

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Conservation Advisory Group
Conservation, Sustainability &
Community Planning Portfolio Holder

AUTHOR/S: Conservation & Design Manager

26th April 2006

THATCH AND THATCHING IN SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Purpose

1. To advise members of the Conservation Advisory Group on the outcome of the public consultation exercise for the Draft Council Policy *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* and seek support to recommend the adoption of the document as Council Policy, incorporating the proposed changes as outlined in the attached appendix.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. Quality, Accessible Services	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will be used as guidance and therefore assist in achieving the Council's aim of the delivery of a high quality planning service.
Village Life	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will have a significant impact on the enhancement village life by ensuring that thatch and thatch details are appropriate to their context and of demonstrable quality.
Sustainability	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will aid delivery of sustainable development by helping to ensure the adoption of appropriate thatch materials and details within the historic environment are appropriate to its setting.
Partnership	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will be a useful resource for both the District Council and Parish Councils to aid their consideration of listed building applications and the Planning Inspectorate in the determination of appeals.

Background

3. In July 2005 the Conservation Advisory Group considered a report and agreed the direction and proposed content of the Thatch and thatching planning policy guidance document. In December 2005 the Conservation Advisory Group considered the initial draft and recommended that officers should undertake an appropriate consultation exercise. The draft was completed in March 2006 and issued for public consultation on 10 March 2006. It was also published on the Council's website. The consultation period closed on 14 April 2006.

Considerations

4. A copy of the draft *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* was sent to local thatchers, the National and Regional Societies of Master Thatchers, adjacent District Councils, English Heritage, CPRE, Government Offices for the East of England, Cambridge ACRE, The National Trust, EEDA, Cambridge Preservation Society. It was also published on the Council's website.

5. 4 responses were received and these are summarised in the attached appendix.

Options

6. The Conservation Advisory Group are requested to either:
 - a) Recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder presents the report on this matter to Cabinet seeking adoption of the draft Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire as Council Policy (subject to the incorporation of the changes outlined in the attached appendix);
 - or
 - b) To require officers to bring a revised draft of Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire to a future meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group incorporating additional amendments and revisions as agreed during the consideration of this matter by the Conservation Advisory Group at their meeting on 26 April 2006.

Financial Implications

7. The production of Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire will be funded from existing departmental resources.

Legal Implications

8. Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire is to be adopted as Council Policy in the short term. Following adoption of the new LDF (due March 2007), Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire will be reviewed and cross-referenced to the relevant policies contained in within the LDF. A sustainability appraisal will be prepared and the revised Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire (together with the sustainability appraisal) will then be issued for further public consultation prior to adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Staffing Implications

9. None specific.

Risk Management Implications

10. Adopting Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire as SPD will ensure that officers give the document due consideration when considering listed building applications and Planning Inspectors make reference to it when determining planning and listed building applications on thatched buildings within the district. It will also ensure consistent advice is provided on thatch.

Consultations

11. Local thatchers, the National and Regional Societies of Master Thatchers, adjacent District Councils, English Heritage, CPRE, Government Offices for the East of England, Cambridge ACRE, The National Trust, EEDA, Cambridge Preservation Society.

Conclusions/Summary

12. The consultations received in respect of the draft Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire are as set out in the attached appendix.

Recommendations

13. That the Conservation Advisory Group recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder presents the draft document to Cabinet to seek its approval and adoption as Council Policy, subject to the incorporation of the changes outlined in the attached appendix.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Draft council policy Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire.

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Appendix : Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire

Summary of Consultations on the draft Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire

