

Cherwell District Council

Lead Member Report – Lead Member for Planning

22 January 2019

Rousham and Heyfords Conservation Area Appraisals
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Report of Assistant Director for Planning Policy and Development

This report is public

Purpose of report

To consider the adoption of the Rousham, Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and their revised boundaries.

1.0 Recommendations

The Lead Member is recommended

- 1.1 To approve the revisions to Rousham, Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford Conservation Area boundaries
- 1.2 to adopt the Rousham, Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Rousham, Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans have been produced as part of a rolling programme of works, which includes the review of all the conservation areas within Cherwell, undertaken by the Design and Conservation Team.
- 2.2 This report sets out the comments received on the draft appraisals and the proposed changes to the boundaries. The report requests that both the proposed changes to the conservation boundaries and the amended appraisals are approved under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“the Act”) with immediate effect.

- 2.3 The Conservation Area Appraisal looks to identify and analyse the distinctive character of an area derived from its unique topography, historic development and features such as buildings, streets, layout and form.
- 2.4 The Management Plan seeks to outline opportunities to enhance the area and identify threats to its character and appearance. This determines a series of action points outlined to address these issues.
- 2.5 The appraisal of the character of a conservation area provides a sound basis for development control and for developing initiatives for improving the area. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a settlement will provide a robust framework for the future management of that settlement against which applications can be considered.
- 2.6 The Act provides legislation for the protection of the nation's heritage of buildings and places of architectural and historic interest, '*the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.*' Local planning authorities have a duty under the Act to consider boundary revisions to their conservation areas 'from time to time'.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The Conservation Area Appraisals look to identify and analyse the distinctive character of the Rousham Conservation Area was first designated in July 1991 and the area was re-appraised in May 1996. This conservation area covered a wide area which included the villages of Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford. The recent re-appraisal of the area has provided separate appraisal documents for the area as a whole as well as Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford. The purpose of a conservation area appraisal is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the current character and appearance of the conservation area to provide a basis for informed judgements on the future conservation and management of the designated area.
 - 3.2 The Act provides legislation for the protection of the nation's heritage of buildings and places of architectural and historic interest, '*the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.*' Local planning authorities have a duty under the Act to consider boundary revisions to their conservation areas 'from time to time'.
 - 3.3 This report sets out the comments received on the draft appraisal and the proposed changes to the conservation area boundaries and indicates the amendments that are recommended appropriate in response.
 - 3.4 The report requests that both the proposed changes to the conservation boundary and the amended appraisal are approved under Section 69 of the Act with immediate effect.
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Public Consultation

- 3.5 Draft appraisal documents were prepared and an exhibition and public meeting arranged for Thursday 28 June 2018 to enable local residents and all interested parties to inspect the draft document in order to comment upon the proposed conservation areas boundary and to identify buildings of local interest. At the meeting it was identified that not all residents in Lower Heyford had received a leaflet about the event and therefore an additional drop in session was arranged for Thursday 19 July 2018.
- 3.6 Public consultation took place on the draft appraisal between 28 June 2018 and 2 August 2018 with the approval of the lead member. The document was available to download from the Council's website and in hard copy from Bodicote House and available to view at Banbury library. Copies of the document were handed out at the public meeting and additional copies made available by request. Publicity was undertaken through local leaflets and posters.

Feedback from the Public Meeting, Questionnaires and Decisions

- 3.7 There were three draft appraisal documents covering Rousham, Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford.
- 3.8 The public meeting was chaired by Councillor Colin Clark, the Lead member for Planning and attended by the Senior Conservation Officer, an additional Conservation Officer, the Team Leader for Design and Conservation and a Planning Policy Officer. The exhibition was attended by approximately 20 people and approximately 20 came to the public meeting in the evening. The additional drop in session on 19 July was attended by approximately 10 people.
- 3.9 A total of 17 written responses were received which comprised 2 for Rousham, 3 for Upper Heyford, 8 for Lower Heyford and 4 general responses covering more than one appraisal document.

