

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

17 NOVEMBER 2021

CONSERVATION AREA REVIEW UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Members on progress reviewing Laxton, Newark, Ollerton and Southwell Conservation Areas (CAs).

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 At the September 2018 Economic Development Committee the Conservation Team was given delegated authority to proceed with a three year plan to review a number of CAs within the District. The intention was to complete this work by the end of 2021.
- 2.2 The focus of the 3 year review would be delivering boundary reviews of the existing CAs in Edwinstowe, Newark, Ollerton, and Southwell. This process was expanded to include Laxton following an update to the Committee in June 2019. This Committee update also set out anticipated dates for completion of Edwinstowe (October 2019) and Newark (April 2020) with the others to follow in 2021.
- 2.3 In November 2019, this Committee authorised amendments to Edwinstowe CA and agreed the adoption of a CA Appraisal and Management Plan. Newark was subsequently delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Progress was nevertheless made during 2019 and 2020 on reviewing all four of the remaining areas. This included early engagement with stakeholders, site surveys, historic map regression and research. However, progress was fundamentally delayed by the national pandemic, and limitations imposed on our ability to undertake wide-ranging public engagement.
- 2.4 For reference, the power to designate CAs falls under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 'Act'). Section 69 (1) states: "Every local planning authority— (a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and (b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas". The first CAs were designated in 1967 under the Civic Amenities Act and there are now over 9,000 CAs in England. They are designated for their special architectural and historic interest.
- 2.5 The Council also has a legal duty to review existing CAs from time to time in accordance with Section 69(2) of the Act. The special interest of areas designated many years ago may now be so eroded by piecemeal change or by single examples of poorly designed development that parts of the area may no longer have special interest. In such cases, boundary revisions will be needed to exclude them or, in exceptional circumstances, reconsideration of the CA designation as a whole. Conversely, the existing boundary may have been drawn too tightly, omitting areas now considered of special interest such as historic rear plots with archaeological potential, later phases of development (such as more recent housing), or parks, cemeteries and historic green spaces. In such cases the existing boundary may need to be extended.

Laxton

- 2.6 As explained at the June 2019 Committee, the Conservation Team feels strongly that a revision to the boundary at Laxton should allow for the inclusion of the historic field system and the castle site. Both elements are intrinsic to the significance of the existing CA, which is currently tightly drawn around the village only.
- 2.7 Early engagement was offered to Laxton and Moorhouse Parish Council and key local stakeholders. The Conservation Team met with the Parish Council on 30 September this year, and is due to meet with the Leet Court on 25 November. Local residents, including those with an interest in the special farm holdings, have also been engaged in the review process.
- 2.8 Survey work for Laxton is now complete. A draft Appraisal document is included in the background papers. We intend to submit this document alongside a consultation report and questionnaire for public consultation between 7 January and 18 February 2022. A public meeting will also be held within the CA during this period. Subject to the outcomes of that consultation process, we hope to bring a resolution to amend the boundary and adopt the Appraisal document to the March Committee.

Ollerton

- 2.9 Information on the review process was sent to Ward Members and Ollerton Town Council in August 2021. Whilst our offer of a meeting has not yet been taken up, we have used observations given by Ward Members, the Town Council and the Ollerton Village Residents Association in 2019 as a useful starting position, noting concerns about challenging buildings within the CA such as Ollerton Hall, the old garage site on Main Street and the derelict former café on Wellow Road. An additional walkabout was undertaken with Notts County Council heritage team in July this year. This process has been invaluable in gaining local knowledge and understanding what is special about the historic core of old Ollerton. We have also recognised that modern housing areas to Wellow Road (such as Church Walk) feel quite detached from the historic core of the village, and that areas included within the boundary adjacent to the Rufford Road roundabout have changed significantly following the construction of service stations and fast food outlets.
- 2.10 Survey work for Ollerton CA is now complete. A draft Appraisal document is available in the background papers. We intend to submit this document alongside a consultation report and questionnaire for public consultation between 7 January and 18 February 2022. A public meeting will also be held within the CA during this period. Subject to the outcomes of that consultation process, we hope to bring a resolution to amend the boundary and adopt the Appraisal document to the March Committee. In the draft Appraisal, you will note that we are currently proposing removal of a modern housing estate on Wellow Road (Church View) and a small area adjacent to the McDonalds food outlet at the roundabout. We hope to get public comments on these proposals during the formal consultation in January. We anticipate support for the removal of the modern housing estate as this will free up home owners from unnecessary planning applications. However, the roundabout element is something our County conservation colleagues would rather we keep in the boundary to ensure that they continue to have a say on significant planned highway improvements to the junction.