Consultee	Nature	Representation	Assessment	Recommendation
1. Martin C Potter (Thatcher)	Support and comment	Appendix 2 – Longstraw thatch outline specification item 4 and page 7 paragraph 5.1 state that material should be securely fastened with hazelwood spars yet the picture on the front cover and on page 7 shows plastic spars on the roof. While there is no objection to their use, the document does not say if they are acceptable, but the picture implies that they are.	Noted. Replace the photographs.	Replace the photograph on the front cover and page 7 with a suitable alternative showing the use of hazel spars.
2. B Mizon (Thatcher)	Support and comment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 4.3 Traditional repair page 6 - Moss is definitely detrimental to thatch and should not be allowed to build up. After the moss has been removed the water comes off the thatch much quicker and slows down the wear of the thatch. 2. Television aerials should not be fixed to chimneys, the extra drips of water and bird droppings make the area under the chimney wear quicker. In addition an aerial installer may damage the thatch. 3. Trees should not be encouraged to overhang as the resulting drips and damp environment cause premature wear. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted. Consideration to be given to including this point. 1. Noted. The actions of birds and casual damage is covered in paragraph 2 page 6. 2. Noted. Consideration to be given to including this point. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise the paragraph at the bottom of page 6 to read as follows <i>However research is inconclusive as to whether the moss does more damage by retaining moisture than it does by forming an extra coat on the thatch but water will be shed much quicker if moss is removed.</i> 2. No change. 3. Add a new

				<p>paragraph below the one on moss</p> <p><i>Overhanging trees may create a damp environment causing premature decay and should be regularly cut back.</i></p>
<p>3. East Anglia Master Thatchers Association</p>	<p>Support and comment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The term “fleeking” is used in the document but is normally known as “flecking”. 2. Page 3 para 4.2 (iv), flecking cannot form the base coat for new thatch. 3. Page 10 – 6.1 Ridges, Reed ridges are always block cut. 4. Page 10 - 6.1. Sways are the horizontal fixings for each course of reed, if they are visible it is considered time to rethatch. 5. Page 11 – 6.2 Dormers. The shape of the dormer has nothing to do with the pliability of the material. The sweeping over is due solely to the fact that the extra thickness of the two coats of straw brings the surface level up to the top of the window frame. Should the window be taller, then the sides would need to be thatched in a similar manner to the reed window example. Similarly should the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted. Consider revising the term to <i>flecking</i>. 2. Consider replacing the word <i>base coat</i> with <i>underlay</i>. 3. Consider replacing the word <i>generally</i> with <i>always</i>. 4. Noted. Consider replacing the words <i>or sways</i> to <i>and pattern rods</i>. 5. Noted. Consider removing <i>the pliability of longstraw</i> and from the first paragraph and consider removing <i>as reed is not pliable and cannot be swept over these features</i> from the second paragraph and adding <i>as the height of the window necessitates the sides being thatched too</i>. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replace the term <i>fleeking</i> with <i>flecking</i> throughout the document. 2. Para 4.2 (iv) replace the term <i>basecoat</i> with <i>underlay</i>. 3. Page 10 6.1, replace generally with <i>always</i>. 4. Page 10 6.1. replace <i>or sway</i> with <i>and pattern rods</i>. 5. Revise the first paragraph to read as follows <i>Due to the greater thickness of thatch that is often found on longstraw roofs, features such as dormers can be swept over</i>. Revise

		<p>reed window be smaller or placed lower, then a swept over appearance is achieved.</p> <p>6. Page 16 – Water reed outline specification, item 2, water reed is not cut to length, it is used as is.</p> <p>7. Page 16 – Water reed outline specification, item 3. The distance is depth not length.</p>	<p>6. Noted. Consider removing the words <i>cut to length</i>.</p> <p>7. Noted. Consider replacing <i>length</i> with <i>depth</i>.</p>	<p>the second paragraph to read as follows <i>Dormers in water reed roofs have a more angular appearance as the height of the window necessitates the sides being thatched too.</i></p> <p>6. Page 16 – Water reed outline specification, remove the words <i>cut to length</i>.</p> <p>7. Replace <i>length</i> with <i>depth</i>.</p>
4. Dodson Bros (Thatchers) Ltd	Comment.	<p>To construct a policy the following require explanation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Straw - Where it came from, farm husbandry, variety and imported plants, Enclosure Act, methods of production and storage, draining of the countryside. 2. Indigenous materials from black bog rush to rosebay willow herb. 3. Influences on buildings i.e. Romans, Normans, and Dutch. 4. Tradition of thatch methods, materials and styles. 5. Destruction from fires, thatch 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is covered in part in the draft document and some of the comments are not relevant to a policy document of limited length. Some of the points have been dealt with in thatching documents produced by English Heritage. 2. Not relevant to the draft policy and Included in <i>Thatch, Thatching in England 1790-1940</i> by 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No change. 2. No change. 3. No change. 4. No change. 5. No change. 6. No change. 7. No change. 8. Expand Appendix 1 to include more information of fire prevention or include a separate section. 9. Add address to

