

AGENDA ITEM 10: APPENDIX F

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 30/09/2014

Title:

HASLEMERE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Brian Adams]

[Wards Affected: Haslemere East and Grayswood]

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Haslemere 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 Haslemere 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 20014/15.

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:

The Haslemere CAA will be used as a material consideration when considering planning and listed building applications in the area.

Introduction

1. Haslemere is one of 43 Conservation Areas (CA) in Waverley. Currently seven Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs) have been completed (Wrecclesham, Bramley, Farnham Town Centre, Wheelerstreet, Godalming Town Centre, Milford and Chiddingfold).
2. This is the fourth CAA to be completed since 2007, and follows the Godalming Town Centre, Milford and Wheelerstreet documents. Wheelerstreet CAA was a pilot project that helped Waverley formulate a methodology (following the latest English Heritage guidelines) so that the remaining 38 CAAs can be undertaken in a consistent manner.

The Conservation Area Appraisal

3. CAAs are undertaken to identify and explain the character of the Conservation Area (CA). This document will identify the specific qualities of the Haslemere CA and thereby help to manage change within the area. The Management Plan section also identifies a variety of projects that should be implemented to preserve and enhance the area.
4. The need to undertake CAA is set out in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (section 71) and is supported through saved policy HE8 of the Waverley Local Plan.
5. 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. This process also allows a review of the boundary and an assessment of adjacent areas to evaluate whether the boundary should be extended.
6. The CAA is attached at Annexe 1.

The Consultation Process

7. A walkabout was conducted with a Steering Group. This group consisted of Local County, Borough and Town Councillors, relevant officers of Surrey County Council and Waverley Borough Council, representative of the local Chamber of Commerce and local amenity society. Various meetings were held to discuss the content of the CAA and identify environmental enhancement projects for the Management Plan section.
8. A public consultation was undertaken to support the development of the CAA and to ask the public's views of the proposed extensions. The consultation started on 14 April 2014 for six weeks, ending on 26 May 2014.
9. The following methods to inform the public of the consultation included:
 - Letter to all residents in the CA
 - Letter for key stakeholders including:
 - Town Council
 - Surrey County Council
 - Amenity Society
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Statutory consultees (English Heritage, Natural England and Environment Agency)
 - Relevant internal Waverley officers
 - Local Councillors
10. A poster and hard copy of the draft Haslemere 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.

11. 31 responses were received to the consultation. The responses fell into three categories:

a) 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.

b) 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 which have been included.

One respondent questioned the need for a CAA arguing that this will stifle future development within the area.

c) Comments on the proposed extensions

i) West Street extension

Six respondents supported the proposal and two respondents objected (on the grounds that there are sufficient planning controls in place).

ii) Half Moon Estate extension

Five respondents supported the proposal. However 22 respondents objected on the grounds that:

- existing planning policies are sufficient to control unacceptable development,
- additional controls were not necessary or wanted,
- the proposed boundary is inappropriate,
- Herbert Hutchinson was not a significant architect,
- There are other options available for protecting the Herbert Hutchinson properties (including Building of Local Merit status).

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.

12. The Consultation Statement is attached at Annexe 2.

Conclusion

13. The Haslemere 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.
14. It is proposed that the appraisal including the proposed extension in West Street 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.
15. If the document is adopted at Full Council, the next steps are to advertise the proposed extension in the local paper and London Gazette (in accordance with the Act). In addition the Secretary of State will also be notified.

Recommendation

It is recommended to the Council that the CAA for Haslemere Town Centre be adopted as a material planning consideration.

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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