

Executive

COTTISFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL: CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION DRAFT AND APPROVAL OF FINAL APPRAISAL

11 May 2009

Report of Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

Local Authorities have a duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to review Conservation Areas from time to time.

This report is public

A copy of the Appraisal document is circulated separately with the agenda

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- 1) To resolve, under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to approve the Cottisford Conservation Area appraisal and to extend the boundary with immediate effect

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the comments received on the draft appraisal and the proposed extension to the Conservation Area and indicates the amendments that are considered appropriate in response.

Proposals

- 1.1 To approve the Cottisford Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 1.2 To extend the boundary of the Conservation Area to include Cottisford Pond to the east, the paddock to the rear of Hethe Road Cottages and the barn to the north west of Cottisford House.

Conclusion

- 1.3 To approve the Cottisford Conservation Area appraisal and to extend the boundary with immediate effect.

Background Information

- 2.1 This report is in accordance with Paragraph 9.48 of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2001 and paragraph 9.89 of the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011, which state that the Council will from time to time propose new or review existing Conservation Areas.
- 2.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, does not require local planning authorities to undertake public consultation prior to designation but this Council considers it to be good practice. It does require Conservation Areas to be reviewed from time to time and for proposals for preservation and enhancement to be submitted to a public meeting.
- 2.3 Cottisford Conservation Area was first designated in 1980; this is the first review of the boundary since its designation.
- 2.4 Public consultation took place on the draft Conservation Area Appraisal following consultation with, and the approval of, the ward member on 30th March.
- 2.5 The appraisal, a questionnaire and pre-paid envelope was posted to every house in Cottisford. The appraisal was also available to download from the Council's website and in hard copy on request from Bodicote House.
- 2.6 A public exhibition was held in St Mary's Church, Cottisford from 6-7pm on 2nd April followed by a public meeting that evening from 7-8pm. Posters were put up in Juniper Hill and Cottisford. The event was attended by approx. 14 people and questionnaires were available asking for comments on the appraisal and the conservation area boundary. The comments received are recorded in the sections following 3.2.
- 2.6 The appraisal comprises an outline of the development of the village, including its history and literary connections, followed by an analysis of the established character of the village including its land use, settlement pattern, building types and style, construction materials, features of special interest and means of enclosure.
- 2.7 The appraisal also contains a Management Plan comprising proposals for preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area, justification for the Conservation Area boundary and the effects of Conservation Area designation.
- 2.8 The document proposed an extension of the Conservation Area to include the paddock to the rear of Hethe Road Cottages. The paddock was once 6 allotments, one associated with each cottage, and each forming an extension to a series of carefully designed outbuildings. The relationship between these cottages and the paddock was felt to represent an important element of Cottisford's social history and the extension was proposed at the public exhibition. Further proposed additions were suggested at the public meeting (see 3.5)

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 Feedback from the Public Meeting and Questionnaires
- 3.2 Villagers present at the public meeting were concerned about the impact of speeding on Cottisford. Although traffic is not heavy, rat running results in the erosion of grass verges and speeding through the settlement. It was generally felt that bollards would urbanise the area. Larger speed signs would not comply with highway regulations for repeater signs. Signs partially obscured by hedging could be uncovered. Speeding outside Kennel Cottages was also raised in the returned questionnaires. Although the County Council is responsible for speed restrictions and signage, further discussions with the Parish Council will ascertain whether Cottisford would be a suitable location for this Council's mobile speed indicator.
- 3.3 There was concern about the future use of the Lower Hethe Poultry Farm site should it become redundant lest it be developed for housing or offices generating more traffic through Cottisford. Cottisford is a Category 3 settlement and therefore any development beyond house extensions is unlikely to be approved.
- 3.4 Suggestions of areas for enhancement within the village focused on the electricity transformer station adjacent to St Fergus. It was suggested that planting on the southern and eastern boundaries of the site would reduce the impact on views from the footpaths to the south and that this should be specifically mentioned in the document.
- 3.5 In addition to the proposed inclusion of the paddock to the rear of Hethe Road Cottages (which was well received) four other areas were proposed.

The field between Lake View and the grounds of Cottisford House:- This was not felt to be of sufficient historic or archaeological importance to justify its inclusion.

Lower Heath Farm and poultry houses:- This was suggested with the assumption that being within the Conservation Area would prevent development on the site. Conservation Area extensions should not be used as a tool to prevent development and the area has no historical justification for inclusion.

Cottisford Pond:- Although the pond has little visual connection with the village it is a much used amenity which has a historical association with the settlement. It features on the 1797 Davis Map of the village and is mentioned in Flora Thompson's book 'Larkrise to Candleford'. The trees that surround the pond are a visual amenity and including this area would help to protect them against removal in the future. The sluice of Cottisford Pond is already included within the boundary and it is proposed to include the rest of the pond within the boundary.

Barn to the north west of Cottisford House:- The boundary of Cottisford House grounds has been altered since the maps used in the appraisal were produced. It is proposed that the Conservation Area is changed to reflect this altered boundary line and include the barn that now lies within the grounds of Cottisford House. Although the barn is in a poor state of repair it appears to be of some historic interest and is within the curtilage of

Cottisford House. The rationalisation of the boundary to make it more legible on the ground would be an appropriate addition to the conservation area.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward as this will enable the Council to publish the finalised version of the Appraisal which will then become a material consideration to be weighed against other considerations in the determining of planning applications within the Conservation Area and its setting.

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| Option One | To approve and to publish the Conservation Area Appraisal including the proposed extension to the boundary |
| Option Two | To not extend the Conservation Area |
| Option Three | To make further changes to the Cottisford Conservation Area Appraisal as members see fit |

Consultations

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| Cllr Gibbard | Made no formal representations |
| The Parish Council | Made positive verbal comments |
| Cllr Wood | Made no formal representations |
| Local Residents | Comments are discussed in detail under headings 3.2 to 3.4 |

Implications

Financial: Financial effects - There are no financial implications arising from this report. The costs of preparing the Appraisal and the public consultation are met from the approved revenue budget and the Council does not operate any grant aid scheme that would be triggered by the Appraisal.

Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Accountant 01295 221552

Legal: The Council has a legal duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to review Conservation Areas from time to time. The Council is not legally required to consult but has undertaken a thorough consultation and the extension to the Conservation Area is broadly supported by the local community.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Assistant Solicitor 01295 221687

Risk Management: The Conservation Area Appraisal analyses the special character and appearance of the designated area and sets out proposals for the management of the area.

Having been publicly consulted upon, the Appraisal will become a material consideration in the determining of planning applications within the designated area and will be used by Inspectors in considering appeals.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566

Wards Affected

Fringford

Corporate Plan Themes

Theme 6: Protect and enhance the local environment
Theme 8: Rural Focus
Theme 10: Focus on Cherwell's People

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Michael Gibbard
Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Economy

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
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