

**THE GLAVEN VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS
& MANAGEMENT PLANS 2021**

Summary: This report seeks approval for the draft Brinton, Thornage, Edgefield, Hunworth, Sharrington and Stody Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans to be taken forward to public consultation in line with national policy and best practice.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the draft appraisals as set out within the body of this report be approved for public consultation.**
- 2. That following consultation, the amended appraisals be brought back to Working Party for consideration and subsequent adoption by Cabinet.**

Cabinet Members(s)	Ward(s) Affected
All Members	All Wards
Contact Officer(s), telephone number and email: Alannah Hogarth, Conservation & Design Officer, 01263 516367	

1. Introduction

1.1 As well as its picturesque coastline, rural landscape and big skies, the District is known for its rich historic environment. The District’s heritage is an intrinsic part of its character and stands as testament to how the area has been shaped and evolved over time. This heritage significance manifests itself in many different forms and this is reflected in the quantity and variety of designations found across North Norfolk including:

- 81 Conservation Areas
- Over 2,200 Listed Buildings
- 33 Registered Parks and Gardens
- 86 Scheduled Monuments
- Nearly 200 Local Listings

1.2 The quality of the environment brings with it many benefits for those living, working, visiting and seeking to invest in the area. Proper management of our shared heritage is therefore vital for a whole range of reasons including:

- **Sense of Place**
Heritage provides the unique character that helps to make communities distinctive.
- **Economic Prosperity**
Heritage attracts visitors and these in turn help to bring wealth and prosperity to the area.
- **Regeneration**
Heritage can support the revitalisation of deprived or run down areas through character, location and use.
- **Civic Pride**
Heritage contributes to a joint sense of pride. The legacy and past reinforces our history and echoes of the past.
- **Sustainability**
Physical life of heritage assets is often greater than their functional life – bringing them back into use is an effective use of resources.
- **Education**
Opportunities to access and understand heritage can have a positive impact on learning and attainment.
- **Leisure and Tourism**
Heritage can provide a focus for leisure activities from simply visiting and enjoying a place to providing a focus for detailed research and interpretation.
- **Health and Well-being**
Exploring heritage helps people in maintaining a healthy physical life-style and can help reduce stress and mental health issues.

1.3 As part of the ongoing management of the Council's 81 Conservation Areas, funding was received for the outsourcing of a small grouping of conservation areas focusing on the Glaven Ports. To this end, the Councils appointed specialist consultants 'Purcell' have produced draft Conservation Area Appraisals and Managements for the following six settlements:

- Brinton
- Thornage
- Edgefield
- Hunworth
- Sharrington
- Stody

These five conservation areas were chosen for review as they were considered priority cases:

- All four conservation areas were designated in the 1970's and 80's and have not been reviewed since this time. During this intervening period, significant change has taken place and the conservation areas must adapt to any prevailing changes.
- All four settlements are under increasing development pressure and are in need of robust definition and understanding to ensure the Conservation Area status remains meaningful and justified.
- It is felt that the additional information and guidance provided by an adopted appraisal would help inform and assist future decision making.

2. Statutory Background

- 2.1 Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A Conservation Area is defined as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.
- 2.2 Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 2.3 The appraisal documents now being considered conform to current Historic England guidance (Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management 2019). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and Conservation Areas is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). The District's adopted Local Development Framework (LDF) provides the local planning policy context.

3. What is a Conservation Area Appraisal?

- 3.1 To assist in the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and their settings, all Local Planning Authorities are required to review their Conservation Areas from 'time to time'. The preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Proposals is a key element in this process. They play a central role in the Council's efforts to safeguard the environment, which is one of the stated priorities of the Council in its Corporate Plan: 2019-2023.
- 3.2 A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has two primary objectives;
1. Firstly, it defines the special characteristics or historic interest of the Conservation Area and identifies the issues that threaten these special qualities.
 2. Secondly, it offers guidelines to prevent erosion of character and achieve enhancement.

In practice, the benefits of reviewing a Conservation Area often extend much further;

- a) A fully adopted Appraisal and set of Management Proposals provides additional support and guidance for decision-making through the Development Management process, since they become, on adoption, a material consideration for the Local Planning Authority when dealing with applications for development.
- b) Having an up to date conservation area boundary which reacts to and reflects the position on the ground is easier to defend and becomes a more meaningful and justified designation.
- c) An up to date Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides the backcloth, together with the planning policies contained in the North Norfolk Local Development Framework, to good decision-making, particularly in respect of applications for development.
- d) Experience has shown that the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans can offer a real and practical opportunity for local communities to engage in the future management of their local environment and as such the process contributes positively to community empowerment.

4. Assessment and Methodology

4.1 Purcell in association with NNDC officers have drafted the conservations area appraisals after a detailed period of research, site assessment, survey analysis and collation of key sources. The structure and format of the Conservation Area Appraisals are consistent across the six documents. Each appraisal includes:

- A Summary of the special interest of the area;
- A review of the areas historic development;
- An overall character assessment;
- A summary of the heritage assets contained within the conservation area;
- A 'street by street' assessment;
- An overview of the areas vulnerabilities and future opportunities;
- A robust management plan to protect the area;
- A guide for further information and sources.

With the above in mind, the documents will set out the planning policy context; special interest including location and setting; historic development and archaeology; layout and plan form; architectural and townscape character; spatial analysis and key views; character analysis including the qualities of buildings; prevailing uses and the contribution of green spaces and suggested boundary changes.

However; it should be noted that no character appraisal can ever be completely comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

4.2 The documents aim to be user friendly, accessible and easy to navigate. To this end, they have been designed primarily as an online resource to be accessed as interactive PDF's.

5. Timetable for public consultation and formal adoption

- 5.1 It is advised that a six-week public consultation period be undertaken. This would include exhibitions at each settlement as well as an open meeting for members of the public to attend. The documents would be placed on the Council's website and comments invited. It is anticipated that following public consultation, an amended document would be brought to the Working Party for approval and adoption by Cabinet by 13 September 2021.

6. Budgetary Implications

- 6.1 There are no further budgetary implications to consider at this stage.

Recommendations:

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