

COMMITTEE: PLANNING

DATE: 27 MARCH 2012

SUBJECT: Draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

REPORT OF: The Planning Policy Manager

Ward(s): UPPERTON

Purpose: To seek authority to go out to public consultation on the draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Contact: Rhiannon Rhys, Conservation Officer, Planning Policy, Unit,
1 Grove Road, Eastbourne
Tel no: (01323) 415251
E-mail: rhiannon.rhys@eastbourne.gov.uk

Recommendation: Members are asked to authorise public consultation on the draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Council has a duty to review, formulate and publish appraisals and management plans for the preservation and enhancement of the Borough's 12 Conservation Areas. The draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal sets out the special interest of the area and reviews the boundary of the existing Conservation Area with a recommendation for an extension to the boundary. The conservation area extension would provide control over the demolition of historic properties and works to trees within the area. The Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal is the fourth of a rolling programme of appraisals (Meads Conservation Area Appraisal underwent public consultation 30th September 2011 to 23rd December 2011), to cover all the remaining Conservation Areas in the Borough. The next Conservation Area to be considered on the programme of appraisals is Park Close.

1.2 The draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal was taken to Planning Committee on the 31st January 2012, to seek authority to go out to public consultation. Planning Committee requested that minor amendments were made to the text and that a further assessment of the wider area surrounding the boundary of the Torfield Conservation Area should be undertaken. All assessments, regarding extensions to the boundary of the Conservation Area are undertaken in accordance to the "Criteria for Measuring the Special Interest and Drawing the Boundaries of Conservation Areas" in Appendix A of the Guidance Manual for Designation and Review of Conservation Areas (January 2011).

2.0 Draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal

- 2.1 The purpose of the draft **Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal** is to define the special architectural and historic interest of the designated area in the form of a detailed character analysis. The Character Appraisal includes a review of the Conservation Area boundary. The boundary review was undertaken in accordance with English Heritage guidance and the Criteria for Measuring the Special Interest and Drawing the Boundaries of Conservation Areas, as set out in Appendix A of the adopted Guidance Manual for Designation and Review of Conservation Areas. The draft Appraisal also contains a Management Plan, which aims to manage change in ways that maintain and strengthen the area's special qualities.
- 2.2 The existing conservation area (designated in 1991) is proposed to be extended to include The Cottage, St Anne's Road. This is one of the oldest buildings in this area. It is of architectural interest and an important part of the history and development of the Torfield Estate. It helps to provide the historic context for the conservation area, as the original estate of Torfield Court was subdivided to accommodate the 1920-30's interwar housing which provides the conservation area with its special architectural and historic character. The Cottages was the Gatehouse for Torfield Court and helps to demonstrate the historic development of the site, and therefore warrants its inclusion. The modern Torfield Court has been excluded from the Conservation Area; however the original Torfield Court gateposts are within the conservation area boundary, as they contribute to the historic context of the site.
- 2.3 Although the proposed extension includes this important property, the impact of the additional planning controls upon the property's owner will not be substantial; the protection afforded by the conservation area's extension provides control over the demolition of historic properties and works to trees within the area. The impact of the extension on the Council's ability to exercise control may result in some additional planning applications but this will not have a significant implication on resources.

3.0 Further Assessment

- 3.1 As a result of Planning Committee's request, an assessment has been undertaken of the surrounding area to the Torfield Conservation Area. This included Mill Gap Road and the associated areas of Torfield Road (south side), Selwyn Road (east side), Arundel Road (north side), St Anne's Road (west side) and Ivy Lane and also an assessment for the west side of Selwyn Road and the associated north side of Arundel Road (No. 1a, 3 and 3a). These are identified in Appendix A.
- 3.2 The assessments were undertaken in line with the Criteria for extensions to the boundary of the Conservation Areas, as set out in Appendix A of the adopted Guidance Manual for Designation and Review of Conservation Areas and in line with guidance from English Heritage. The recommendation from this assessment was that with respect to the special interest and character of Torfield Conservation Area, as defined within the appraisal document, no further extensions warranted inclusion into the conservation area. This was due to a culmination of factor under the criteria set out in the Guidance Manual. The criteria looks at the architectural quality and historical relevance of the area, the townscape and public realm quality and the current boundaries, in relationship to the special character of the

Conservation Area. Appendices A and B summarise the assessment process.

