

South Cambridgeshire Hall  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridge  
CB3 6EA

t: 08450 450 500  
f: 01954 713149  
dx: DX 729500 Cambridge 15  
minicom: 01480 376743  
[www.scambs.gov.uk](http://www.scambs.gov.uk)



13 April 2004

To: Chairman – Councillor SJ Agnew  
Vice-Chairman – Councillor NN Cathcart  
Members of the Conservation Advisory Group – Councillors Mrs MP Course,  
Dr JA Heap, Dr JPR Orme, JA Quinlan, RGR Smith, RJ Turner and  
AW Wyatt MBE  
and to Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Conservation Portfolio Holder)

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **CONSERVATION ADVISORY GROUP**, which will be held in **COMMITTEE ROOM 1** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **WEDNESDAY, 21 APRIL 2004** at **2.00 p.m.**

Yours faithfully  
**GJ HARLOCK**  
Finance and Resources Director

---

## AGENDA

## PAGES

### PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**  
Members need only declare an interest in circumstances where there is an item on the agenda that may cause a conflict of interests.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** 1 - 4  
To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2004 as a correct record.

### ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION

4. **Monument Management Programme 2004/05** 5 - 16
5. **Proposed Pilot Scheme: Community Archaeological projects - 2004/05** 17 - 22
6. **Linear Sites: Archaeology Projects - Improving Access and Interpretation on Fleam Dyke 2004/05** 23 - 28
7. **Conservation Award Scheme 2004/05** 29 - 32  
For decision.
8. **Unlocking the Potential of the Rural Urban Fringe** 33 - 38

**VERBAL REPORTS AND REPORTS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE AT  
THE MEETING**

- 9. Trees and Hedgerow Partnership Scheme 2004/05 and 2005/2006**
- 10. Consultation on the Proposed High Hedges Procedure (Part 8 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)**
- 11. Buildings at Risk Report 2004-05**

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group held on  
Wednesday, 10 March 2004

PRESENT: Councillor SJ Agnew – Chairman  
Councillor NN Cathcart – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Mrs MP Course Dr JA Heap  
Dr JPR Orme RJ Turner  
AW Wyatt MBE

Councillors Mrs JM Healey (Chairman, Development and Conservation Control Committee) and Mrs DSK Spink (Portfolio Holder for Conservation) attended the meeting by invitation.

Councillors RGR Smith and JH Stewart (Vice-Chairman, Development and Conservation Control Committee) sent apologies for absence.

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors NN Cathcart, Mrs MP Course and AW Wyatt declared personal interests in Minute no. 7 (Heritage Initiative Fund support for the Farmland Museum Development Fund) as Trustees of the Museum. Councillor SJ Agnew declared a personal interest in Minute no. 6 (Review of Operational Plan for Conservation) in view of his involvement with the Green Belt Project.

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Conservation Advisory Group authorised the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2004.

Members noted that in Recommendation (2) of Minute 4 (Wildlife Enhancement Scheme), the words "...and schools about..." had been struck through. This had been an error, and no deletion had been intended. The Recommendation was reaffirmed as stating, "... (2) subsequently to inform local conservation groups and schools about the potential availability of the WES grants...".

**3. PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH THE WOODLAND TRUST**

Liz McLelland, Regional Development Officer) and Tom Curtis (Woodland Manager) with the Woodland Trust, attended the meeting and gave a Powerpoint presentation to Members on a range of project initiatives.

Accepting that land in South Cambridgeshire had a high commercial value, the Regional Development Officer clarified the Trust's aim of developing a 150-acre woodland by saying that it was exploring a number of options other than outright purchase, including a variety of partnership arrangements with local landowners, and contact with schools, possibly through local authorities.

Members raised the following issues:

- schools should be approached individually with a view to encouraging children to engage with the natural environment, whether or not in possession of a tree pack issued by the Woodland Trust
- a larger number of smaller community woods, which were clearly appreciated by

local people, might be more appropriate so long as the ecological benefits, cohesiveness and sustainability of a single larger woodland area could be replicated

- the implications of set-aside land in establishing woodland and wildlife corridors connecting different woods, and the benefits of developing working relationships with organisations such as the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- there might be scope, in due course, for the Woodland Trust to become involved in establishing wooded buffer zones in areas such as Northstowe and the Cambridge Southern Fringe
- the appropriate management of woodlands
- financial implications and the potential, in the future, to seek individual sponsorship of small parts of woodland to help defray the cost of maintenance

The Chairman thanked Liz McLelland and Tom Curtis for attending the meeting.

The Conservation Advisory Group endorsed the Woodland Trust's range of new initiatives, set out in the report from the Conservation Manager, and

**RECOMMENDED** that the Portfolio Holder for Conservation authorise development of the full range of projects to secure enhancement of tree coverage in South Cambridgeshire, reporting progress back to the Advisory Group as projects were developed.

#### 4. **ST DENIS CHURCH, EAST HATLEY - PUBLIC QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

A series of public questions had been submitted for presentation to the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 11th March 2004. These questions all related to the future use of St. Denis Church, East Hatley and, in view of the matter's importance and urgency, the Chairman agreed to accept this item onto the agenda as a late item.

Members received copies of the questions, and the Chairman highlighted the amount of work undertaken by the Conservation Manager in addressing this particular issue. The Conservation Manager summarised the questions, referring in particular to numbers 5 and 15. Members commended his responses to the questions as being very fair and unbiased, and stressed that any realistic solution would rely on there being serious involvement by the local community.

The Chairman of Development and Conservation Control Committee reminded Members that the future of St. Denis Church was the ultimate responsibility of the Portfolio Holder for Conservation and the Cabinet. The role of Scrutiny Committee should simply be to satisfy itself that the District Council was using its best endeavours to secure the most appropriate future use for St. Denis Church, East Hatley.

#### 5. **FARDELL'S LANE RESERVE - VILLAGE GREENSPACE ELSWORTH - PILOT SCHEME**

The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer and Ecology Officer gave a joint presentation to Members, who also had before them a report from the Conservation Manager.

Copies of Elsworth Parish Council's document entitled Fardell's Lane Reserve: Draft Management Plan – December 2003 were circulated at the meeting.

The Vice-Chairman said that caution was needed to ensure that this important site did not

become over-managed.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) that the Portfolio Holder for Conservation authorise adoption of the Fardell's Lane Reserve Draft Management Plan - December 2003 as the basis for development of the Elsworth Village Greenspace; and
- (2) that, subsequent to final completion of the legal transfer of the site to Elsworth Parish Council, funding of up to £5,000 from the Heritage Initiative Fund be made available to the Parish Council to support the implementation of the Management Plan.

## 6. REVIEW OF OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR CONSERVATION

The Conservation Manager presented a report to which was appended a document entitled *Conservation Service: Draft Operational Plan – Revised February 2004*, which reflected the Council's Corporate Objectives and Priorities.

The Portfolio Holder for Conservation commended the draft, especially in relation to its demonstration of the breadth of work undertaken by the Conservation Section and the clarity with which it highlighted the ways in which that Section sought to further the Corporate Objectives in partnership with outside organisations.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Portfolio Holder for Conservation endorse the Operational Plan for the Conservation Section and authorise its publication as the Council's programme for preservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environments for the period up to April 2005, in accordance with the Council's Objectives and Priorities.

