

COMMITTEE: PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE: 8 JANUARY 2012

SUBJECT: THE COTTAGE, ST ANNE'S ROAD, TORFIELD
CONSERVATION AREA

REPORT OF: PLANNING POLICY MANAGER

Ward(s): UPPERTON

Purpose: To seek approval for consultation on the inclusion of The Cottage, St Anne's Road, Torfield in the list of Buildings of Local Interest

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Recommendation: Members agree to consult on the inclusion of 'The Cottage', St Anne's Road, Torfield as a Building of Local Interest

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to propose The Cottage, Torfield Conservation Area for inclusion in The Local List of Buildings of Local Interest held by The Council. It comprises buildings or structures which make a special contribution to the Townscape; represent the work of an important local Architect or represent a particular style of Architecture, or period in the development of the town.

1.1 The boundary and Management Plan of the Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal have recently been reviewed, in alignment with Guidance set out by English Heritage. The Review, (Approved by Cabinet on 24th October 2012), approved the revised boundary to include The Lodge, St Anne's Road, Torfield, which is now within the Torfield Conservation Area.

1.2 The Conservation Area Advisory Group supported the motion that 'The Cottage' be nominated as a Building of Local Interest at its Meeting on 9th October 2012 following publication of the Torfield Conservation Area Appraisal.

2.0 The Role Of Local Heritage Listing

2.1 English Heritage in its Guidance Note, identifies that Local heritage listing is a means for a community and a local authority to jointly identify heritage assets that are valued as distinctive elements of the local historic environment. It provides clarity on the location of assets and what it is

about them that is significant, guaranteeing that strategic local planning properly takes account of the desirability of their conservation.

3.0 National Planning Policy Framework And Heritage Assets

3.1 The NPPF advises LPAs to set out 'a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment' in their Local Plan. Emphasis is placed on 'sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets' and recognising that heritage assets are an 'irreplaceable resource' and should be conserved 'in a manner appropriate to their significance'. Heritage assets are defined in the NPPF as:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Heritage assets not designated under statutory regimes, but recognised by the LPA as having heritage significance, do merit consideration in planning matters; with the LPA taking a balanced judgment having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

It is the intention of this proposal, that The Cottage will be better protected, as set out above.

4.0 Buildings of Local Interest

4.1 Buildings of special architectural or historic interest are Listed by the Secretary of State. However the criteria for the lowest listing category - Grade II - states that the building should be of special interest. This may mean it is National significance in architectural, technological or social means, or is designed by an important Architect. Therefore, buildings that might be considered of local importance but not of sufficient special interest do not achieve listed status. Some buildings not considered of National Importance, and therefore listable, may be considered to be of sufficient Local importance to be included on The Local List.

4.2 Such buildings of local interest contribute to the townscape of Eastbourne do not have the statutory protection of listed buildings but, nevertheless, they should be retained and ideally enhanced. It must be stressed that like areas of high townscape value, there is no statutory control on buildings of local interest, over and above those that already exist for any building. However many of the buildings are within Conservation Areas and therefore they are automatically afforded a degree of protection against demolition. Inclusion on The Local List highlights the special qualities and contribution of a building and may reflect architectural merit, social history or development of town planning.

4.3 When considering planning applications for the alteration of Buildings of Local Interest, the Council will take into account that the property is of more than ordinary significance.

Policy UHT 18 Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011 (Adopted September 2003), and;

Policy UHT 18 SPG Eastbourne Townscape Guide: Buildings of Local Interest recognises this and states:

Proposals which would adversely affect the character or appearance of Buildings of Local Interest will not be permitted. Should planning permission be granted for a major alteration, the consent will be subject to a condition to provide an opportunity for the building to be inspected and recorded.

5.0 Setting & Development of 'The Cottage'

5.1 The Cottage was constructed in c. 1890, when the substantial villa 'Torfield Court' and The Cottage were built on St Anne's Road. The Cottage was the major ancillary building to Torfield Court, which also had a range of other structures usual at the time – Glass houses, cucumber frames and the grounds were richly planted with trees around the perimeter (See Appendix A 1870 Map and Appendix B 1899 Map).

The original gate posts to the South East facing entrance still exist and denote the original entrance. The exit of the carriage ring adjacent to The Cottage is more modest.

In the 1920's PD Stonham, a notable local Architect developed the land belonging to Torfield Court building a serried of Mock Tudor residences which now comprise the Torfield Conservation Area. The original Court and the Cottage remained until Torfield Court was demolished and replaced with the present block of flats in the 1960s.

6.0 The Cottage

6.1 The Cottage is a modest brick building, with original vertical sliding sash windows and a distinctive dovecote. It exhibits attractive decorative brick detailing to window cills and string course, under a hipped clay tile roof with simple finials to the ridge. The Cottage would probably have been multi purpose, with space to store the carriage, and stabling. The upper floor has an unusual dual aspect interior space to the Northern end, with an upper barn door to the Southern range of the L-Shaped building. The Cottage retains its outhouse/privy and original walling and handsome brick stop, where the original paved gulley can be seen. See Appendix 3 – Photos

7.0 Assessments

7.1 The assessments were undertaken in line with the Guidelines in the 'English Heritage Good Practice Guide For Local Heritage Listing'

The recommendation from this assessment is that The Cottage be added to the local list as a Building of Local Interest.

7.2 The quality of construction of The Cottage; its contribution to the streetscape and its place within the development and history of Upperton and that it is the remaining fragment of Torfield Court; suggest its inclusion in the Local list.

7.3 Therefore, the recommendation of this report is that The Cottage be included in the List of Buildings of Local Interest, to signify its contribution to the history of the Torfield Estate.

8.0 Consultation

8.1 On 20th November 2012 the Conservation Area Advisory Group supported an officer recommendation that The Cottage, St Anne's Road be included in the list of Buildings of Local Interest.

8.2 Public comment is being invited on the inclusion of The Cottage in the local list of Buildings of Local Interest for a period of 8 weeks between 8th January 2013 and 5th March 2013

9.0 Financial and Staffing Implications:

9.1 The cost of the consultation has been met from within existing budgets and will largely consist of staff time.

10.0 Sustainability Implications

10.1 The conservation of heritage assets, which are a finite and diminishing resource, is an integral aspect of sustainable development. The designation as a Building of Local Interest will assist in the conservation of heritage assets.

11.0 Other Implications

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

12.0 Conclusion

12.1 The proposal for 'The Cottage' to be added as a Building of Local Interest has been prepared following English Heritage's Guidance Note. It aims to set out, in a clear and concise manner, the special architectural and historic interest of the building and to provide information on the best approach to managing change, in order to conserve or enhance the special interest of the area.

Clare Dales
Conservation Officer

Background Papers:

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

Eastbourne Borough Plan (2001 – 2011)

Eastbourne Borough Council SPG Eastbourne Townscape Guide

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE FOR LOCAL HERITAGE LISTING; 2012

English Heritage Guidance Note

NPPF, paragraph 126.

NPPF, Glossary, p.52.

Appendix A – Torfield Map 1970

Appendix B – Torfield Map 1899

Appendix C – Photographs The Cottage