

Consultation Statement

Haslemere Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA)

Introduction

Waverley Borough Council prepared a draft Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) for Haslemere Town Centre and carried out an associated consultation. This report outlines how the consultation was undertaken, who was involved and how responses were considered.

Consultation Process

The consultation started on Monday 14 April 2014 for six weeks, ending on Monday 26 May 2014.

The following methods to inform the public of the consultation included:

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

An email was also sent to members of the Steering Group.

A presentation was given to the Half Moon Residents Association on Wednesday 23 April to explain the implications of the proposed extension.

A poster and hard copy of the draft Haslemere Town Centre CAA document was made available at Planning Reception, Council Offices, Godalming (Monday to Thursday 9am – 5pm and Friday 9am – 4pm) and a copy could be viewed online at:

www.waverley.gov.uk/haslemerecaa

Individuals and organisations were contacted by letter (see Appendix A for full list of those consulted). Businesses were consulted by leaflet which was hand delivered in the first week of the consultation (see Appendix B). Whilst the consultation was focussed, it did not preclude the other interested parties from responding. In addition to the webpage on the Council website, a press release (Appendix C) was issued to inform the public of the consultation.

A full summary of the consultation responses is set out below. The main issues have been identified as a result of this process and where practicable and appropriate, amendments made to the CAA.

A Steering Group consisting of members from Haslemere Town Council, the local amenity group, local Councillors, Surrey County Council and the Chamber of Commerce was set up. This group was active in the preparation of the CAA and met regularly to discuss the content. In addition, a walkabout was conducted and environmental enhancement projects for the management plan were highlighted. This gave participants the opportunity to raise questions, but also to gain feedback on the content.

Respondents were able to comment of the draft Haslemere Town Centre CAA in a variety of ways:

- Via the online Innovem (consultation) database accessed via the website (with no need to register)
- By email to the conservation inbox (conservation@waverley.gov.uk)
- By letter

A number of key questions were asked:

- Do you have any comments on the draft Haslemere Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal?
- Should the draft Haslemere Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal cover any other issues?
- Do you agree with the proposed Conservation Area extension in West Street? Do you have any comments?
- Do you agree with the proposed Conservation Area extension in the Half Moon Estate? Do you have any comments?

Respondents were also given the opportunity to give any additional comments that they thought were relevant to the draft CAA.

Consultation Responses

31 responses were received to the draft document. The responses fell into one of three categories:

- 1) Statutory consultees,
- 2) General comments on the CAA, and
- 3) Comments on the proposed extensions.

The comments are summarised below.

- 1) Statutory consultees

English Heritage considered the document to accord with the most recent guidance on producing conservation area appraisals and in particular praised the section on public realm enhancements. They also acknowledged that the areas proposed for CA status would appear to be of special local interest, especially West Street with

the distinctive shop fronts. Natural England had no comments on the document, and the Environment Agency did not respond to the consultation.

2) General comments on the CAA

A number of comments were received, mainly supporting the need for a CAA and some suggesting helpful minor amendments (which have been made), and also further recommendations for the Management Plan (in terms of implementation of projects through a working group). This additional recommendation has been included.

One respondent questioned the need for a CAA arguing that this will stifle future development within the area. In response, the CAA will help support relevant local and national planning policies, ensuring that the most appropriate development is permitted in the CA which either preserves or enhances the special character.

Two respondents provided additional useful commentary on the CAA. One requested that the local authorities do more to ensure roads and footpaths are made good after utility companies undertake work and that signage and street furniture should be chosen to reflect Haslemere's uniqueness and desirability. The second respondents' comments are outlined below with Waverley's response:

Respondent comment	Waverley response
The general character section is not sufficiently detailed (and recommended other documents for guidance) (para 3.1.1).	This has been reviewed, but in light of EH comments and that para 3.1.1 should not be read in isolation, no significant changes are proposed.
All listed buildings, buildings of local merit and heritage features should be listed.	This has not been included as much of this information is available on Waverley's website and online mapping system. Those assets identified don't intend to give a comprehensive list, but a 'flavour' of the types of buildings within the CA.
Some recent developments (such as the new railings along Lower Street and Shepherds Hill) are not in keeping with the character of the CA and therefore there are issues that need addressing.	Generally the CA is in good condition and the CAA reflects this within the text. No change proposed.
The recommendation about the standardisation of street furniture will reduce variety throughout the town, detracting from its existing character.	Standardised street furniture helps to subtly support the local distinctiveness of an area. No change proposed.
Specific mention should be made of the new railings, and a commentary should be included to state that they should be shorter.	It is inappropriate to comment on the railings in this document. These were installed by SCC Highways to meet the current standards in highway safety.
A recommendation should be included to produce a protocol for	This is a specific matter for SCC, and a recommendation is not

SCC Highways to consult with Waverley and the Town Council prior to any highways works being undertaken,	proposed in the CAA.
Photographs should be included within the document (some provided with associated text).	Photographs will be included within the final document.