## 7. HERITAGE INITIATIVE FUND SUPPORT FOR THE FARMLAND MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT PLAN - 2004-2005

The Conservation Manager presented a report that summarised applications for continued financial support for local museums and the proposed funding for Museum Grants in 2004-05, presented to Cabinet on 4th March 2004. Members also considered whether or not to recommend continued financial support for the development programme at the Farmland Museum in 2004-05.

At the request of the Chairman, the Conservation Manager undertook to explore the possibility of arranging a site visit for Members.

The Conservation Advisory Group accepted the option, set out in paragraph 23(a) of the report from the Conservation Manager, to continue support for the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey's development programme and **RECOMMENDED** that the Portfolio Holder for Conservation agree to allocate a sum of up to £10,000 from the Heritage Initiative Fund, to enable the implementation of the next phase of the Farmland Museum's development programme in 2004-05, subject to Conditions set out in the report.

## 8. GREAT SHELFORD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT - ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

The Conservation Advisory Group **NOTED** the results of consultation and the decision by Cabinet to adopt the Great Shelford Village Design Statement – February 2004 as

Supplementary Planning Guidance, supporting policies HG15, EM7, EM12, TP7, TP9, RT2, RT8 RT9, EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

**9. CAM CATCHMENT SUSTAINABLE FARMING PILOT PROJECT - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Council's Ecology Officer gave a Powerpoint presentation to Members about progress made during the first four months of the one-year pilot Cam Catchment Sustainable Farming Project. The Conservation Advisory Group **NOTED** the position, and asked that the Portfolio Holder for Conservation invite the Project Coordinator to a future meeting in order to highlight the pilot scheme's conclusions and achievements, which could then form the basis of consideration of this Council's further support for the Scheme.

Members felt that it would also be useful to receive a presentation at a future meeting from someone well versed in the details of the Common Agricultural Policy.

**10. ITEMS FOR THE CONSERVATION ADVISORY GROUP MEETING ON 21ST APRIL 2004**

The Conservation Advisory Group **NOTED** a provisional list of items for the next meeting. This related to

- Community Archaeological Schemes
- Monument Management Project in South Cambridgeshire 2004-05
- Trees and Hedge Partnership
- Regional Woodland Strategy
- Ecclesiastical Exemption
- Conservation Awards 2004-2005 – Criteria for natural heritage awards
- Linear sites project
- Local biodiversity Project Guide

---

**The Meeting ended at 4.35 p.m.**

---

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**REPORT TO:** Conservation Advisory Group 21<sup>st</sup> April 2004  
Leader & Conservation Portfolio  
Holder

**AUTHOR/S:** Conservation Manager

---

**MONUMENT MANAGEMENT PROJECT - 2004/05**Purpose

1. To advise members of the progress of the Monument Management Project (MMP) and seek support for proposed new initiatives within 2004/05.

*Stephen Macaulay, Project Manager Cambridgeshire Archaeology (Cambridgeshire County Council) will make a presentation on this project.*

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The Monument Management Project (MMP) has at its core the need to protect, preserve and promote some of the Counties most important ancient monuments, many of which are of not only national but international importance. This requires the highest quality of professional advice and work and through this allows these monuments to be widely accessible to the people of the district and Cambridgeshire.

The project meets both county council and South Cambridgeshire District Council's objectives by :

- Delivering high quality services on ancient monuments of National Importance.
- Improving access and interpretation to local communities.
- Contributing to sustainability by ensuring that these monuments are protected and preserved for future generations both for archaeology and where appropriate their nature conservation value. (A number of the sites are both Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Sites of Special Scientific Importance).
- Creating an effective partnership project between Cambridgeshire County Council, English Heritage and South Cambridgeshire District Council as well as a focus for joint working with parish councils and local communities.

3. The MMP contributes to the achievement of the 2004/05 Annual Priorities by :
  - Improving the delivery of services aimed at improving access to the countryside.
  - Contributing to the establishment of effective management procedures for historic sites within and around the growth areas.

### Background

4. ***MMP aims***

SCDC have worked in conjunction with Cambridgeshire County Council and English Heritage on the Monument Management Project (MMP) since 1992. The MMP aims to both preserve sensitive archaeological sites and enhance their interpretation and public access. In addition, the project offers free advice, recommendations and general input for all archaeological sites and monuments to the public and owners throughout South Cambridgeshire. The success of the project is such that English Heritage now propose its extension to facilitate continued beneficial management of important monuments until 2006.
5. Cambridgeshire County Council have appointed a full time Countryside Archaeological Advisor (Adrian Scruby) who started in January 2004. In future he will report on the progress of the MMP, although Stephen Macaulay will still be involved in archaeology grants in relation to outreach and public programmes.
6. The project is financed by a package of grants from English Heritage, *matched* by funding from Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. SCDC contributed £3,000 to the MMP in 2003/4 from the Archaeology Grants budget, within the Conservation Portfolio. During 2003/04 the Council also supported individual projects from the Heritage Initiatives Fund, notably the successful Archaeology Training Project held at Fulbourn during August/September 2003.
7. At present a total of 22 individual sites are entered into the MMP scheme across the County (with a further 5 Pocket Parks owned by the Cambridgeshire County Farms Estate managed for the benefit of the public, archaeology and the environment). The largest number are within South Cambridgeshire, these are outlined below.
8. **Existing sites managed under the Monument Management Project in South Cambridgeshire are:-**
  - (i) **Bartlow Hills, Bartlow**



Managed directly by the county archaeology section. This magnificent site has received on-going scrub management and rabbit control as well as a programme of guided walks, public interpretation and access. The site interpretation board has been vandalised on a number of occasions, most recently in November 2001 and needs to be monitored. Scrub is removed from the mounds annually and the access paths are maintained. The site is located on a number of well-used public footpaths and is regularly used by locals for dog walking etc.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : The owner has signed a renewal of the management agreement this year that will commence for 5 years from 1st April 2004.

(ii) **Motte & Bailey Castle, Castle Camps**

Remains of the largest castle in Cambridgeshire. We are working in conjunction with the local Parish Council and local schools (Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme) on this site. The owner sold Castle Farm itself in 2001, however he has retained ownership of the bailey and deserted village earthworks. Works related to the re-development of Castle Farm have affected the management of the site but have been dealt with by English Heritage. This site has great potential and would benefit from increased visitor use and interpretation (i.e. leaflets). A number of footpaths cross the site and it has de facto public access as a result.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : Sections of the Norman motte are being cleared of scrub in an on-going programme, to aid both preservation and interpretation

(iii) **Medieval Moat, Caxton**

The conservation work is carried out by farm workers at the request of the owners. The site has three moats, of which the southern has been under the main management. Where clearance has occurred a healthy grass cover has been established quite quickly. The site is cut for hay but grazing should be encouraged (again). The site is home to one of the County's largest badger setts.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : conservation work has not progressed as fast or as widespread as first envisaged, consideration to be given to bringing in external contractors to advance the initial clearance works.

