

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>		
MEETING/DECISION MAKER:	<b>Cllr. Bob Goodman, Cabinet Member for Development and Neighbourhoods</b> <b>Cllr. Tim Warren, Leader of the Council</b>	
MEETING/DECISION DATE:	<b>On or after 16th March 2018 (for single Member decision)</b>	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	<b>Midsomer Norton and Welton, Saltford and Queen Charlton Conservation Areas - boundaries, character appraisals and management plans</b>	
WARDS:	Midsomer Norton, Welton, Saltford and Compton Dando	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> Annex 1: Midsomer Norton and Welton Conservation Area Appraisal, Management Plan, consultation response log and maps. Annex 2: Saltford Conservation Area Appraisal, Management Plan, consultation response log and maps. Annex 3: Queen Charlton Conservation Area Appraisal, Management Plan, consultation response log and map. Annex 4: Equality Impact Assessment/Equality Analysis Risk Assessment		

## **1 THE ISSUE**

1.1 A conservation area is defined in Section 69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) as an “area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. It is the quality and interest of the area, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in designating a conservation area.

1.2 Section 69 of the Act imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate conservation areas and to review their areas from time to time to consider whether further designation of conservation areas is called for.

- 1.3 It is best practice to prepare a conservation area appraisal to support the designation of a conservation area and there is also a duty placed on the Council to publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of a conservation area.
- 1.4 The conservation areas for Midsomer Norton and Welton, Saltford and Queen Charlton were designated in 2004, 1977 and 1985 respectively. A Conservation Character Appraisal was prepared for Midsomer Norton and Welton in 2004 and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. No such appraisals have been prepared for Saltford or Queen Charlton.
- 1.5 Conservation Area Appraisals form part of the evidence base that inform the preparation and implementation of all planning policy. In light of the work currently being undertaken by the Council in respect of the Joint Spatial Plan, Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans it has been considered that the existing conservation area boundaries should be reviewed and accompanying character appraisals and management plans prepared.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 The Cabinet members are asked to agree, in accordance with the powers contained in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to designate the revised boundaries of the Midsomer Norton and Welton, Saltford and Queen Charlton Conservation Areas as shown in the respective Conservation Area Character Appraisals in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 to this report and that notice of the designations be duly given and advertised in accordance with the provisions of Section 70 of the Act.
- 2.2 The Cabinet members are asked to agree the adoption and publication of the Midsomer Norton and Welton, Saltford and Queen Charlton Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans.

## **3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 3.1 The cost of preparing the proposed boundary, appraisal and management plan and undertaking the public consultation has been funded from relevant existing budgets within Development Management.
- 3.2 There are not considered to be any financial implications related to the decision other than the cost of advertisement as required by the Act and preparation of the graphic presentation of the documents which will be funded from existing budgets.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Section 69 of the Act places a duty that local planning authorities shall "(a) 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.

- 4.2 Section 71 of the Act places a duty on local planning authorities ‘to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.’
- 4.3 Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework states local authorities should be able to justify conservation area designations in terms of their special architectural or historic interest. Conservation character area appraisals are the means by which the special interest can be set out.
- 4.4 There is no statutory requirement to consult prior to the designation or amendment of conservation area boundaries, adoption of Conservation Area Character Appraisals or Management Plans. However, it is good practice to do so and is encouraged by the Council’s Neighbourhood Planning Protocol, adopted in September 2014. Details of the consultation undertaken in this matter are set out in section 8 of this report.

## **5 THE REPORT**

- 5.1 In pursuance of its responsibilities through the duty imposed under Section 69 of the Act, the Council has reviewed the Midsomer Norton and Welton, Saltford and Queen Charlton Conservation Areas by means of desk analysis of historic records, mapping, detailed site survey and analysis of areas.
- 5.2 Character appraisals have been prepared for the areas, and as part of this process the boundaries of the designated areas, last assessed in 2004, 1977 and 1985 respectively have in accordance with best practice, been reviewed.
- 5.3 As a result of the boundary reviews, the existing designated areas have been amended to include additional areas of special historic and architectural interest and to remove those areas which are considered to lack such interest. Since the public consultation it has been acknowledged that the grade II listed dovecote north of Manor Barn, which adjoins Saltford Manor, was incorrectly located on the appraisal maps. This has been corrected and the conservation boundary amended to include the correct building on the final version of the maps attached to this report.
- 5.4 The Council has a duty to ensure that the character of a conservation area is preserved or enhanced, particularly when considering applications for development. In order to do this, it is important to understand what gives the area its distinct and unique character. This is derived from a number of factors including historic development, landscape and topography, the style, type and form of the buildings, spaces between buildings, materials, textures, colours, detailing which can all contribute to the special character of the area.
- 5.5 The appraisals have been prepared to identify these special qualities and to highlight features of particular significance.
- 5.6 By establishing what makes a conservation area special, the reasons for designation should be clearer to those who live, work or propose to carry out

development within them. The appraisals are intended as an overview, providing the framework within which individual planning applications can be assessed.