Newark

- 2.11 Early engagement has been undertaken with the Newark Civic Trust, Millgate Society and Notts. Building Preservation Trust, as well as number of enthusiastic members of the public who had attended the launch event in 2018. This has helped direct our appraisal work. Our early thinking on potential changes to the boundary were highlighted in the June 2019 Committee.
- 2.12 Survey work for Newark CA is now complete, but engagement with local stakeholders, including the Town Council and Civic Trust is ongoing and not complete. A walkabout and workshop with both organisations is being offered and will inform the final preferred options. A Saturday morning stand in the Market Place in December is also going to be utilised to promote the review and gain public views on potential boundary changes. Opportunities for engagement with other stakeholders will be offered wherever possible.
- 2.13 A working draft Appraisal document is available in the background papers. We intend to submit an updated version of this document alongside a consultation report and questionnaire for public consultation between 11 February and 25 March 2022. A public meeting will also be held within the CA during this period. Subject to the outcomes of that consultation process, we hope to bring a resolution to amend the boundary and adopt the Appraisal document to the Committee as soon as practicable after 25 March 2022.
- 2.14 We are currently considering proposing several amendments to the existing CA boundary: i) The College Quarter, comprising the College itself, additional areas of Friary Road, part of Sleaford Road, Wellington Road entirely, and part of Beacon Hill Road; ii) Appleton Gate/ Northgate Station Quarter, comprising parts of Appleton Gate from Queen's Road (principally the eastern side of the roadway) to Northgate Station, and parts of George Street, Warburton Street, and Lovers Lane; iii) Magnus School area, limited to the original school building on Earp Avenue, and Hatton Gardens, Winchelsea Avenue and Milner Street (being a composite example of Edwardian planned housing and education); iv) Crown Street (having good 18th and 19th century housing stock considered to contribute to the Mill Gate/Victoria Street area of the town); v) Potential removal of parts of North Gate, including the modern residential and retail development to the north of the Warwick and Richardson complex. We acknowledge that removal of part of North Gate could be perceived as a loss of control on what is otherwise an important gateway into the town.

Southwell

- 2.14 Survey work for Southwell is now complete. Meetings with local organisations such as the Southwell Civic Society and Southwell Community Archaeology Group has been very productive, to the point that our original objective of simply revising the existing Appraisal document (to bring it in line with current planning policies) has been expanded to include consideration of boundary changes. We had already concluded that some tweaks to the boundary were necessary to resolve anomalies where it is inaccurately drawn or confusing around domestic gardens. However, the extensive archaeological investigations undertaken by the local community over the last 10 years and more lead us to conclude that there are several areas worthy of consideration for being included within the existing CA, including for example archaeological sites around Park Farm and Brandreth. Additional special interest has been identified in land to the northeast of Greet Lilly Mill (Station Road), land south of the Westhorpe Dumble (between Cundy Hill and Halloughton Road),

as well as land south of the recreation park (via Memorial Drive) such as the Potwell Dyke Grasslands and the cemetery (in the context of the former manorial deer park). Additional areas within the urban settlement have also been identified, such as traditional 19th century housing stock along Dover Street and Chattam Street, and Edwardian villas along Halam Road.

- 2.15 A working draft Appraisal document is available in the background papers. We intend to submit an updated version of this document alongside a consultation report and questionnaire for public consultation between 11 February and 25 March 2022. A public meeting will also be held within the CA during this period. Subject to the outcomes of that consultation process, we hope to bring a resolution to amend the boundary and adopt the Appraisal document to the Committee as soon as practicable after 25 March 2022.