(iv) **Deserted Medieval Village, Clopton**

One of the most impressive deserted villages nationally, let alone in Cambridgeshire, as a result it features in a number of National Curriculum texts. New owners bought the site in 2002. The site has been cleared of rubbish and other tipped material.

Agreement has been reached with the owners to allow greater access and school visits throughout the site. The site has a large badger sett that will be protected as part of the scheme. Areas around the villages (including two moated sites) have been cleared of scrub, and rubbish has been removed from the most southerly moat. Animal action (badgers) is a problem on the northern moat. Tree, scrub and animal poaching are being tackled in the MMP scheme. The site has interpretation and is on the Wimpole Way 'ridge' walk.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : The owner has signed a renewal of the management agreement this year that will commence for 5 years from 1st April 2004.

(v) **Round Moat, Fowlmere**

Clearance work continues to keep the moat free and grass is beginning to re-colonise the interior (to great effect) where picnic areas have been laid out. The site is managed with the Parish Council and a great deal of local interest and involvement has developed.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : The owners (Parish Council) have signed a renewal of the management agreement this year which will commence for 5 years from 1st April 2004. In addition a new committee of the Parish Council has been set up to aid the on-going management of the site and aims to work closely with the archaeology section to improve management and promote greater involvement of the local community.

(vi) **Dunmowes manor (aka Zouches Castle), Fulbourn**

This site is now managed by the Archaeology Section, the Local History Society and the Fulbourn Manor Estate (owners) in the MMP. Long term the site has been planned to be grazed by sheep, however this is not feasible at present. The Fulbourn Estate Countryside Stewardship Agreement runs for another 3 years and there will then be a review of the overall management. The AFU Training Excavation has been held at the site in 2001, 2002 and in 2003 (each year part funded by SCDC). This was very successful and has demonstrated excellent preservation of the old manor.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : Implementation and monitoring of the Stewardship scheme; improved interpretation.

(vii) **Mutlow Hill (Fleam Dyke), Gt. Wilbraham**

Bronze Age Barrow, Roman Temple and later re-used as a medieval *meeting place*. The site is open to the public, with a display board, and is on the Fleam Dyke footpath.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : On-going programme of scrub clearance and conservation work on the site by the Green Belt

Team (of the Wildlife Trust) and local volunteers interested in environmental conservation

(viii) **Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, Gt. Wilbraham**

This is the second ploughed site to be removed from arable cultivation under the present MMP scheme. Important Anglo-Saxon cemetery (similar to Barrington and Oakington) that has produced bronze brooches, spear heads and early Saxon artefacts, its removal from cultivation will protect the site for the future.

*Proposed action 2004/05* : Maintenance of the rough grassland and agreement to protect from ploughing; improved interpretation.

(ix) **Roman Road, Worsted Street**

The MMP officer sits on the Roman Road Steering Group and this works closely with the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke in coordinating management and conservation works along the linear route.

*Proposed action 2004/05* : Advice and recommendations have been produced for forthcoming management plans and input into interpretative material (cf Friends of Roman Road & Fleam Dyke LHI grant in 2002). A Guided walk is now planned for the monument in the summer of 2004 (21/07/04) as part of Cambridgeshire Archaeology's public events programme.

(x) **Worts Meadow Medieval Moat and Deserted Medieval Village, Landbeach**

County Farms Pocket Park with guided walks are held each year around the site and the historic village in general. A new Countryside Stewardship Agreement was put in place during 2003/04. This will guide additional conservation work on the moat and will attempt to attract more visitors to the site.

*Proposed action 2004/05* : On-going development of the new stewardship scheme.

(xi) **Giants Hill Medieval Anarchy Castle & Deserted Medieval Village, Rampton.**

County Farms Pocket Park, public events are regularly held at the site. There is now an annual living history weekend (held in June) on the monument staged by the Medieval re-enactment group Regia Anglorum and the Cambridgeshire Archaeology. The event has become very popular and has been extended to run on both Saturday and Sunday with over 1200 visitors coming to the weekend in 2003. In addition a guided walk is held on the site each year that regularly attracts over 50 visitors. The site has

been kept clear of nettles for access and scrub clearance continues.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : Development of the interpretation and access programme; on-going scrub clearance.

(xii) **Car Dyke Roman Canal, Waterbeach**

County Farms Pocket Park. Work continues to remove scrub in conjunction with a wildlife plan to encourage the use of the site as a habitat. Clearance work also allows an improved visual appreciation of the site. A number of school tours were held at the Car Dyke during 2003/04 and a guided walk in the summer attracted over 80 visitors.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : Development of the interpretation and access programme; on-going scrub clearance and habitat enhancement.

(xiii) **Car Dyke, Roman Canal, Cottenham Cambridge Research Park)**

The conservation management plans for the Cambridge Research Park development (on the former site of Landbeach Marina) are to include management of the Car Dyke where it crosses the site.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : On-going development of the conservation plans to include erection of new interpretation boards on the site and liaison.

(xiv) **Moulton Hills, Bourn**

One of a group of three Roman burial mounds. Work includes removal of damaging scrub and rabbit control. Site no longer in the MMP, it has not been very successful, with clearance work not stabilising the site. The surrounding undergrowth and hedges would have needed to be cleared for more effect and there was no grass colonisation. Might need to consider grass seeding, however project not included at present.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : Research project (Community Archaeology Project with LHI support) for 2004-5 to establish the sites origins, which may not necessarily be Roman burial mounds but possibly linked to early medieval metalworking.

(xv) **The Biggen, Duxford**

New agreement in 2001 with the Parish Council. The site is now under beneficial management and is cut annually.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : development of new gate access and interpretation.

(xvi) **Grinnell Hill, Melbourn**

In the MMP since 2002, this is a joint agreement with the Parish Council to manage the last clearly visible barrow on a once much large cemetery on the outskirts of Melbourn.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : On-going management of vegetation, re-establish grass on the slopes; control rabbits and erect marker posts at the base to prevent plough encroachment.

(xvii) **Fleam Dyke (Various Sites)**

Developing from the new Fleam Dyke Steering Group, CCC Archaeology has both direct and indirect management agreements on sections of the Fleam Dyke. All management is in partnership with English Nature and The Wildlife Trust. Two sections have MMP Agreements with the owners (White & Hicks), agents (Wildlife Trust) and Archaeology for scrub management, plough damage prevention, and general conservation improvements (see also Mutlow Hill plus interpretation). In addition sections southeast of the A11 managed by English Nature and The Green Belt Project (Wildlife Trust) are supported by CCC Archaeology.

**Proposed action 2004/05** : On-going conservation and management works. Development of a linked scheme for the Linear Sites to improve access and interpretation on this site.

Considerations

9. **Proposed MMP development work for 2004-5**

In addition to the on-going work outlined for the individual sites above, key elements of the archaeological work on the MMP for 2004/05 in the district are proposed as follows:

- (a) *New sites added.* A number of new sites are currently being considered in South Cambridgeshire for entry into the MMP and/or renewal of existing agreements (5 years standard).
- (b) *On-going Management.* All the sites in the MMP have at least one annual visit, close liaison with owners and all other interested parties, the arrangement of conservation work and general site management, including where appropriate access and interpretation.
- (c) *Advice & information.* Guidance to be provided for existing sites under management, as well as schemes drafted for those that do not have formal agreements.

