

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Sustainability, Planning and Climate Change
Portfolio Holder

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AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Operational Services) / Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

PAPWORTH EVERARD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND PROPOSED BOUNDARY

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for the adoption of the Papworth Everard Conservation Area Appraisal including an extension of the existing Conservation Area.
2. This is not a key decision because the Conservation Area Appraisal and revised boundary will only directly affect the community living or working in one ward.

Recommendations

3. That the Portfolio Holder agrees that the Conservation Area Appraisal including the revised boundary should be adopted, with officers given delegated responsibility to make any minor typographical or formatting corrections required before publication.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The responses to the consultation on the draft Appraisal and revised boundary generally supported the extension of the existing Conservation Area, but highlighted the need for further appraisal work on the Papworth Hospital site and requested a number of clarifications and changes.
5. The further appraisal work has been carried out and the clarifications and many of the changes requested have been made. The revised Appraisal is considered to be a balanced and robust document that takes into account the varied views of the public and local stakeholders, and is aligned with national and local policy and guidance.

Background

6. The Government expects local authorities to regularly review conservation areas and their boundaries, and produce conservation area appraisals which describe the areas' character, appearance and significance and give recommendations for their conservation and enhancement.
7. The Council's programme for conservation area appraisals is now concentrating on Minor Rural Centres such as Papworth Everard that are a focus for new development. Papworth Everard was also chosen as a priority for an appraisal because of the Council's Local Development Framework policy (Policy SP/10 of the Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document) which says that a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be prepared for the Papworth West Central area. Much of this area, which includes Church Lane and an area to the west side of Ermine Street, lies within the proposed Papworth Conservation Area boundary. The policy proposes a mix of community, employment and residential uses to support the

continued invigoration of the village centre, through the development of a number of sites in the West Central area.

8. The Conservation Area Appraisal and West Central area SPD were to be prepared together, and a series of meetings were held with local stakeholders including landowners and the Parish Council to facilitate this. In view of some of the concerns being raised by stakeholders as draft proposals were emerging, and the significant implications of the Appraisal for the SPD, it was decided to progress the Appraisal through to conclusion before taking the draft SPD further.
9. A public consultation draft of the Appraisal including a revised boundary was prepared and considered at the Planning Portfolio Holder meeting on 13 July 2010. The report on the Appraisal gave background on conservation areas, the reasons for undertaking the Papworth Everard Appraisal including the review of the boundary, and the rationale of the draft document. The Portfolio Holder:
 - (a) Agreed that the draft Papworth Everard Conservation Area Appraisal which contained the proposed new conservation area boundary should be issued for consultation.
 - (b) Gave authority to the Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities) to make minor amendments to the above document and modify its presentation.
10. The public consultation draft of the Papworth Everard Conservation Appraisal, which contains the revised boundary is **Appendix A**.

Public consultation

11. The public consultation ran from 6 September to 18 October and included:
 - (a) Full information on the Council's website
 - (b) Articles in *News and Views*, the Papworth Everard Community Newsletter
 - (c) Leaflets distributed to properties within the proposed Conservation Area boundary
 - (d) Exhibitions at Papworth Library and South Cambridgeshire Hall
 - (e) A public meeting at Papworth Library on 21 September
 - (f) Consultation emails and letters sent to local Councillors and public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders
12. 10 consultation comments were received from: 4 members of the public, the Parish Council, County Council, Varrier-Jones Foundation and Papworth Trust, Papworth Hospital NHS Trust, Natural England and English Heritage. (These are given in **Appendix B**.)
13. The Parish Council and members of the public generally supported the Appraisal and expanded Conservation Area, with the Parish Council and some members of the public arguing for further expansion of the Conservation Area. **Appendix C** is the Conservation Area map sent by the Parish Council, which shows the extra areas that they would have liked included.
14. The Papworth Hospital NHS Trust said that there should be a more comprehensive evaluation of buildings on the Hospital site. The Varrier-Jones Foundation and Papworth Trust raised concerns over the usefulness and timing of the document and argued that the condition and future viability of buildings should have been considered.

