

BODY: CABINET
DATE: 18 April 2012
SUBJECT: Meads Conservation Area Appraisal
REPORT OF: Senior Head of Development and Environment

Ward(s): ALL
Purpose: To adopt the **Meads Conservation Area Appraisal**.
Decision type: Key decision
Contact: Rhiannon Rhys, Conservation Officer, Planning Policy Unit, 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne
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Recommendation: Members are recommended to approve the **Meads Conservation Area Appraisal**.

1.0 Introduction: National Context

1.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Council from time to time to determine which parts of the borough are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance and they should designate those areas as conservation areas and review this designation periodically. The Council also has a duty to determine whether any further parts of the borough should be designated as conservation areas. Section 71 of the same Act places a duty on local planning authorities to from time to time formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas; to hold a public meeting to canvas views; and to take into consideration the views expressed at that time.

The Practice Guide to Planning Policy Statement 5, Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS 5) asks local authorities, in drawing up their core strategy and other development plan documents, to consider conservation area appraisals as an evidence base and to commission further reviews and appraisals, if required (paragraph 43, 1). Compliance with the policy in HE12.2 of PPS5 requires that local planning authorities collect this information and make it publicly available.

Conservation area appraisals are considered good practice and a sound basis for development control decisions.

2.0 Purpose of the Document

- 2.1 The purpose of the **Meads Conservation Area Appraisal** is to define the special architectural or 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 (it is recommended that the existing boundary remain as it is). The **Meads Conservation Area Appraisal** also contains a **Management Plan**, which aims to manage change in ways that maintain and strengthen the area's special qualities.

This appraisal is part of a rolling programme of character appraisals, which is currently being undertaken for each of the Borough's 12 conservation areas. The Upperton Conservation Area Appraisal was the first such document to be adopted by the Council in December 2010, and Warrior Square Conservation Area was adopted in March 2011.

The appraisal process follows best practice as set out in English Heritage's *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* and *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*, this guidance has now been combined in English Heritage's *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The background work and research on the Meads Conservation Area (designated in 1969 and extended in 1982 and 1988) began in 2009, when a draft Meads Conservation Area Appraisal was produced by the Conservation Studio on behalf of Eastbourne Borough Council. By June 2011, a boundary review had been carried out inline with Appendix A of the Guidance Manual for the Designation and Review of Conservation Areas (no further extensions have been proposed) and the draft Meads Conservation Area Appraisal and associated Management Plan had been completed.
- 3.2 A conservation area review typically includes a character appraisal, management plan and the undertaking of public consultation. It sets out the history of the area and explains the area's special interest. Due to its size and for the purpose of the appraisal, Meads Conservation Area has been divided into four distinct character areas, to enable clear explanation for each site, with regards to their special architectural and historic attributes. The appraisal also includes proposals for the management and enhancement of the area, through a management plan. The appraisal will be used by the Council in considering proposals for alterations to or demolition of buildings or for any new development within or affecting the area. The process follows best practice as set out in English Heritage's *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* and *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*, which has now been combined in English Heritage's *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*.

4.0 Public Consultation

- 4.1 In September 2011, advertising for the public consultation was undertaken through local community groups. Information was placed on community websites, in newsletters, on notice boards and advertised within shops, to inform all residents in the area of the consultation. The appraisal and accompanying questionnaire was also made available for consultation on the Council's website, at the Information Desk at 1 Grove Road, at the Reception Desk at the Town Hall and at Eastbourne Library.
- 4.2 Public consultation on the document began on 30th September 2011 and finished on 23rd December 2011. The 12 week consultation was in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 4.3 A public exhibition was held at St Johns Hall, on the 8th November 2011 to allow local residents to learn more about the conservation area and the draft conservation area appraisal. The exhibition was attended by 25 members of the public and received good support.
- 4.4 Besides the residents within the Conservation Area, external consultees were also contacted (Appendix A). A notice was placed in the local newspaper (Eastbourne Herald) informing and inviting members of the public to comment on the appraisal via the Council's website or to attend the public exhibition.
- 4.5 The Council received 9 responses to the consultation; the details of representations made can be seen in Appendix B. Several of the responses were requests for boundary extensions (Appendix C). Each proposed extension was considered in line with the adopted "Guidance Manual for the designation and review of Conservation Areas" (adopted Jan 2011), which sets out the Criteria for Measuring the Special Interest and Drawing the Boundaries of Conservation Areas in Appendix A and English Heritage's Guidance. From the assessments undertaken none of the proposed sites were considered to warrant inclusion, as they did not fulfill the criteria. Therefore, no further extensions to the Meads Conservation Area have been proposed.
- 4.5 One extension request was to include Upper Duke's Drive (north side), Edensor Road, Rowsley Road and Baslow Road (south side). As a result of the assessment it was considered that this area could be designated as an Area of High Townscape Value. A letter of consultation is being sent to local residents to ascertain their views which will be reported back. If agreed, this designation can be included within the Development Management DPD.

5.0 Member Involvement

- 5.1 The Conservation Area Advisory Group commented upon and were supportive of the Appraisal. Planning committee are to be consulted on the 17 April 2012 and their comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.

6.0 Implications

- 6.1 Financial

There are no adverse financial implications. The cost of the adoption exercise can be met within the existing service budgets.

6.2 Legal

The Appraisal complies with Section 69 and Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

6.3 Human Rights Implications

There are no Human Rights Implications.

7.0 Other Implications

7.1 The document supports the conservation of Eastbourne's historic environment and conservation is inherently sustainable. The principle implicit in the conservation of the historic environment is that of repairing and re-using existing buildings and their materials instead of indiscriminate replacement.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1 In light of the above, it is recommended that the appraisal be adopted as a guidance document for the understanding, protection and enhancement of the area.

Rhiannon Rhys
Conservation Officer

Background Papers:

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

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment (CLG, 2010)

PPS5: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (CLG, 2010)

Draft Meads Conservation Area Appraisal

English Heritage: Guidance On Conservation Area Appraisals (2006)

English Heritage: Guidance on the Management Of Conservation Areas (2006)

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

Site Assessment of Granville Road and St Johns Road

Site Assessment of Edensor Road

Site Assessment of Baslow Road

Site Assessment of Upper Dukes Drive

Site Assessment of Rowsley Road

Note:-

Appendix A –Consultees

Appendix B – Consultee Responses

Appendix C – Suggested Boundary Extensions to the Meads Conservation Area

Appendix 1

Consultees

The Eastbourne Society

Eastbourne Natural History & Archaeological Society

Conservation Area Advisory Group: Councillors Thompson, Shuttleworth, Belsey and Ede and external advisors Richard Crook and Nicholas Howell,

Eastbourne Local History Society

County Archaeologist East Sussex County Council

English Heritage

Local historian, Laurence Stevens

David Boyson, South Downs National Park Planning Authority

Victorian Society

Meads Community Association