

ITEM 11 – APPENDIX F

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 5TH NOVEMBER 2013

Title:

GODALMING TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Reynolds

Wards Affected: Godalming Central and Ockford

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Godalming Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) be adopted by the Council as a material consideration and used in the determination of any application for planning permission and listed building consent within the Conservation Area (CA).

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The Godalming CAA supports the environmental priorities of the Council by encouraging protection and enhancement of Waverley's unique mix of rural and urban communities. The production of CAAs is set out in the Planning Service Plan 20013/14.

Financial Implications:

There are no resource implications. The use of the document as a material planning consideration will be managed within existing resources. Some of the environmental enhancement projects could be funded through Section 106, Planning Infrastructure Contributions (PIC) or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Legal Implications:

Godalming Town Centre's CAA will be used as a material consideration when considering planning and listed building applications in the area.

Introduction

Godalming Town Centre is one of 43 Conservation Areas (CA) in Waverley. Currently only five Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs) have been completed (Wrecclesham, Bramley, Farnham Town Centre, Wheelerstreet and Chiddingfold).

This is the second CAA to be completed since 2007, and follows the Wheelerstreet document. Wheelerstreet CAA was a pilot project that helped Waverley formulate a methodology (following the latest English Heritage guidelines) so that the remaining 39 CAAs can be undertaken in a consistent manner.

The Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA)

CAAs are undertaken to identify and explain the character of the CA. This document will identify the specific qualities of the Godalming Town Centre CA and thereby help to manage change within the CA. It is not enough for a LPA to just designate an area as a CA. Section 71 of the 1990 act explains that “it shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas”. Policy HE8 in the Local Plan states that “the Council will seek to preserve or enhance the character of conservation areas by.....(e) carrying out conservation area appraisals”. It is therefore considered pertinent for Waverley to undertake CAAs with the aim to appraise the character of each CA; identify the qualities which should be preserved and enhanced, and produce a management plan to include proposals for enhancement where necessary. The CAA for Godalming town centre is attached at Annexe 1.

The Consultation Process

A Steering Group was set up consisting of Local Councillors, including the County Councillor, members from local amenity groups and the chamber of commerce and officers from Godalming Town Council, Waverley Borough Council and Surrey County Council. A walkabout was conducted with the group and there was regular communication by email and meetings to discuss the draft document. The group's input was particularly useful in putting together the Management Plan and environmental enhancement schemes for the CA.

A robust public consultation was undertaken in July/August 2013, to support the development of the CAA. The consultation included:-

- A letter to all residents in the CA
- A leaflet to all businesses in the CA (hand delivered)
- A letter to key stakeholders including:-
 - Town Council
 - Surrey County Council
 - Statutory consultees (English Heritage, Natural England and Environment Agency)
 - Amenity Society (the Godalming Trust)
 - Relevant internal Waverley officers
 - Local Councillors

A presentation was given to the Chamber of Commerce on 16th July 2013 and the Godalming Business Network was also informed. It placed details of the consultation on LinkedIn.

A copy of the draft CAA document was made available for inspection at the Council Offices in Godalming, and full details were also available on the web site.

26 responses were received in response to the consultation. The main issues raised related to the proposed Management Plan. As a result it has been updated to include additional issues such as litter and fly posting. Recommendations for environmental enhancement to Wiggins Yard, the public realm outside the Red Lion and Station Road were also supported.

A potential new CA just outside Godalming Town Centre on Westbrook Road will also be examined as a separate piece of work.

The Consultation Report, setting out the comments received and the Officers' response, is attached at Annexe 2.

Conclusion

The Godalming Town Centre CAA document identifies the specific qualities of the CA and thereby helps to manage change within the area. It has been subject to a robust consultation process to ensure residents and interested stakeholders had the opportunity to comment on and shape the final document.

It is proposed that the appraisal be adopted as a material consideration to be used in the determination of any application for planning permission and listed building consent within the conservation area.

Recommendation

That the Executive recommends to Council the approval of the Conservation Area Appraisal for Godalming Town Centre.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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