Rousham

- 3.10 There were a total of 4 responses which mentioned the wider area of Rousham.
- 3.10.1 One from residents of a property in Lower Heyford was positive and supportive and felt the boundary was appropriate and that the conservation area should focus on the views and the repair of the follies.
- 3.10.2 The Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Group and Upper Heyford Village Group made a case for the conservation area to extend into the existing RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area to include the airfield west of the Portway, an ancient routeway.
- This was considered, but it was felt that the current character of this area reflects the existing RAF Heyford Conservation Area and will be subject to conservation area controls anyway and any development within the area will**

be considered in light of the impact on the setting of Rousham Conservation Area. No change to the boundary is proposed.

3.10.3 Pegasus Planning Group wrote on behalf of Dorchester Living Limited (developers at Heyford Park) expressing concern that development at RAF Heyford was referred to in the appraisal document without acknowledgement that RAF Heyford is a conservation area. This is irrelevant in terms of the impact that development in the area could have on the setting of Rousham Conservation Area, which is a separate issue.

No changes to the document needed.

There was also concern with reference to some of the key views.

Reference to views of RAF Heyford from View 2 have been removed. Concern was expressed about the inclusion of View 10 which was not a view designed by William Kent. At a follow up meeting with a representative from Pegasus it was pointed out that the approach we had taken was inconsistent in relation to views from the monuments within the wider landscape. The Eyecatcher had been scoped out, but not the Roundels or Temple Mill. It was decided to restructure the Views section and to include the Eyecatcher (View 12) within the analysed views rather than to remove the Temple of the Mill (View 10) or the Roundels (View 11). Further consultation is not required as the land between Rousham Park and the Eyecatcher is already included in Views 1 and 2.

3.10.4 An additional comment was made verbally at the public exhibition (by a representative of New College, Oxford) that part of the boundary to the east of the site did not make sense as there was no longer a field boundary. No comment was received in writing detailing this concern and the boundary aligns with OS boundaries in the area and has an existing hedgeline.

No changes to the boundary needed due to a lack of evidence.

3.10.5 No changes to the Rousham Conservation Area Boundary are proposed.

Upper Heyford

3.11 There were a total of 4 responses which referred in detail to Upper Heyford, one from the Upper Heyford Village Group ("UHVG") and three from individual residents.

3.11.1 All residents suggested extensions to the boundary and supported the document produced by the UHVG.

Some changes are proposed to the boundary, but not to the extent requested. The Upper Heyford Conservation Area is entirely surrounded by the Rousham Conservation Area and the areas suggested for inclusion will remain within a conservation area.

3.11.2 The UHVG proposed a boundary change to include land within RAF Upper Heyford to the west of the Portway, an ancient routeway.

This was considered, but dismissed for the reasons given above.

- 3.11.3 The UHVG outline that their concerns relate to the impact from development at Heyford Park. It should be noted that the whole of the area identified will be included within either the Rousham Conservation Area or the RAF Heyford Conservation Area which have the same controls and legislation as the Upper Heyford Conservation Area. The section on transport networks / highways has been strengthened in the Rousham Conservation Area following the consultation on all three documents.
- 3.11.4 A couple of factual errors were also noted and these have been amended.
- 3.11.5 The Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum identified potential confusion between Upper Heyford and Rousham Conservation Areas.
This has been addressed with a change of title and additional text in Introduction and Conservation Area boundary sections of the document.
- 3.11.6 One of the residents and the UHVG made reference to the Poor Allotment and the recreation ground which were awarded to the village in the Enclosure Act of 1842.
These were of significance to the specific historic development of the village and the boundary has been adjusted to include the remaining allotment gardens and the recreation ground to the east of Somerton Road.