- 3.3 Therefore, the recommendation of this report is that the boundary of Torfield Conservation Area should be retained with the extension to include the Cottage, St Anne's Road, to help maintain the special architectural and historic character of Torfield Conservation Area.

4.0 Consultation Plan

- 4.1 Internal consultation has been carried out on the draft appraisal; the Conservation Area Advisory Group has been consulted and are supportive of the document.
- 4.2 Following the draft document going before Planning Committee on 31st January 2012, minor changes to the text have been made in line with comments made and a further assessment of the surrounding location of the conservation area has been undertaken. As explained in Paragraph 3.2 no further extensions to the boundary are recommended after assessment of the surrounding area against the technical criteria. Additional consultation will however be carried out with residents in the adjoining areas to gather views on the Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal and the appropriateness of the boundary.
- 4.3 Subject to approval of the recommendations in this report, it is proposed to carry out public consultation on the draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal. The consultation will be carried out with local amenity societies, residents and occupiers of the conservation area and surrounding locality concerned through advertising by means of a letter drop. Copies of the document will be available to view and download on the Council's website at www.eastbourne.gov.uk and at the Council's main office at 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, during office hours for the 12 week consultation period. Copies shall also be available at the Reception Desk at the Town Hall and at Eastbourne Library. Copies of the relevant documentation will be sent to all statutory consultees and any other targeted groups where appropriate. A notice will be placed in the local newspaper (Eastbourne Herald) and on the Council's website at www.eastbourne.gov.uk. This will advise where and when the document can be inspected, how copies can be obtained, the opening and closing date of the public consultation, and where to send representations. The consultation will take place for 12 weeks, starting on the 6th April 2012 and running until the 29th June 2012. This will be done in compliance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 4.4 Comments will be invited on the areas' special architectural and historic interest, the appropriateness of the boundary and the content of the draft Appraisal and Management Plan. An assessment of the wider areas, as part of the boundary review, will be included as an appendix to the Conservation Area Appraisal. Therefore, the public will be able to view the document explaining the Conservation Area's special architectural and

historic character and also to understand why the boundary has not been extended further.

- 4.5 Any comments or further information, including proposed extensions, regarding the draft appraisal will be reviewed after the public consultation. Any boundary reviews will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Guidance Manual (2011) and English Heritage's Guidance. If, it warrants inclusion, then it shall be adopted into the Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as part of the final recommendations.
- 4.6 A further report will then be brought back to this Committee, outlining the results of the public consultation, summarising the comments made and the action taken, before making final recommendations regarding further boundary extensions and any other changes made to the Torfield Conservation Appraisal.

5.0 Financial and Staffing Implications:

- 5.1 The cost of the consultation will be met from within existing budgets and will largely consist of staff time.

6.0 Sustainability Implications

- 6.1 The conservation of heritage assets, which are a finite and diminishing resource, is an integral aspect of sustainable development. The designation and extension of the conservation areas will assist in the conservation of heritage assets.

7.0 Other Implications

- 7.1 There are no youth, anti-poverty, equality or community safety implications as a direct result of the draft documents.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal is part of a continuing programme of works and has been prepared according to English Heritage guidance and aims to set out, in a clear and concise manner, the special architectural and historic interest of the area and to provide information on the best approach to managing change, in order to conserve or enhance the special interest of the area.

Rhiannon Rhys
Conservation Officer

Background Papers:

The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:

Planning Policy Statement 5

Eastbourne Borough Plan (2001 – 2011)

Draft Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal

English Heritage: Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals

English Heritage: Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas

English Heritage: Conservation Area Practice

English Heritage: Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management

Eastbourne Borough Council: Guidance Manual for Designation and Review of Conservation Areas

Eastbourne Borough Council: Conservation Areas in Eastbourne - Companion Document

Officers Assessment of Mill Gap Road and the associated areas of Torfield Road (south side), Selwyn Road (east side), Arundel Road (north side), St Anne's Road (west side) and Ivy Lane.

Officers Assessment of west side of Selwyn Road and the associated north side of Arundel Road (No. 1a, 3 and 3a).

Appendix

Appendix A –Area assessed as part of boundary review for Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal

Appendix B - A Review of the Boundary as part of the Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal