

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group held on
Wednesday, 26 April 2006 at 10.00am

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

Councillors:	RF Bryant	Mrs A Elsby
	R Hall	Mrs CA Hunt
	Dr JPR Orme	EJ Pateman
	Mrs DSK Spink MBE	Dr JR Williamson
	NIC Wright	

and Councillor Mrs JM Healey (Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder),

Councillor SGM Kindersley was in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Mrs P Corney, Mrs S Doggett, JH Stewart and R Turner sent Apologies for Absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In connection with Minute no. 6 (Teversham Conservation Area Design Guidance), Councillor Mrs CA Hunt declared a personal interest by virtue of being a member of Teversham Parish Council and of being acquainted with each of the respondents referred to individually in the Appendix attached to the report. She also declared a personal interest by virtue of owning the former shop referred to at Point 2 of the representation from the owner of 1 Thulborn Close, Teversham.

3. MINUTES - 8 MARCH 2006

The Conservation Advisory Group authorised the Chairman to sign, as an accurate record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2006.

4. THATCH AND THATCHING IN SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise for the Draft Council Policy on Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire.

The Conservation and Design Manager distributed a list of additional consultation responses received subsequent to publication of the agenda, and copies of a leaflet entitled *Fire in Thatch*, published by the National Society of Master Thatchers Ltd. Public opinion had been positive.

Members discussed what advice the Council should give in relation to the use of log burners, and in the context of buildings insurance. They agreed that the Council should write to owners of thatched buildings, highlighting the safety issues identified by the National Society of Master Thatchers, and include an article on the subject in the next edition of the *South Cambs Magazine*.

In response to a Member's question, the Conservation and Design Manager undertook to establish the likely cost of producing the Council's guidance document.

The Vice-Chairman urged officers to promote and encourage the sourcing of appropriate thatching materials locally.

The Chairman noted with gratitude the degree of officer time spent on addressing this issue.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** 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 Appendix attached to the report as supplemented by the further responses distributed at the meeting.

5. **BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY**

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of public consultation on the draft South Cambridgeshire District Council Biodiversity Strategy.

The Ecology Officer distributed an addendum to the Appendix, containing significant, responses to consultation, received subsequent to dispatch of the agenda. Members noted that the comments from Cambridgeshire County Council's Environment and Policy Service were based on new guidance from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, issued during the consultation period. They agreed that, as a result, the Ecology Officer would need to liaise further with partner organisations in order to revise the draft Strategy, if such revision was made necessary by the new guidance. The Chairman regretted the delay this would cause, but it was essential that the final document reflected the aspirations of the District Council, including protection of those smaller parcels of land which, argued DEFRA, did not warrant such protection.

The Conservation Advisory Group agreed that it would be useful if example Planning Conditions relating to biodiversity could be publicised on the Council's website.

Members supported the Ecology Officer's suggestion that wording be added to the Strategy so as to state that, on all major housing developments, 50% of dwellings should have features such as a bird, bat, or insect box provided in close association with the property and that, on all other sites, suitable provision should be negotiated. The Ecology Officer said that, in some cases, this might result in a greater provision of biodiversity features.

The Conservation Advisory Group **DEFERRED** making a recommendation to the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder, and instructed officers to present a revised draft of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Biodiversity Strategy to a future meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group incorporating additional amendments and revisions as agreed during the consideration of this matter at the current meeting.

6. **TEVERSHAM CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE (INCORPORATING CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS)**

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise relating to the Teversham Conservation Area Design Guidance (incorporating a Character Appraisal and Management Proposals).

Members supported officers' recommendations in connection with the representation from Teversham Parish Council.

Members supported officers' recommendation in connection with the representation from the owner of no. 8 High Street, Teversham, namely that no change should be made to the draft Guidance as far as it affected that property.

Members supported officers' recommendations in connection with the representation from the owner of no. 1 Thulborn Close, Teversham, namely that no change should be made to the draft Guidance as far as it affected that property.

Members supported officers' recommendation in connection with the representation from the owner of no. 10 Church Street, Teversham, namely that no change should be made to the draft Guidance as far as it affected that property.

The Chairman thanked the Conservation Area and Design Officer for his efforts in dealing with this matter.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder uses her delegated powers to confirm the revised boundaries for the Teversham Conservation Area, and presents the draft Design Guidance to Cabinet to seek its adoption as Council Policy, subject to the incorporation of the changes outlined in the Appendix attached to the report.

7. BAITS BITE LOCK CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE (INCORPORATING CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS)

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise relating to the proposed revised Baits Bite Lock Conservation Area, together with the draft Conservation Area Design Guidance incorporating a Character Appraisal and Management Proposals.

Councillor Mrs CA Hunt reported that Horningsea Parish Council had welcomed the proposed revisions.

The Chairman thanked the Conservation Area and Design Officer for his efforts in dealing with this matter.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder uses her delegated powers to approve the revised boundaries for the Baits Bite Lock Conservation Area and presents the Design Guidance to Cabinet to seek its adoption as Council Policy.

8. SWAVESEY CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE (INCORPORATING CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS)

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise relating to the Swavesey Conservation Area Design Guidance (incorporating a Character Appraisal and Management Proposals).

The Chairman thanked the Conservation Area and Design Officer for his efforts in dealing with this matter.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder uses her delegated powers to confirm the revised boundaries for the Swavesey Conservation Area and presents the draft Design Guidance to Cabinet to seek its adoption as Council Policy (incorporating the changes outlined in the appendix attached to the report).

9. SOUTH CAMBS. NATURAL HERITAGE AWARDS 2006/07

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on proposals for the South Cambridgeshire Natural Heritage Awards scheme for 2006-07.

The Chairman encouraged all Members of the Council to promote the scheme locally, and to assist in identifying potential candidates for awards.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder confirms the launch of the 2006-07 Natural Heritage Awards, in line with the criteria and timetable set out in paragraphs 6 and 8 of the report.

10. PROPOSED CAMBRIDGESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY PARTNERSHIP

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report suggesting that South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council enter into a Service Level Agreement to create a countywide archaeology partnership supporting specific archaeology work.

Those present discussed the possible resource implications for the District Council, and the anticipated role of developers. There was a general feeling that, as Cambridgeshire County Council was statutorily responsible for archaeological matters, it was inappropriate to form an opinion on this issue at this stage, especially in view of the District Council's financial situation post-capping.

Members **DEFERRED** making any recommendation to the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder, and instructed officers to arrange for the County Archaeologist to present a more detailed proposal to the July 2006 Conservation Advisory Group meeting enabling them to explore all options and the implications for budgets from 2007-08 onwards.

11. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Conservation Advisory Group noted that the next meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group would be held on 12 July 2006.

The Meeting ended at 12.35 p.m.