- (d) *Cottenham Moat project.* A project in conjunction with the developer, parish council and CCC Archaeology is in development for Cottenham Moat and is proposed for formal entry to MMP from April 2004 (delayed from 2003). These will commence in 2004 once English Heritage agrees the programme of works.
- (e) *An updated list of key sites* under threat will be produced and discussed with English Heritage for possible inclusion into the MMP scheme.
- (f) *Guided Walks and Publication.* It was suggested in 2003 that each issue of the South Cambs Magazine should include an article on a site in the MMP and some information on a guided interpretative walk. This would then eventually be compiled into a publication of guided walks around all sites with public access in the MMP. This programme can now be advanced with the appointment of the new Countryside Archaeological Advisor but will need financial support to enable illustrative material to be designed and used for both the South Cambs Magazine and the on site walk guides.

#### Options

10. Support for these initiatives is entirely discretionary, therefore, the Conservation advisory Group are asked to consider the following options :
  - (a) To continue to support the Monument Management Project in 2004/5, and recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder allocates a sum of £3,000 from the Archaeology Grants budget, specifically to support the existing MMP sites and authorises the continued development of partnership initiatives with the county archaeologists to secure the preservation and enhancement of key archaeological sites in South Cambridgeshire, as described in this report.
  - (b) To continue to support the development of wider interpretation and access to the MMP sites by recommending that the Conservation Portfolio Holder, allocates a sum of upto £1,500 from the Conservation Budget 2004/05 to support the design and publication of guided walks for monuments in conjunction with the proposed South Cambs Magazine articles, outlined above.
  - (c) Not to support the funding arrangements for the Monument Management Project in 2004/5 or the development of further partnership initiatives with the county archaeologists, setting out the reasons for this option.

### Financial Implications

11. The Conservation budget for 2004/05 includes an allocation of £3,000 for *Archaeology Grants*. It is proposed that this sum is used specifically to support the existing MMP sites and partnership scheme in 2004/5. The proposed additional allocation of upto £1,500 to support the publication of illustrations and design for the guided walks articles for the South Cambs News can be also funded from the Conservation budget 2004/05.

### Legal Implications

12. None Specific.

### Staffing Implications

13. None specific. The MMP is managed by the county archaeological section with a full time Countryside Advisor in post from January 2004, in consultation with the Conservation Manager.

### Consultations

14. Each site subject to MMP or archaeological intervention is subject to extensive local consultation, initiated by the County and English Heritage, the national statutory body who oversee Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

### Conclusions/Summary

15. The Monument Management Project has been very successful in achieving its objectives of both preserving components of the historic environment and enhancing physical and intellectual access to important archaeological sites. It is hoped that the partnership arrangements will continue to develop in 2004/5 to continue to expand on this success. Reflecting this success is the other partners' commitment to fund a full time Countryside Archaeological Advisor from January 2004.
16. It is, however, clear that a range of initiatives need to be developed to address the potential of the district's vast archaeological heritage. A possible model which may influence future key projects is the Devils Dyke Project which has recently received lottery funding and was developed by a local steering group. Similar steering groups have been formed to promote proactive management for Fleam Dyke and Worsted Street Roman Road. These steering groups include the key statutory bodies (English Heritage, English Nature and Cambridgeshire

County Council) as well as landowners, Friends groups, Parish Councils and representatives of SCDC.

17. The general level of interest in the South Cambridgeshire's archaeology can be gauged by the number of successful public events held throughout the year on important monuments. These include guided walks at: Car Dyke (Waterbeach), Worts Meadow (Landbeach), Giants Hill (Rampton) and Fulbourn Moat (& Training Excavation). Each tour attracted at least 50 visitors. In addition an archaeology day was held in conjunction with Milton Country Park 10th years anniversary celebrations. School talks were held at Car Dyke and Rampton, and several hundred people attended the (now annual) Living History weekend at Giants Hill, Rampton. It is, therefore, considered important that the Conservation Portfolio Holder and Conservation Advisory Group continue to support these initiatives in 2004/5 and monitor their achievements to build on the success of these projects.

#### Recommendations

18. It is recommended that the Conservation Advisory Group :
- (a) resolve to advise the Conservation Portfolio Holder to endorse option 10(a) above, to support the allocation of £3,000 from the Archaeology Grants budget, to contribute to the Monument Management Programme in 2004/5 (as identified in paragraph 8)
  - (b) resolve to advise that the Conservation portfolio Holder endorses Option 10(b) above and authorise an allocation of upto £1,500 from the Conservation Budget to support the further interpretation of the MMP sites via the South Cambs Magazine and guided walk leaflets (as identified above in paragraph 9{f}).
  - (c) Invite the County Archaeologists to present a six month progress report to the Conservation Advisory Group and Portfolio Holder on the on-going Monument Management Programme during 2004/05 (to include developing archaeological initiatives) for consideration and prioritisation for the future development of the project.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: None

**Contact Officer:** Nick Grimshaw - Conservation Manager



Telephone: (01223) 443180

This page is intentionally left blank

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**REPORT TO:** Conservation Advisory Group 21<sup>st</sup> April 2004  
Leader & Conservation Portfolio  
Holder

**AUTHOR/S:** Conservation Manager

---

**PROPOSED PILOT SCHEME : COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECTS  
- 2004/05.**Purpose

1. To seek support for a new pilot initiative within 2004/5 aimed at developing community based archaeology projects within South Cambridgeshire.

*Stephen Macaulay, Project Manager, Cambridgeshire Archaeology (Cambridgeshire County Council) will make a presentation on this item.*

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The project proposal seeks to both instigate and provide the support to allow communities to develop archaeology projects throughout South Cambridgeshire. It will allow non-professionals to develop and maintain an interest in their local heritage and provide a template to develop similar projects. The project meets both the county council and South Cambridgeshire District Council's objectives by :
  - Delivering high quality services on historic sites and landscapes and provision to local communities.
  - Improving countryside access and interpretation to local communities.
  - Contributing to sustainability by ensuring that local communities become involved in understanding, protecting and maintaining their heritage.
  - Delivering substantial partnership projects, directly involving Cambridgeshire County Council, English Heritage, English Nature, the Beds & Cambs Wildlife Trust. Importantly the Local Heritage Initiative have been involved in similar projects (Thriplow, Fulbourn, Bourn and Boxworth) and will be approached to be involved as a partner in most future schemes.
3. The project will contribute to meeting the Annual Priorities for 2004/05 by :

- Improving access to countryside and heritage services.
- Contributing to the understanding of local heritage and the establishment of effective management procedures for historic sites within and around the growth areas.