15. English Heritage's comments were generally supportive of the approach taken by the Appraisal and the proposed boundary but suggested that more work should be done on the evaluation of Hospital buildings and different types of designation of buildings, and that more information could be included on the Appraisal Map.

Further stakeholder consultation

16. Following the public consultation, some stakeholders asked to follow up the comments they had made. As a result, all local stakeholders were given the opportunity to discuss the Appraisal and give additional views. This further engagement took the form of meetings, correspondence and phone calls, and involved the Papworth Trust, Varrier-Jones Foundation, Papworth Hospital NHS Trust, Parish Council and County Council.
17. Those who had responded to the public consultation were told about this further stakeholder consultation and that a report to the Portfolio Holder on the Appraisal would be delayed, and were sent a copy of the public consultation responses.
18. Stakeholders who gave views at this stage generally sought to emphasise and enlarge on the comments they had made during the public consultation and provide extra information. The Varrier-Jones Foundation challenged the value of some buildings identified in the Appraisal as having local interest, and promoted an approach to accept the loss of buildings which had outlived their original purpose with lost heritage recognised through other means. The Parish Council, on the other hand, supported the selection of buildings of local interest in the document and wanted the positive townscape contribution of one recognised. The Parish Council provided detailed information on a number of buildings in order to aid understanding of their importance and make the Appraisal more accurate.

Revisions to the Conservation Area Appraisal following the consultations

19. Appendix B records the comments made in the public consultation, along with the officer responses and the resulting revisions to the Appraisal. Main points which were raised during the consultation, officer views and revisions to the Appraisal are summarised here.

- (a) More landscapes and the wider setting of the conservation area should be included in the boundary:

Conservation areas are not primarily intended as a way of protecting landscapes, and natural areas and open spaces can be better covered by other designations. The revised Appraisal Map now includes the Papworth Wood SSSI and Protected Village Amenity Areas.

Conservation areas should generally be limited to the immediate settings of, say, groups of historic buildings. This is in line with English Heritage guidance. No change has been made to the boundary, but important views from outside the Conservation Area have been included.

- (b) Baron's Way should be included in the Conservation Area:

Baron's Way is part of the Village Settlement and could be included in the Conservation Area for that reason. However, its 1950s date makes it later than the Village Settlement houses on Ermine Street south, which have important sponsor plaques and greater significance. Conservation areas have to be strictly drawn to justify their designation and the extra controls and workload they bring. No change has been made to the boundary.

- (c) There should be a more comprehensive assessment of the Papworth Hospital site that includes the significance and contribution of all the buildings:

The public consultation draft of the Appraisal focused on the major and clearly historic buildings on the Hospital site. However, further appraisal work is justified and has been carried out with the help of Papworth Hospital NHS and its agent. The results are included in the revised document.

- (d) Additional features should be added to the Appraisal Map:

It was suggested that a number of additional features should be added to the Appraisal Map. National and local designations, an important public open space and additional important views have been added. Other features, such as poor boundary treatments, are highlighted in the text and photographs.

- (e) The Appraisal should be clearer on the nature and implications of heritage significance, designated and non-designated assets, and on the positive, negative or other contribution of buildings to the Conservation Area:

The Appraisal contains more information on the nature and implications of significance, local interest and townscape contribution, and is tied more closely to *PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment*. The local or national interest of buildings is identified, as is their positive, neutral or negative townscape contribution.

The revised Appraisal does not suggest that any local interest buildings will be put forward for national listing. Such a step would only be taken in consultation with stakeholders and the local community.

- (f) Some individual buildings should not be identified as having local interest:

We believe that the selection of buildings is justified by their architectural, and often historic, interest. It is supported by an analysis of important periods and themes, which give a coherent rationale for selection. An upfront evaluation of significance can give helpful direction, and such an evaluation of heritage assets would anyway be required to support a planning, listed building consent or conservation area consent application. No change has been made to buildings identified as having local interest apart from on the Hospital site.