Lower Heyford

- 3.12 There were 9 responses in total which made reference to Lower Heyford, including one from the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan group.
- 3.12.1 A number of responses suggested inclusion of the three fields to the south of the village. **These were included in the original (pre Rousham) Lower Heyford Conservation Area boundary and it is considered appropriate to include them. The boundary has been amended.**
- 3.12.2 Three responses requested inclusion of the allotment gardens, 1950s houses and Tollgate Cottage to the south east of the village to be included. **The allotments and 1950s houses are not considered to make a significant enough contribution to the character of the settlement to warrant inclusion, but the boundary has been amended to include Tollgate Cottage.**
- 3.12.3 One response suggested the inclusion of King George's Playing Field which was set up as a memorial to King George V and is celebrated with commemorative panels. **This area has not been included. Although there is some interest with the connection to King George V this is not specific to the development of Lower Heyford.**
- 3.12.4 Three responses suggested that Lower Heyford should be categorised as Category C village (similar to Upper Heyford) rather than Category B. **This is beyond the remit of the Design and Conservation Team and would need to be addressed elsewhere.**
- 3.12.5 Three responses included the suggestion that Caulcott should be considered as a separate conservation area in its own right. **This is beyond the scope of the**

Rousham Conservation Area Appraisal and will need to be considered and addressed at a later stage.

- 3.12.6 One response gave detailed consideration to the trees in the area. This was passed on to the Arboriculture Officer for comment. **He responded to say that trees are protected in conservation areas anyway and can be considered for TPO designation on a case by case basis as issues arise.**
- 3.12.7 A number of responses made reference to the Visual Appraisal for the village and suggested alterations / additions to green space and views. **These have been assessed on an individual basis and alterations made to the figure.**
- 3.12.8 One response referred to the significance of the 'ford' in relation to the location of Lower Heyford. **The text has been amended to reflect this significance.**

Buildings of local significance

- 3.13 Buildings of less than national significance can be locally significant. This is identified within the NPPF and reflected in the Cherwell District Council's programme for their inclusion within the district-wide register of Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs) - formerly known as the Local List. A couple of suggestions were made for additions and amendments to the Local Heritage Assets list for Lower Heyford and one for Upper Heyford and these have been incorporated into the document.

Article 4 Directions

- 3.14 A number of Article 4 Directions were proposed for both Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford as part of the appraisal process. The issue was not raised either as part of the discussions or in any written consultation responses.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Conservation area appraisals are an important way of ensuring that this aspect of policy framework is up-to-date, robust and of the greatest value in the consideration of development proposals within conservation areas.
- 4.2 Up-to-date conservation area appraisals will assist the consideration of planning applications in the areas covered by the appraisal from the point at which they are adopted, and will also assist the implementation of the Cherwell Local Plan.
- 4.3 It is for these reasons that it is recommended that the revisions to the boundaries of Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford be adopted along with the existing boundary for Rousham and the three Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

5.0 Consultation

Public consultation – 28 June - 2 August 2018

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified:

Option 1: To agree the recommendations as set out in the report

Option 2: To amend the recommendations

Option 3: Not to agree the recommendations

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 Any expenditure in relation to the conservation area reviews for the settlements will be from existing resources.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

7.2 Conservation areas may affect residents of the district, business and other parties. Works that can usually be undertaken to the land and property as 'permitted development' may be restricted in conservation areas.

7.3 If adopted, the Rousham, Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans will become part of the evidence base for the forthcoming Local Plan and represent a material consideration in the planning process.

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8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

Fringford and Heyfords

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

This report directly links to all three themes from the Joint Corporate Strategy 2018-19:

- District of Opportunity & Growth
- Protected, Green & Clean
- Thriving Communities & Wellbeing

Lead Councillor

Cllr Colin Clarke
Portfolio Holder for Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Rousham Conservation Area map
Appendix 2	Rousham Conservation Area Appraisal
Appendix 3	Lower Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal
Appendix 4	Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal
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