### Background

4. Members will be aware that the concept of supporting 'Community Archaeology Projects' evolved after the successful AFU archaeological training project which was held at Fulbourn in August/September 2003. Officers have, therefore, examined possible ways of supporting parish initiatives based on examples of similar successful projects notably supported by grant aid from the Local Heritage Initiative and the County's Archaeological Field Unit. Examples of these within South Cambridgeshire (all with LHI support) include :
- Thriplow Archaeological Society – parish survey project (this is developing into other possible projects in Melbourn and Babraham)
  - Fulbourn Village History Society - parish survey.
  - Bourn Society - research and investigations into the Moutlon Hills, Roman Barrows
  - Boxworth project – an ambitious site investigation including excavation, currently in development. (see paragraph 5 below).

Outside of South Cambridgeshire similar community archaeology projects are underway in Sutton (Sutton Conservation Society), and at Thorney.

5. *The Boxworth Project 2004-5 (Example of large project)*  
This ambitious project has been led by a local amateur (who attended the AFU Training Excavation). The project aims to study and record the redundant village green and carry out an excavation of its Roman and Medieval remains. Part of the site was featured on the Time Team's Big Dig Project last year. The project team will be led by locals and comprise villagers, supported on site by professional archaeologists who will act as supervisors to ensure the final archaeological record is correctly compiled. The project will involve the local schools, local workshops, research into the villages history and a festival and exhibition planned at the end.

The total project costs have been calculated at £40,000. A grant from the LHI has already agreed to pay a grant of £25,000 with the residual £15,000 to be met by local sponsorship and volunteer labour.

6. The purpose of the proposed pilot scheme for Community Archaeology Projects in 2004/05 is, therefore, to help other villages within the district to develop archaeology projects and thereby generate an interest and involvement in local heritage. Understanding local history is considered to be particularly relevant to the district at a time of impending substantial new growth.

It is also noted that the modern development of the more commercial nature of archaeological investigation has resulted in less opportunities for this type of amateur, local involvement in interpreting parish history. Support for such an initiative would also link with existing partners (County/HLF/EH) who also seek to develop this area and commit to supporting local communities in the County.

#### Considerations

7. The proposed *Community Archaeology Projects- 2004/05* would be an initial one year pilot scheme, funded from the Heritage Initiative Fund. It will be evident that the existing fund is already designed to allow for the support of such projects. However, it is considered that identifying a specific funding source and promoting a specific scheme via the South Cambs. Magazine and by working with the county archaeological field unit that greater access and interest will be generated in the development of such local initiatives.
8. It is not intended that the pilot scheme would solely fund local projects, rather that it would contribute to a package of funding and help secure more substantial funds (such as from the HLF) where required. The emphasis would, however, be on those projects which can be undertaken and delivered by local community groups and consequently will tend to remain small scale.
9. The scheme would be directly managed by the Archaeological Field Unit, reporting via the Conservation Manager to CAG and the Portfolio Holder. Support for individual project proposals would be based on submission of 'Project Design' which will demonstrate their *validity* as a contribution to local history knowledge and *viability* as a project capable of being delivered by the local group.
10. The proposed *Community Archaeology Projects-2004/05* pilot scheme is, therefore, designed to :

- Provide support, advice and expertise for the development of community archaeological investigation proposals.
- Approach communities with proposals linked to local heritage.
- Provide advice on securing HLF and other partnership funding (including via the County Council) for projects.
- Provide financial support to act as partnership funding to lever major grant funding where necessary.
- Provide financial and technical support for the production of interpretative material etc. linked to the projects.

11. It is suggested that, where possible, schemes which might be supported under the banner of the *Community Archaeology Projects-2004/05*, should also help facilitate other local initiatives which contribute to enhanced access to the countryside. These might include Village Greenspace projects.

Given the on-going development of the scheme at Boxworth it is suggested that the local group might be invited to submit a project design to seek support via the proposed *Community Archaeology Projects-2004/05*. It is understood that in this instance grant support might a display board of the village's history and project after the excavation.

#### Options

12. Support for this initiative is entirely discretionary, therefore, the Conservation Advisory Group are asked to consider the following options :
- (a) To support the development of a pilot project to develop Community Archaeology Projects in 2004/5, and recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder allocates a sum of £5,000 from the Heritage Initiatives Fund to support the development of individual projects during the financial year, subject to approval of individual project design (to include evidence of partnership funding).
  - (b) Not to support the development of a specific pilot project to develop Community Archaeology Projects in 2004/5, rather to recommend that consideration is given to support individual projects from the Heritage Initiatives Fund, as and when they arise.

- (c) Not to support the development of Community Archaeological Projects, rather to recommend that the Heritage Initiative Fund is used for other purposes.

#### Financial Implications

13. The proposed project funding of £5,000 to support the pilot scheme could be allocated from the Heritage Initiatives Fund in 2004/05. It is recommended that a contribution of upto £2,000 is made available to support individual projects and consequently it is considered that a maximum of 3 schemes per annum could be supported within the pilot year (2004/05).

#### Legal Implications

14. None Specific

#### Staffing Implications

15. None specific. The AFU (Contracts section of Cambridgeshire Archaeology) have the recognised expertise and experience within its Outreach and Design teams for this undertaking and have a dedicated Outreach Officer, as well as excavation staff.

#### Consultations

16. Each project will have a different range of objectives and aims which will be defined in the 'Project Design', which will be subject to consideration and approval by the Conservation Portfolio Holder and CAG. Specific consultation will depend on the nature of the project.

#### Conclusions/Summary

17. This proposed project aims to build on the success of other archaeological partnership projects with the County Archaeologists, such as the Fulbourn Training Excavation, Car Dyke Project and Milton Landfill site, as well as the Local Heritage Initiative schemes at Fulbourn, Bourn and Boxworth. It will also provide a platform for a much broader range of projects where local communities can become directly involved in their understanding and interpreting their heritage.

Recommendations

18. It is recommended that the Conservation Advisory Group :
- (a) resolve to advise the Conservation Portfolio Holder to endorse option 12(a) above, to support the development of a pilot project to develop Community Archaeology Projects in 2004/5, and recommend that a sum of £5,000 is allocated from the Heritage Initiatives Fund to support the development of individual projects during the financial year, subject to approval of individual project design (to include evidence of partnership funding).
  - (b) request that the County Archaeologists are invited to present a six-monthly progress report to the Conservation Portfolio Holder and Conservation Advisory Group on the development of Community Archaeology Projects to enable consideration of effectiveness and future direction.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: None

**Contact Officer:** Nick Grimshaw - Conservation Manager Telephone: (01223) 443180

Stephen Macaulay – Project Manager, Cambridgeshire  
Archaeology, (Cambridgeshire County Council)



**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**REPORT TO:** Conservation Advisory Group                      21<sup>st</sup> April 2004  
Leader & Conservation Portfolio  
Holder

**AUTHOR/S:** Conservation Manager

---

**LINEAR SITES ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT – IMPROVING ACCESS & INTERPREATION ON FLEAM DYKE 2004/05.**Purpose

1. To support proposed new initiatives within 2004/05 for improving access and interpretation on the Fleam Dyke, one of the 'Linear Sites'.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The project aims to improve the access and on-site interpretation of the Fleam Dyke, an Anglo-Saxon dyke of national importance. The project meets both Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Councils objectives by :
  - Delivering high quality services on ancient monuments of National Importance.
  - Improving access and interpretation to local communities.
  - Contributing to sustainability by ensuring that the monument is protected and preserved for future generations both for archaeology and its nature conservation value. The monument is both a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Creating an effective partnership project between the SCDC and Cambridgeshire County Council, English Heritage, English Nature, the Beds & Cambs Wildlife Trust, Friends of Roman Road & Fleam Dyke.
3. The project contributes to meeting the Annual priorities for 2004/05 by improving access to the countryside and local heritage.