3) Comments on the proposed extensions

a. West Street extension

Eight respondents commented on the West Street proposed CA extension. Of these:

- Six respondents consider that the proposed West Street extension should be designated as a CA. There was recognition that there is a common thread linking to the existing CA and that it reflects the diversity and character of Haslemere.
- Two respondents considered that the proposed West Street extension should not be designated as a CA. Both respondents considered that there are sufficient planning controls currently in place and that CA designation would add unnecessary restrictions on residential and commercial development.

b. Half Moon Estate extension

27 respondents commented on the Half Moon Estate proposed CA extension. Of these:

- Five respondents considered that the proposed Half Moon Estate extension should be designated as a CA. There was recognition that CA status would benefit the area as it would give greater importance to its character, especially when planning applications were determined. The character (footpaths, wide verges, open aspect and trees) alongside the vision from local architect Herbert Hutchinson is such to provide a 'garden' feel that is distinctive to this area and worthy of designation. An additional comment was received suggesting a further building be included within the extension.
- 22 respondents considered that the proposed Half Moon Estate extension should not be designated as a CA. Many respondents reflected the comments of the Half Moon Estate Residents Association explaining that current planning controls and policies are sufficient to protect the character of the area from future undesirable developments.

The Hutchinson buildings maybe of interest and are noteworthy, however there are more appropriate methods of long term protection (such as designating them as Buildings of Local Merit). Hutchinson, whilst a local architect is not widely known for his architectural skills. The boundary appears to subdivide roads and exclude many of Hutchinson's buildings, additionally over 40% of the buildings proposed to be included within the CA are not designed by Hutchinson and many have been built within the last 40 years. Many respondents also asked why this area was not taken forward in 2005 when the CA was previously considered (and extensions designated).

Many respondents would not welcome the additional controls that come with CA designation (such as reduced permitted development rights) and argue that the additional protection that comes with CA status is limited.

When determining whether to proceed with the designation of the Half Moon Estate as a CA, the Council has recognised that there are a number of issues that need to be balanced against one another. In light of the responses to the consultation, the Council has decided not to take this proposal forward. The West Street extension continues to be promoted as this has a strong connection with the existing CA and is indistinguishable from the existing boundary. The document has therefore been updated to reflect this position.

Next Steps

The consultation has informed the necessary amendments to the document before being submitted through the committee process (Executive and Full Council) for adoption as a material consideration in planning applications and to inform future environmental enhancement works.

If agreed a public notice will be displayed in the local newspaper and London Gazette in accordance with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Section 70). The Secretary of State will also be given notice of the designation.

Appendix A – Consultees

- Surrey County Council
 - Highways & Parking
 - Landscape.
- Waverley Borough Council
 - Local Ward Councillors
 - Officers from Planning, Environmental Services, Landscape, Community Services, Legal, Finance, CEO, etc.
- All commercial businesses in CA and proposed extensions
- Steering Group - Members made up of Surrey County Councillor, Local Councillors, the Local Amenity Group, Chamber of Commerce, Haslemere Town Council, Surrey County Council officer and Waverley BC officers.
- English Heritage - Assistant Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas, Sussex and Surrey.
- Natural England - Lead Adviser
- Environment Agency - Planning Adviser
- Haslemere Society
- Haslemere Town Council
- The Owner/ Occupiers in:
 - Tanner Lane
 - Lower Street
 - Shepherds Hill
 - Sandrock
 - Courts Mount Road
 - Courts Hill Road
 - Petworth Road (part)
 - High Street
 - West Street
 - Well Lane
 - Cobden Lane
 - Three Gates lane
 - Grayswood Road (part)
 - Church Lane
 - High Lane
 - Derby Road
 - Church Road
 - Chestnut Avenue
 - College Hill
 - College Hill Terrace
 - Hill Road
 - Museum Hill

Appendix B – leaflet hand delivered to businesses in the CA (and proposed extensions)

News Release

Issued by Waverley Borough Council

Date: Tuesday May 13

Views Wanted On Extending Haslemere's Conservation Area

Waverley is seeking views on the draft conservation area appraisal (CAA) for Haslemere. Within the appraisal, Waverley is looking for views on proposals to extend the town's conservation area along the north side of Wood Street and in to the Half Moon Estate to the south.

Haslemere is one of 43 conservation areas in the borough and Waverley is keen that it keeps pace with any changes. To do that, views from across the community are needed.

As part of the appraisal on which people can comment, along with the extensions to the area, Waverley is considering some improvements that would need to be in keeping with the conservation area. Parts of the town already identified for consideration include:

- The public realm surrounding the horse chestnut tree at the Georgian House Hotel
- Outside 42 High Street (currently Costa)
- Tall planters and public space on the High Street and Petworth Road
- Public realm at the bottom of College Hill and the High Street and at the junction of Shepherds' Hill and Lower Street
- Pedestrian links
- Benches.

The draft Haslemere Conservation Area Appraisal is open for comment until May 26 and is made up of two parts – one identifies and explains its special character while the other sets out the long term management plan for the area.

The draft Haslemere Conservation Appraisal Consultation can be viewed online at www.waverley.gov.uk/haslemereCAA where feedback can also be registered. Hardcopies of the appraisal are available in the planning reception of Waverley Borough Council offices, The Burys Godalming, GU7 1HR and responses can be sent by email to conservation@waverley.gov.uk or by post.