent for screening, quick growing evergreens, especially to hide industrial sites	Telford's is within RDC's area. Conifers are an unattractive alien species	No amendment required
The garden centre has been the same since 1988 it's reasonably tidy with the grass trimmed	The garden centre is within RDC's area. There is scope to enhance the sites appearance in the future	No amendment required
The grade II listed bridge needs repair or replacing to get rid of the eyesore repairs in the centre of the village	The repairs were essential retain the historic bridge in use. Visual impact of repairs noted in report.	No amendment required
We really need a church/village hall of about 1,400 sq ft	The report identifies the opportunity to provide a new hall	No amendment required

Comment	CBC Response	Recommended Action
No one should lose site of the fact that buildings of different appearance, style and materials, within reason, are what makes villages interesting, uniformity is the worst form of planning	Noted. The report identifies the variety within the area	No amendment required
Battlesbridge Church		
The windows to the church were replaced with economy and low maintenance in mind	The replacement windows detract from the appearance of the building.	No amendment required
The church are keen to play a full part in the local community and provide facilities	Noted	No amendment required
J.P.Pettitt		
No mention of the telephone kiosk at the corner of Hawk Hill/Malting Road	The size and position of the kiosk mean that it does not significantly impact on the appearance of the area. Potential for improvement to street furniture noted in report.	Amend enhancement section of report.
Impact of the industrial area adjacent to the Hawk	This is beyond the conservation area, but does adversely affect the approach from the east. This is identified in the townscape analysis section	No amendment required
Unightly appearance of the ditch to the rear of the Barge Inn	Noted in report. Discussions with the owner of the Barge Inn have taken place	No amendment required
Access to the northern side of the river	Noted in report as a possible enhancement	No amendment required
Public access to the village green	Although accessible, this area is in private ownership	No amendment required
Various minor inconsistency in figure numbers	Noted	Amend Document
Potential traffic control over the bridge	Noted	Amend Document

Comment	CBC Response	Recommended Action
Jim Gaile		
Lack of mains drainage	Noted, but not relevant to the conservation area designation	No amendment required
Lack of street cleaning	Comments passed onto CBC operational services	No amendment required
Inaccurate annotation of orientation in photographs	Noted	Amend Document
Concerns of traffic and the bridge	Noted	Amend Document
Concerns over the introduction of additional planning restrictions, could a grant scheme be introduced	Noted, a revenue bid is being prepared for grants towards the repair of historic buildings	No amendment required
Comments on quality of street furniture	Noted	Amend Document
Typing errors	Noted	Amend Document
Rettendon Parish Council		
Note that if article 4 directions are introduced, it should not be retrospective and the implication need to be understood by owners	No adverse comments have been made in respect of the article 4 directions by local residents. It would not be retrospective. Guidance could be produced for owners	No amendment required
Concern over existing advertising	The majority of the signs in place are of a size and position which means that consent is not required	No amendment required
Supports enhancements, concerns over traffic and the impact of the adjacent industrial sites	Noted. Text amended	Amend Document
Suggest a grant scheme for repairs etc	Noted. Capital bid prepared	No amendment required

6 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 the Council is required, from time to time, to review the designation of conservation areas and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should

be designated as conservation areas; and, if so, designate those parts accordingly.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Adoption of the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans can be carried out using in-house existing resources.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Amendment of the boundaries of Conservation Areas will require an Article 4(2) Direction to be made under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.

9 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Copies of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans were sent to the Parish Councils inviting their comments.

10 RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RECOMMENDS** to Council
- (1) That the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans be adopted as evidence base documents, subject to the recommended changes set out in this report and in the annex to this report.
 - (2) That the conservation area boundaries be amended, as recommended in the reports.
 - (3) That implementation of the recommendations of the appraisals be considered through the Local Development Framework process and by other mechanisms, as appropriate.

Shaun Scrutton

Head of Planning and Transportation

Background Papers:-

None

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