Background

4. Originally the Fleam Dyke (and Roman Road) were two of the three Cambridgeshire Linear Sites (the third being Devils Dyke in East Cambs). This project was part of a large HLF grant application to improve the management, protection, conservation and access and interpretation of these nationally important archaeological and wildlife sites. Unfortunately, the HLF were reluctant to award a very large single grant for all three sites and only the Devils Dyke (to date) has received a HLF funding support. However the bodies involved in all three sites

have continued to support the management and conservation of these important monuments and sought other grant aid. This included a successful LHI grant being made to the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke in 2002 to support works and interpretation of the Roman Road).

5. Members will be aware that as part of SCDC's support for the development of the original initiative, funding was allocated in the Heritage Initiative Fund under the Linear Sites Project. Members subsequently agreed to re-focus the residual funding (c£13,000) to contribute to securing the fabric and interpretation of Fleam Dyke, subject to consideration of individual projects, as and when they are developed. The revised Linear Sites Project is, therefore, to develop schemes that complement projects being supported by other agencies working on the Fleam Dyke including : Cambridgeshire County Council; English Heritage; English Nature; the Beds & Cambs Wildlife Trust; The Friends of Roman Road & Fleam Dyke. In addition all owners, tenants, local societies and other interested parties are included in consultations. The project outlined below is the latest phase of the SCDC initiative.

Considerations

6. The revised South Cambridgeshire Linear Sites proposal is to focus SCDC funds solely for the purpose of improving access and interpretation. Other partners have contributed resources to protect and conserve the monument, however, no funds have been available for the broader issues of public access and understanding. All English Heritage and English Nature funding is required to be spent on physical fabric conservation requirements, support from the Conservation Portfolio will, therefore, focus resources on much needed access and interpretation improvements. The project components are outlined below and have been developed by identifying the areas where there is currently no specific provision.

7. ***Improving Interpretation :***

<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Research and Design 4 x A1 Interpretation Boards (AFU)	£4,400
Production of 4 x A1 Interpretation Boards (Shelly Signs@£765 each)	£3,060
Design Leaflet (to accompany board)	£ 600
Print 5,000 Leaflets (Victoires)	£ 700
Information to be accessible via the Web.	£ 200
<b>Total Interpretation Costs</b>	<b>£8,960</b>

*NOTE: There is an economy of scale and the graphics and illustrations necessary for the interpretation boards can then be used at little cost to produce leaflets and on CCC, SCDC and other websites.*

8. *Improving Access*

<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Erecting (No.1) new ladder steps	£1,000
Signposts (No. 10)	£2,000
<b>Total Access improvement Costs</b>	<b>£3,000</b>

## 9. Partnership Funding:

<b>Partnership Funding</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
English Heritage & Cambridgeshire County Council (2003 to 2007)	£10,000
English Nature 2003/04	£10,266
English Nature 2004/05 (proposed)	£11,000
Beds & Cambs Wildlife Trust & Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke (via grant aid Awards for All)	£ 5,000
<b>Total Partnership Funding</b>	<b>£36,266</b>

Options

10. Support for these initiatives is entirely discretionary therefore the Conservation advisory Group are asked to consider the following options :

(a) To continue to support the Linear Sites Project in 2004/5, and recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder allocates a sum of upto £11,960 from the Heritage Initiatives Fund, specifically to support the interpretation and access improvements on the Fleam Dyke to secure the preservation and enhancement of this key archaeological site in South Cambridgeshire, as described in this report.

(b) To continue to support the development of wider conservation and enhancement works on the Fleam Dyke by recommending that the Conservation Portfolio Holder authorises development of complementary projects with partnership agencies.

(c) Not to support the development of further partnership initiatives within 2004/05, setting out the reasons for this option. All other partnership funding would continue, however these resources would be entirely allocated to conservation requirements

Financial Implications

11. The identified total costs £11,960 (Improving the Interpretation-£8,960 and the Improvement for access at £3,000) can be met from the existing allocation for Linear Sites Projects in the Heritage Initiatives Fund. The SCDC funding will be matched by significant partnership funding.

Legal Implications

12. None Specific.

Staffing Implications

13. None specific. The AFU (Contracts section of Cambridgeshire Archaeology) have the recognised expertise and experience within its Outreach and Design teams to manage the project implementation. The project will be developed in liaison with the Conservation Manager. The AFU have undertaken an almost identical scheme for the Devils Dyke Lottery Project.

Consultations

14. Each site subject to MMP or archaeological intervention is subject to extensive local consultation initiated by the County and English Heritage the national statutory body who oversee Scheduled Ancient Monuments. In addition the project will be carried out with full consultation of the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke, English Nature and the Wildlife Trust. SCDC Consultation will be via the Conservation Manager.

Conclusions/Summary

15. SCDC has experienced great success in archaeological outreach projects, including the Monument Management Project and other individual partnerships projects such as the Fulbourn Training Excavation, Car Dyke Project and Milton Landfill site scheme.
16. It is, however, clear that, given the extent of the district's vast archaeological heritage initiatives need to be developed and prioritised. The Fleam Dyke is not only one of the key archaeological sites in the district but it also contributes to meeting countryside access Community Strategy. It is, therefore, a major target for Conservation action. However, given the complexity and scale of the site, this requires an innovative approach to target and utilise resources effectively. A model which may influence future key projects is the Devils Dyke Project, which has recently received major lottery funding and was developed by a local steering group. This current proposal seeks to mirror aspects of the management and implementation of the East Cambs project to secure improved interpretation and access for the Fleam Dyke.

Recommendations

17. It is recommended that the Conservation Advisory Group :
- a. continue to support the Linear Sites Project in 2004/5, and recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder allocates a sum of upto £11,960 from the existing budget for Linear Sites in the Heritage Initiatives Fund, specifically to support the interpretation and access improvements on the Fleam Dyke to secure the

preservation and enhancement of this key archaeological site in South Cambridgeshire, as described in this report.