		<p>totally banned in whole areas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. How did you arrive at listed buildings? 7. Methods of thatching through the centuries. 8. Methods to save structures. 9. No mention of the EMMTA. 	<p>English Heritage.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Not relevant to this document. 4. Adequately covered in the draft document. 5. Not relevant to this district. 6. Not relevant, the Local Planning Authority does not list buildings. 7. Not relevant to this document. Extensive research has been carried out by English Heritage and published in two volumes <i>Thatch, Thatching in England 1790-1940 and 1949-1994</i>. 8. Noted. Consideration to be given to including a section on fire prevention and or expanding Appendix 1. 9. Noted. Address of the East Midlands Master Thatchers Association to be included in Useful Addresses. 	<p>the list at the back of the document.</p>
4. Roger Scanlon (Thatching Consultant)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cover photo not a good choice due to position of thatcher on right. 2. Background para 4 omit basically and replace <i>but is</i> with <i>that</i>. 3. 4.1.2 replace <i>is normally</i> with <i>will</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted. Replace the photograph. 2. Noted. Consider revising the sentence omitting the word <i>basically</i> and replacing <i>but it</i> with <i>that</i>. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replace the photograph with a more suitable one. 2. Revise para 4 to read as follows,

		<p><i>always be .</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Page 4 para 3, Thatch is one of the lightest roofing materials. Is this true? 5. Page 4 para 4, Does the 12m rule still apply with the Dorset Model? 6. 4.3 page 5 last para, "Dressing" (a method of pushing the material back into place) is common during a ridging and maintenance programme. 7. Page 6 para 6, Who's research? 8. 5.1 Longstraw, omit <i>ordinary</i>. 9. 5.1 Longstraw para 2 add <i>to form</i> and omit brackets to bed. 10. 5.1 Longstraw para 2 replace <i>well soaked</i> with <i>damp</i>. 11. Page 7 line 1, replace <i>loose bundles of straw</i> with <i>suitable working units</i>. 12. Page 7 para 2, replace <i>combed</i> with <i>raked</i>, to avoid confusion with combed wheat reed. 13. Page 7 last para, replace <i>loose</i> with <i>open</i>. 14. 5.2 para 1, last line, omit (<i>or bunches</i>). 15. 5.2 para 2 line 1, revise first line to <i>Little preparation is required on site and involves ...</i> 16. 5.2 para 2 sentence 2, omit normally and replace <i>metal sways (rods)</i> with <i>lateral metal rods (sways)</i>. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Noted. Consider revising the first sentence. to replace <i>normally</i> with <i>will always be</i>. 4. Noted. Does not need clarification. 5. Noted. Does not need further clarification 6. Noted. Consider revising the last paragraph as suggested. 7. Noted. Source English Heritage document. 8. Noted. Consider omitting <i>ordinary</i>. 9. Noted. Consider revising the sentence by adding <i>to form</i> and omitting the brackets. 10. Noted. Consider replacing <i>well soaked</i> with <i>damp</i>. 11. Noted. Consider replacing <i>loose bundles of straw</i> with <i>suitable working units</i>. 12. Noted. Consider replacing <i>combed</i> with <i>raked</i>. 13. Noted. Consider replacing <i>loose</i> with <i>open</i>. 14. Noted. Consider omitting (<i>or bunches</i>). 	<p><i>Combed wheat reed is wheat straw that is prepared and applied</i> Revise 4.1.2 to read as follows, <i>Listed Building Consent will always be required for a change in roof materials,</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. No change. 4. No change. 5. Revise 4.3 page 5 last para to read as follows, <i>However, a dressing (a method of pushing back into place) is common during a ridging and maintenance programme.</i> 6. No change. 7. Omit <i>ordinary</i> from first sentence. 8. Revise 5.1 Longstraw para 2 to read as follows <i>The</i>