- (g) The Appraisal does not pay sufficient regard to the condition and viability of buildings:

The Appraisal focuses on identifying the significance and townscape contribution of the historic buildings and other parts of the heritage that the Area contains. Factors such as condition and viability will be fully assessed and taken account of when proposals and planning applications come

forward, in line with the criteria set out in PPS 5. This approach and process is in line with national policy and guidance.

- (h) The Appraisal should give more direction on the design of development for individual sites:

The Appraisal sets out the context into which new development which affects the Conservation Area should fit, but more specific design principles will be given through other documents such as the proposed Papworth Everard West Central SPD and at pre-application and application stages.

- (i) The Appraisal is too late as major change has already led to the loss of much of the character of the area:

It is accepted that Papworth Everard has had major change, however, many of the Estate and Village Settlement houses have not been greatly altered, largely because of their ownership by the Trust. The area has retained sufficient architectural, and particularly historic, character to merit designation.

- (j) The Appraisal is too optimistic about its influence and what can be achieved:

The Appraisal aims to raise the profile of the area and highlight what makes it special. It seeks positive management and change through local pride, persuasion, advice and other support, and planning controls. It is considered to be realistic and in line with national policy and guidance.

- 20. The revised version of the Appraisal, which has been produced following the consultation and is recommended for adoption by the Portfolio Holder, is Appendix D.

Further stakeholder involvement and the preparation of the West Central SPD

- 21. As the Appraisal has been nearing conclusion, a stakeholder meeting was arranged to brief stakeholders on the proposed revisions to the Appraisal and give them a final chance to raise any issues. The meeting also discussed how work on the draft SPD will now be progressed, with the Appraisal providing a conservation framework for it. It is envisaged that following partnership working with stakeholders, a consultation draft SPD will be considered by the Northstowe and New Communities Portfolio Holder before the end of the year, with a view to carrying out consultation at the beginning of 2012 and adoption in spring 2012.

Options

- 22. Options available are to:
 - (a) Accept the recommendations of this report
 - (b) Accept a range of other changes to the Appraisal and proposed boundary such as those which are suggested in the consultation responses but have not been acted on, making decisions between conflicting comments and aiming to produce a coherent approach
 - (c) Not take forward the Appraisal or changes to the Conservation Area boundary

Implications

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| 23. Financial | Within existing budgets. |
| Legal | None. |
| Staffing | Staffing will be required to carry out the additional planning and other work needed to implement the controls and recommendations given by the Appraisal and revised boundary. This will be accommodated within existing resources. |
| Risk Management | No significant risks on the basis that national policy and guidance and due process are being followed. |
| Equality and Diversity | The Appraisal deals with the conservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area and is not concerned with land use issues that will impact on Equal Opportunities. |
| Climate Change | The Appraisal supports sustainable development and the retention and use of existing buildings. |

Consultations

24. Prior to and after public consultation, there was internal consultation on drafts of the Appraisal. A local stakeholder group was consulted informally on an earlier draft of part of the Appraisal and has been briefed and given the opportunity to raise issues about the proposed revisions.
25. The public consultation exercise on the Appraisal and proposed boundary is described in this report along with further engagement with local stakeholders.

Consultation with Children and Young People

26. Children and Young People had the opportunity to respond to the public consultation, but were not specifically targeted.

Effect on Strategic Aims

26. 27. The Conservation Area Appraisal will contribute to the Council's strategic aims and approaches including to making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live and shows a commitment to providing a voice for rural life.

Conclusions / Summary

28. A number of changes proposed in consultation responses have been accepted including the need for further evaluation of buildings on the Papworth Hospital site. Others changes have not been accepted for the reasons given.
29. This report requests that the revised Conservation Area Appraisal, including the proposed boundary, should be adopted by the Planning Portfolio Holder.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment
- PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide
- Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, English Heritage (2006)
- Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, English Heritage (2006)

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Appendixes

1. Appendix A: Public Consultation Draft of the Papworth Everard Conservation Area Appraisal
2. Appendix B: Schedule of comments received – Papworth Everard Conservation Area Appraisal public consultation
3. Appendix C: Conservation Area map with addition of proposed areas for enlargement sent by the Parish Council
4. Appendix D: Revised Papworth Everard Conservation Area Appraisal (for adoption)