- b. continue to support the development of wider conservation and enhancement works on the Fleam Dyke by recommending that the Conservation Portfolio Holder authorises development and monitoring of complementary projects with partnership agencies.
- c. request that the County Archaeologists present a progress report to the Conservation Portfolio Advisory Group and Conservation Portfolio Holder on the development of the Linear Sites Project before the end of 2004/05 to facilitate consideration of future support.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: None

**Contact Officer:** Nick Grimshaw – Conservation Manager Telephone: (01223) 443180

Stephen Macaulay – Project Manager – Cambridgeshire Archaeology (Cambridgeshire County Council)

This page is intentionally left blank

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**REPORT TO:** Conservation Advisory Group                      21<sup>st</sup> April 2004  
Leader & Conservation Portfolio  
Holder

**AUTHOR/S:** Conservation Manager

---

**CONSERVATION AWARDS 2004/05 – NATURAL HERITAGE**Purpose

1. To seek members guidance on the establishment of Conservation Award scheme for 2004/05 focusing in the Natural Heritage, agree a programme for launch of the initiative and seek authority from the Conservation Portfolio Holder to allocate resources to support its implementation.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The proposed Natural Heritage award scheme will contribute to meeting the Council's objectives by :
  - encouraging the best practice in the delivery of countryside access and enhancement services
  - recognising and celebrating schemes which enhance village life.
  - Contributing to meeting sustainability by enhancing biodiversity and landscape quality.
  - Facilitate partnership initiatives.
3. The proposed Natural Heritage award scheme will contribute to meeting the Council's annual priorities for 2004/05 by establishing best practice exemplars which can be used to create an effective approach to the development of the major growth sites.

Background

4. The Conservation Award scheme is designed to recognise, celebrate and encourage best practice which meets the Council's Conservation objectives. Given the breadth of the agenda (which includes both the built and natural heritage) the award scheme is proposed to alternate between years, to enable appropriate focus on the two main areas of achievement. Members will be aware that the *Conservation Award* scheme was re-launched in 2003/04 to help recognise positive efforts by parishes, developers and private individuals in securing the preservation, enhancement and

management of both built heritage. The proposed Coinservation Awards for 2004/05 will focus on the Natural heritage and will be a recognition of excellence in all aspects of conservation work relating to the natural environment.

### Considerations

5. It is proposed to launch the Natural Heritage award scheme for 2004/05. Members views are invited on the appropriateness of the proposed assessment criteria and award categories. The following are considered to be the broad headings under which awards for Natural Heritage Conservation excellence might be considered :
  - (a) Achievement in landscape design and management. *Large scale schemes.*
  - (b) Achievement in woodland management. *Large scale schemes.*
  - (c) Achievement in enhancement of biodiversity – large scale.
  - (d) Achievement in enhancement of biodiversity - small scale.
  - (e) Achievement in countryside access and interpretation improvement.
6. It is proposed that all projects are assessed against their contribution towards meeting the Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the forthcoming South Cambridgeshire Local Biodiversity Policy, as well as the actions in the Community Strategy relating to countryside access improvements.
7. Awards would be given for schemes which would be able to clearly demonstrate fulfilment of specific actions and targets within the species and habitat plans. In addition consideration would also be given to;
  - Use of own initiative/origin of the project.
  - Site accessibility.
  - Co-ordination of resources.
  - After-use and follow-up work
  - Value for money
  - Diversity of habitats
  - Interest to the general public.
8. The following are considered fundamental to the success of the project.
  - High profile press launch (including article in South Cambs Magazine) describing the scheme and setting out the timetable.



- Production of a well designed plaque or plate for erection on site (estimated cost £100 per plaque) as well as framed certificates (total cost £100).
  - Judging/shortlisting panel to comprise CAG members.
  - Site visits held late September to visit the recommended sites
  - Funding for an award ceremony. Afternoon?
9. Projects that have received grant should be eligible for consideration. Projects undertaken within the last five years should be considered within the scheme, as some is required for the larger schemes to mature or develop interest.
10. If members and the Portfolio Holder wish to proceed then it is proposed to have a press launch for the Natural Heritage award scheme early in June 2003 (after the elections on June 10th) with applications to be submitted by the end of August. Site visits could then take place in September and a award ceremony in October to coincide with future CAG meetings.

#### Options

11. The Conservation Advisory Group are asked to consider the following options :
- (a) To support the launch of the Natural Heritage Conservation Award scheme in 2004/05 specifying criteria for consideration/classification of entries.
  - (b) To postpone development of the award scheme until a future date.

#### Financial Implications

11. Financial resources will be required to administer the scheme, produce an appropriate commemorative site plaque and to finance the award ceremony. The scheme would have to be managed in-house using existing resources. It is anticipated that the total cost of the award scheme will not exceed £1,500 and can be met from existing resources in the Conservation budget.

#### Legal Implications

12. None specific.

#### Staffing Implications

13. None specific.

Consultations

14. None specific

Conclusions/Summary

15. The award scheme would help promote the Council's Conservation objectives and encourage excellence. However, it is potentially a significant additional project and need to be properly resourced and planned, lessons on timing and promotion of the ceremony will be learnt from the 2003/04 awards.

Recommendations

16. It is recommended that the Conservation Advisory Group resolve to :
- (a) support the launch of the Natural Heritage Conservation Award scheme in 2004/05, specifying criteria for consideration/classification of entries for approval by the Conservation Portfolio Holder.
  - (b) advise that the Conservation Portfolio Holder authorises appropriate funding from the Conservation Portfolio budget to support the production of commemorative plaques and the funding of the award ceremony.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: None

**Contact Officer:** Nick Grimshaw - Conservation Manager  
Telephone: (01223) 443180

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

---

**REPORT TO:** Conservation Advisory Group                      21<sup>st</sup> April 2004  
Leader and Conservation Portfolio  
Holder

**AUTHOR/S:** Conservation Manager

---

**UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF THE RURAL URBAN FRINGE**Purpose

1. To consider the consultation document, "Unlocking the Potential of the rural urban fringe" and its relevance to South Cambridgeshire.  
*(extracts will be circulated at the meeting)*

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The development of a vision for the rural urban fringe in South Cambridgeshire will make significant contribution to several of the Corporate Objectives by securing:-
  - Greater accessibility to the countryside as this is integral to the overall vision.
  - Multifunctional, enhanced landscapes adjacent to residential areas benefiting health, biodiversity and landscape character thereby improving the quality of village and town life.
  - Sustainable forms of landscape
  - Integrated working between the Countryside Agency, Groundwork, Local Authorities and local groups addressing partnership objectives.
3. It will have a significant impact on the 2004/05 Annual Priorities by helping develop effective approach to the landscape development in the growth areas and at Northstowe.

Background

4. The Countryside Agency and Groundwork in conjunction with other Authorities and local groups have been working towards developing a better use of land immediately adjacent to towns and cities for several years. The Countryside Agency was established by an Act of Parliament to provide rural expertise. Groundwork was established in 1981 as a vehicle to involve local communities in neglected land, including the urban rural fringe in creating practical sustainable landscape regeneration. Groundwork is supported by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and is a strategic partner in delivering Sustainable Communities Programmes.

5. To address the Governments Urban and Rural White Paper and Sustainable Communities plans requirements, the Countryside Agency and Groundwork have formally joined forces to promote a new strategic approach. This will include a coordinated approach to developing well managed and accessible countryside, within everyone's reach, and where local farmers and landowners can take advantage of the urban needs for leisure, food and environmental services.

6. ***The Vision***

The Countryside Agency and Groundwork are promoting a *vision* of the rural urban fringe as one of a :

*“ rural urban fringe that is attractive, accessible, diverse and multi-functional. It serves the needs of both urban and rural communities, strengthens the links between town and country, and contributes fully towards sustainable development”.*

Such a vision is considered to be of particular relevance to South Cambridgeshire given the nature of the district and its impending substantial growth. These areas are important in creating and enhancing the setting of the city and the villages within the South Cambridgeshire landscape.