Next Steps

- 2.16 A workshop with Committee Members and affected local Ward Members has been arranged for 29 November. This will provide a constructive framework in which to provide information on potential boundary changes, and some of the key challenges in managing affected CAs such as heritage at risk and regulatory implications for stakeholders. This process will help inform the final preferred options for boundary changes which shall be submitted to public consultation for 6 weeks, as set out above. Once complete, the Council has a legal duty to pay regard to the submitted comments. The final documents and proposed amended CA boundaries will be taken to the next available Committee after the public consultation has finished.
- 2.17 Boundary review work will continue for Southwell and Newark. Formal public consultation will begin in January for Laxton and Ollerton. Newark and Southwell will follow in February. The Conservation Team will take account of all material consultation responses. Details of the consultation design and outcomes will be published alongside the Appraisal documents.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 That the Members acknowledge the review work undertaken by the Conservation Team since the June 2019 update, and to note the forthcoming milestones for public engagement and approvals.

Conservation Area	Boundary Review Engagement	Final Document Consultation	ED Committee for Approval
Laxton	Complete	7 Jan – 18 Feb 2022	23 rd Mar 2022
Ollerton	Complete	7 Jan – 18 Feb 2022	23 rd Mar 2022
Newark	Ongoing (to be completed by 17 Dec 2021)	11 Feb – 25 Mar 2022	First available date from Apr 2022
Southwell	Ongoing (to be completed by 17 Dec 2021)	11 Feb – 25 Mar 2022	First available date from Apr 2022

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 In carrying out the Council's legal duty under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, there are no specific equalities implications for the District Council when designating or reviewing conservation areas. However, in accordance with the duty to publish management proposals within the affected area, and the benefit of wide ranging public engagement, appropriate consideration will need to be given to consultation strategies, public meetings and access to documents (also in accordance with public expectations for consultation as set out in the Statement of Community Involvement). Consultation reports setting out how the Conservation Team will meet these expectations will be published alongside each Appraisal setting out how, amongst other things, access and equality has been considered.
- 4.2 The CA Review Programme will need to ensure that there is equality of opportunity and that no individuals or groups are disadvantaged or discriminated against because of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, maternity and pregnancy, marriage or civil partnership, age, or social inequality.

5.0 Digital Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct implications for ICT. However, the production of spatial mapping is an essential element of the Appraisal publication, as well as demarcating boundary changes. It is anticipated that GIS support within the Planning Team will be able to manage this workload.

6.0 Financial Implications - FIN21-22/1866

- 6.1 The Conservation Team does not expect there to be any impact on the budget in this case. A new Conservation Officer joined the team in January 2021, increasing the capacity to undertake CA reviews. In addition, the number of planning applications received by the Council is not likely to change significantly as a result of this work. It is possible that increased reporting of enforcement matters may occur; however, it is considered that current provisions exist within the Planning Team to deal with this.

7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

- 7.1 The community engagement on the CA Appraisals accords with the desire to increase participation with the Council and within local communities. It will also align with the objective that seeks to ensure the district continues to be a place where people choose to live, work, invest and spend their recreational time. The positive management of the historic environment will contribute to our well-being and sense of place.

8.0 Comments of Director

- 8.1 It is desirable to maintain a continuous programme of CA reviews, noting the general duty within section 69 of the Act to designate new areas and review past designations. The publication of Appraisal documents contributes to our knowledge, sense of place and promotes pride and well-being within the community.

9.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee note the work undertaken by the Conservation Team and the forthcoming draft proposals for amendments to Laxton, Ollerton, Newark and Southwell Conservation Areas.

Reason for Recommendation

To enable officers to carry out the Council's legal duties in respect of section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Background Papers

Draft Appraisals for Laxton, Ollerton, Newark and Southwell.

For further information please contact Oliver Scott on Ext 5847.

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