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		<p>17. 5.2 para 2, last sentence on page 8, replace <i>In modern times reed thatching practice it is not usual to retain underlying layers of thatch....</i> with <i>In this region it is usually a single layer material with one coat replacing another when worn ...</i></p> <p>18. Page 9 para 1, replace <i>with the exception of the ridge</i> with <i>across the body of the roof</i>.</p> <p>19. Page 9 para 1, last line, replace <i>is made to splay at this point</i> with <i>provides a "kick" from the eaves</i>.</p> <p>20. Page 9 para 2 replace <i>for between 80 and 100 years</i> with <i>in excess of 60 years</i></p> <p>21. 6.2 Dormers, most thatchers call a window that breaks the line of the eaves an eyebrow – to be a dormer the window needs thatch beneath it (i.e, within the slope).</p> <p>22. 6.4 lime mortar does not work well in tension, the tradition would be no fillet at the chimney.</p> <p>23. Appendix 2, item 8, replace <i>shape</i> with <i>contours</i></p> <p>24. Appendix 3, item 2, omit <i>cut to length</i>.</p> <p>25. Appendix 3, item 3, replace <i>length</i> with <i>depth</i>.</p>	<p>15. Noted. Consider revising to <i>Little preparation is required on site and involves ...</i></p> <p>16. Noted. Consider omitting normally and replace <i>metal sways (rods)</i> with <i>lateral metal rods (sways)</i>.</p> <p>17. Noted. Consider replacing <i>In modern times reed thatching practice it is not usual to retain underlying layers of thatch....</i> with <i>In this region it is usually a single layer material with one coat replacing another when worn ...</i></p> <p>18. Noted. Consider replacing <i>with the exception of the ridge</i> with <i>across the body of the roof</i>.</p> <p>19. Noted. Consider replacing <i>is made to splay at this point</i> with <i>provides a "kick" from the eaves</i>.</p> <p>20. Noted. Consider replacing <i>for between 80 and 100 years</i> with <i>in excess of 60 years</i>,</p> <p>21. Noted. Any type of window that breaks the</p>	<p><i>straw is laid on the ground in layers o form a bed without regard to the alignment of the stems.</i></p> <p>9. Longstraw para 2 by replacing the word <i>well soaked</i> with <i>damp</i>.</p> <p>10. Revise page 7 line 1 by replacing <i>loose bundles of straw</i> with <i>suitable working units</i>.</p> <p>11. Revise page 7 para 2, replace <i>combed</i> with <i>raked</i>.</p> <p>12. Revise page 7 last para, replace <i>loose</i> with <i>open</i>.</p> <p>13. Revise 5.2 to omit (or bunches).</p> <p>14. Revise 5,2 para 2 line 1 to read as follows <i>Little preparation is required on site and involves ...</i></p>
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			<p>eaves is considered to be a dormer.</p> <p>22. Noted. Lime mortar has been used historically and is less intrusive than a modern alternative such as lead.</p> <p>23. Noted. Consider replacing <i>shape</i> with <i>contours</i>.</p> <p>24. Noted. Consider omitting <i>cut to length</i>.</p> <p>25. Noted. Consider replacing <i>length</i> with <i>depth</i>.</p>	<p>15. Revise 5.2 para 2 sentence 2, to read as follows...<i>and are fixed directly to the timber structure of the roof with lateral metal rods (sways) and iron hooks hammered into the rafters.</i></p> <p>16. Revise 5.2 para 2, last sentence on page 8, to read as follows <i>In modern times reed thatching practice it is not usual to retain underlying layers of thatch.... with In this region it is usually a single layer material with one coat replacing another when worn (so there is unlikely to be any underlying historic thatch retained).</i></p>
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| | | | | <p>17. Revise page 9 para 1 by replacing <i>with the exception of the ridge</i> with <i>across the body of the roof</i>.</p> <p>18. Revise page 9 para 1, last line to read as follows replacing <i>is made to splay at this point</i> with <i>which provides a "kick" from the eaves</i>.</p> <p>19. Revise page 9 para 3 to read as follows <i>...in excess of 60 years,</i></p> <p>20. No change.</p> <p>21. No change.</p> <p>22. Appendix 2, item 8 replace <i>shape</i> with <i>contours</i>.</p> <p>23. Appendix 3 item 3, replace <i>length</i> with <i>depth</i>.</p> |
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