7. At the national level various on going schemes, including Community Forests, illustrate the possible achievements from long-term, integrated planning for landscaping these rural urban fringes. In the South Cambridgeshire context the proposed initiatives by the Woodland Trust, National Trust and the Cambridgeshire Preservation Society, as well as the major settlement developments will all contribute to an evolving urban-rural fringe. It is, therefore, considered that development of a coordinated vision for South Cambridgeshire, to form the basis of a landscape strategy focused on the rural-urban fringe will be of benefit to the evolution of the district.
8. Current government housing density guidance and developmental needs within Cambridgeshire, and specifically with regard to Northstowe, the Eastern and Southern Fringe developments, further emphasise the local importance and significance of these peripheral city areas for :
  - The health and well being of both existing and future residents.
  - The overall setting of the developments.
  - The replacement of the landscape lost due to development.

The suggested Countryside agency/Groundwork vision also accords with the environmental objectives of the recently adopted Community Strategy which focuses on improving access to the countryside and sustainability.

Considerations

9. The draft Countryside Agency/Groundwork vision statement illustrates many potential benefits of developing such a strategic approach. These include a means to focus local action and thereby :
- Promote greater countryside accessibility with new footpaths and cycle ways, through new and improved parks, woodlands and green spaces.
  - Improve and reinstate many natural landscape features.
  - Create accessible, safe and attractive open areas for relaxation and leisure activities, improving 'well being'.
  - Creating gateways to the countryside and to the town, ensuring that fringe areas, often neglected in development, are designed to complement and enhance the local character.
  - Providing educational areas for many facets of life on the doorstep.
  - Increasing sustainability with the multi use areas, such as natural drainage swales and ponds being used both as a wildlife resources and flood risk management.
  - Enabling and encouraging local farmers to supply local produce directly.
  - Enabling communities to develop through their involvement in the creation and management of these areas.
  - Improving the biodiversity, air and water qualities.
10. The approach recommended is the creation of new partnerships between the Countryside Agency, Groundwork, the local authorities and the landowners to indicate a method to encourage more diverse use of these peripheral areas. If adopted the proposed approach would assist the local authority in moving towards the development of a more holistic landscape strategy. This is necessary as the rural urban fringe often falls outside the remit of planning applications, master plans, and current planning legislation. The more holistic approach would enable a bringing together of the broad range of individual initiatives under coordinated strategy.
11. The Consultation exercise asks members to consider the draft Countryside Agency/Groundwork's draft vision in the form of a series of questions, the key points of which are summarised below with suggested responses :
1. Do you consider a renewed focus and a push for coordinated action on the rural fringe to be, low, medium or high priority?  
*Suggested response : Given the nature of the district and the development proposed in the area such a strategy is considered to be a high priority.*

2. Does the vision capture the potential of the rural urban fringe and provide a way forward?  
*Suggested response : Yes, but it needs to be adapted to suit South Cambs.*
3. Would an urban rural fringe toolkit be a worthwhile resource?  
*Suggested response : Yes, provision of a best practice guidance note by the Countryside Agency/Groundwork for use by the authority which indicates tools and techniques and offers local solutions would be very useful and would help guide the development of a local strategy.*
4. Are there other forms of support that would help in the urban rural fringe?  
*Suggested response : Yes, a coordinated approach to funding regimes.*
5. Do existing policies and regulations need to change to enable the vision to be realised?  
*Suggested response : Yes, increasing access to central resources for landscape development, including planting schemes.*
6. Would we wish to deliver this through free standing Area Action Plans or through existing plans and strategies?  
*Suggested response : Development of specific Action Area plans, tied into the Local Development Framework would appear to be the most effective form of coordinating delivery.*
7. This will require action at local, sub regional and regional level, how can this be coordinated?  
*Suggested response : The Countryside Agency/Groundwork should prepare the essential toolkit and policy guidance which could then be adapted by individual authorities to address individual requirements/conditions.*

#### Options

11. The Conservation Advisory Group are asked to consider the following options :
  - (a) To support the proposed Countryside Agency/Groundwork vision and recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder supports the drafting of a 'stand alone' Rural Fringe Area Action Plan to be developed as a integral part of the Local Development Framework.
  - (b) To support the proposed Countryside Agency/Groundwork vision proposals, and recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder supports the drafting of guidance toolkit for local

authorities to be subsequently adapted to the South Cambridgeshire rural/urban fringe requirements within the Authorities Area Action Plans

- (c) To support the proposed Countryside Agency/Groundwork vision and request that the Conservation Portfolio Holder supports the development of coordinated action for the district's rural urban fringe.
- (d) To recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder does not support these proposals as others are satisfactorily addressing the issues.

#### Financial Implications

- 12. This cannot be currently quantified, but it is envisaged that in the long-term support would be required from both central government and the local authority, particularly with regard to the long-term maintenance of these areas. However, the first priority must be to attempt to coordinate development of an appropriate local vision and strategy which can be then used to bid for appropriate resources.

#### Legal Implications

- 13. None specific

#### Staffing Implications

- 14. None specific. The Landscape Design Officer would be available to work with the partnership to develop the local vision and strategy.

#### Consultations

- 15. There are consultations currently being undertaken by the Countryside Agency/Groundwork partnership with a wide range of groups. There would be more detailed local consultation as any individual project evolves

#### Conclusions/Summary

- 16. Countryside Agency and Groundwork currently do not propose to create new rural urban fringe policies but to provide a 'toolkit' to assist the policy framework at the local level. This would involve providing guidance for Regional Spatial Strategies, Local Development Frameworks, and Area Action Plans and encouraging their implementation on the ground through planning obligations, interim land use agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships and Community Strategy actions.
- 17. Whilst the draft vision cannot provide a solution to all the issues, it reflects much of the current governmental guidance on multi

functional use of land, sustainability, health and well being, whilst providing interesting landscapes, in which to address biodiversity and accessible recreational needs. The proposed development of such a vision at the local level, utilising the proposed toolkit of best practice is therefore considered to be of particular relevance to South Cambridgeshire.

### Recommendations

18. That the Conservation Advisory Group express support for the preparation by the Countryside Agency/Groundwork of a rural urban fringe vision and 'toolkit' and recommend that :
  - (a) the Conservation Portfolio Holder supports the drafting of a 'stand alone' Rural Fringe Area Action Plan for South Cambridgeshire, to be developed as a integral part of the Local Development Framework.
  - (b) the Conservation Portfolio Holder authorises a response to the consultation exercise supporting these draft proposals as set out in paragraph 11 above.
  - (c) The Conservation Portfolio Holder authorises development of enhanced rural urban fringe proposals in partnership with the Countryside Agency/Groundwork and appropriate agencies for the benefit of the district, reporting back to the Conservation Advisory Group as projects are developed.

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

- Unlocking the potential of the rural urban fringe.- A consultation by the Countryside Agency and Groundwork.
- Groundwork 2004
- Groundwork Yearbook 2003

**Contact Officer:** Lesley Dickinson – Landscape Design Officer  
Telephone: (01223) 443188