- 5.7 When determining applications, the planning authority considers factors such as size, scale, materials and design in order to assess the likely impact of the proposed development on the character of the conservation area. The character appraisals have been written to align with local and national planning policies and are reflected in ongoing policy development.
- 5.8 Section 71 of the Act places a duty upon the Council to publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. Conservation Area Management Plans have also been produced to assist in caring for the conservation areas, identify improvement opportunities and to help establish priorities for enhancement or regeneration schemes.
- 5.9 These documents have been prepared to support a clear and consistent approach by the Council in each of the three conservation areas. It is intended that they will be for use by the Council when determining applications and considering the Council's own works in these areas as well as being a point of reference for property owners, developers and agents.

## **6 RATIONALE**

- 6.1 The approach adopted follows the duty imposed under Sections 69 and 71 of the Act and associated best practice guidance published by Historic England.
- 6.2 The proposals and documents supplement Placemaking Plan policy HE1 Historic Environment.

## **7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 7.1 None.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The draft conservation area appraisals, management plans and proposed conservation area boundaries were each the subject of a six week public consultation which ran from 30 May to 8 July 2017 for Midsomer Norton/Welton and Queen Charlton, and 5 June to 14 July 2017 for Saltford.
- 8.2 Certain groups and organisations were specifically informed of the public consultation. For Midsomer Norton and Welton this included the Town Council, the Midsomer Norton Society and Historic England. The Parish Councils for Saltford and Queen Charlton were consulted, and they in turn made other local groups and organisations aware of the consultation.
- 8.3 Further consultation also took place with relevant teams and officers within the Council, and no responses were received. Comments previously received on the initial draft documents, circulated internally, were incorporated in the public consultation versions.

8.4 For each conservation area consultation comprised: posters displayed locally promoting the consultation, display and questionnaire in the local libraries at Midsomer Norton, Saltford and Keynsham; notifications in local press and community magazines, the Council website (which included copies of the appraisal, management plan and an on-line questionnaire), and locally held drop-in public events attended by relevant council officers. The events attracted 21 visitors at Midsomer Norton Town Hall, 35 visitors at St Marys Church Hall Saltford and 22 visitors at Queen Charlton Village Hall. Hard copies of the documents were also made available at Midsomer Norton Town Hall and the council offices at Lewis House in Bath.

#### 8.5 Public response

8.6 The responses to each of the three consultations and subsequent amendments to the documents are set out in full detail in annexes 1 to 3.

8.7 The key responses received related to:

#### Midsomer Norton and Welton

Support was received from the Town Council with particular suggestions for adding further areas to the boundary, which have largely been included.

Other respondents were generally supportive and a range of suggestions were received, some of which have resulted in changes to the final version of the appraisal. The key issues raised were:

- Changes to the conservation area boundary – general support, but several objections to the proposed removal of the 1960's Somervale School which remains as removed due to its lack of positive contribution to character.
- Ensuring that the 'satellite' area around the former railway station is linked with the rest of the conservation area which has been addressed.
- Further suggestions for inclusion of 'eyesore' buildings that are considered to detract from character which have been included.

#### Saltford

Full support was received from the Parish Council. Other respondents were generally supportive and a range of comments and suggestions were received, some of which have resulted in changes to the final version of the appraisal. The key issues raised were:

- Suggested extension of the conservation area further to the east along Mead Lane. This has not been included as it fails to meet the recognised criteria for conservation area designation.

- Some reservations about the proposed enhancement treatment for The Shallows which have been acknowledged.

### Queen Charlton

Full support was received from the Parish Council. Other respondents were generally supportive and a range of comments and suggestions were received, some of which have resulted in changes to the final version of the appraisal. The key issues raised were:

- Extending the conservation area boundary to include parts of the surrounding landscape. The boundary has not been further extended as this would not meet the recognised designation criteria, but the text has been strengthened to emphasise the value and importance of the surrounding landscape setting.
- Concern at possible future pressure for large-scale housing development proposals in close proximity to the village, which is already recognised in the appraisal.
- Traffic volumes, speed and management measures which are already addressed in the appraisal.

8.8 The council's Monitoring Officer and Section 151 officer have been given the opportunity to review this report.

## **9 RISK MANAGEMENT**

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

<b>Contact person</b>	<i>John Davey 01225 477675</i>
<b>Background papers</b>	<b>Annex 1:</b> <b>Midsomer Norton and Welton Conservation Area Appraisal, Conservation Area Management Plan, Consultation Response Log and maps.</b> <b>Annex 2:</b> <b>Saltford Conservation Area Appraisal, Conservation Area Management Plan, Consultation Response Log and maps.</b> <b>Annex 3:</b> <b>Queen Charlton Conservation Area Appraisal, Conservation Area Management Plan, Consultation Response Log and map.</b> <b>Annex 4: Equality Impact Assessment/Equality Analysis Risk Assessment</b>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an</b>	

## alternative format

SMD report 10 01 18