

Southern Area Planning Committee

Wiltshire Council

16 January 2014

SALISBURY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

1 Report Summary:

1.1 This report sets out the background to the task of carrying out conservation area appraisals and management plans by the conservation team (the process which has been undertaken) and presents the final draft of the Salisbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan with a request that the Southern Area Committee approve the disaggregation of Salisbury into 4 parts namely: Salisbury City, Milford Hill, Old Manor Hospital and Britford, and approves the 4 appraisals for each of the individual areas.

2 Background to the Appraisal and Management Plan

2.1 There are approximately 240 conservation areas in Wiltshire covering historic settlements and small villages. A conservation area is described in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

2.2 Conservation areas are designated by the local authority and designation is the recognition of an area’s special qualities, which the council intends to safeguard as an important part of the district’s heritage. It is the accumulation of an area’s positive architectural or historic attributes, rather than the quality of its individual buildings, which makes it worthy of conservation area status. The attributes might include: the landscape setting of the area; the grouping of traditional buildings and the resultant spaces and sense of enclosure; the scale, design, type and materials of the buildings; historic boundaries; public realm; landmarks, views and vistas; and the present and former pattern of activities or land uses.

2.3 Conservation area designation allows for strengthened planning controls, gives protection to trees, and provides control over the demolition of unlisted buildings.

3 Planning Policy Context

3.1 The local planning authority is required by the legislation to periodically review their existing conservation areas. An appraisal of each area is therefore required in order to identify the particular attributes that make each conservation area special. Guidance is provided to the local authority in carrying out this task in the English Heritage publication *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* and its companion document *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*, both published in August 2005.

3.2 There is also guidance from central government in the National Planning Policy Framework (chapter 12), which advises that the local authority should consider how planning applications preserve and enhance conservation areas.

3.3 Wiltshire Council has encapsulated the broad principles of the government guidance in its existing local plan policies (saved policy CN8– CN12 of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy) and in policy HE7 of the draft Wiltshire Core Strategy. Planning applications that affect the character of the conservation area should be considered on their individual merits, in the light of the core strategy policies, and taking into account **all other material considerations**. The appraisals and management plans are used to guide and inform the decision-making process.

3.4 The actual wording of the current policies (South Wiltshire Core Strategy) is:

“The District is notable for the quality of its built environment and there are many areas of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Such areas can be designated as Conservation Areas. There are now 69 Conservation Areas in the District, ranging from Salisbury City centre to villages and hamlets, with over half of these designated since 1989.” (CN8)

“The Local Planning Authority has a duty to enhance Conservation Areas, and improvements to the quality of such areas through removal of unsightly elements, which may include signs, buildings, advertisements, wiring or other features, are a part of this enhancement process. “ (CN12)

3.5 And in the draft Wiltshire Core Strategy, the relevant policy is HE7 which says:

“The architectural and historic heritage of the plan area will be safeguarded from inappropriate development. Development proposals should preserve or enhance the character of conservation areas. Development involving listed buildings should have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

3.6 Conservation area appraisals and management plans and are seen as the first steps in a dynamic process, the aim of which is to seek the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas and to provide a basis for making decisions about their future management.

4 Purpose and Scope of the Documents

4.1 Each appraisal and management plan aims to:

- Identify those elements of the conservation area which contribute to its character;
- Identify elements which detract from the character;

- Propose measures to maintain or improve the positive character, local distinctiveness and sense of place of the conservation area.

4.2 In the former Salisbury District area, there are 70 conservation areas, of which 10 have adopted appraisals. These are:

Downton
Dinton
Steeple Langford
Old Sarum
Durrington
Amesbury
Broad Chalke
Tisbury
Wylie
Hindon

4.3 In addition to these 10 adopted appraisals, and the draft Salisbury appraisals now under consideration, there are a further 10 in varying degrees of completeness for the following areas:

Alderbury
Barford At Martin
Newton Tony
Netherhampton
Pitton
Bulford
Hanging Langford
Mere
Fovant
Wilton

4.4 The process that has been undertaken in producing these final documents is outlined later in the report. It has been a lengthy process of preparation, consultation and redrafting. Whilst the draft documents have carried some weight to date to assist with the determination of planning applications and for use in appeals, it is hoped that the reports will obtain the committee's approval, and enable them to become a material consideration as part of the planning process.

5 Methodology and Public Consultation

5.1 Conservation consultants were employed by the council to produce the draft conservation area appraisals and management plans, and began carrying out the surveys in 2007. The survey work was carried out in accordance with the guidance mentioned above. The draft documents, once presented by the consultants, were reformatted and illustrated in-house in preparation for public consultation.

5.2 It is central government advice that conservation area appraisals and management plans should form part of the evidence base of the Local Development Framework, therefore, the consultation exercise followed the procedure for evidence base as set out in the approved Statement of Community Involvement.

5.3 The first stage of the public consultation exercise, involving the four conservation area appraisals was undertaken in 2009 and ran for 6 weeks. Letters and cds containing copies of the documents were sent to a number of people, including ward members and local organisations. Copies of the documents were placed on the council's website. An advert was placed in the Salisbury Journal, site notices were displayed in the conservation areas and a public exhibition was held at City Hall.

5.4 In addition to the main consultation exercise, a consultation was carried out directly with owners/occupiers affected by the proposed changes to the boundaries of the conservation areas.

5.5 A summary of the responses received for the consultation on the four 'Salisbury' areas can be found in Appendix 2. Officers examined all of the responses received in conjunction with the consultants, and amended the document as necessary. The table in Appendix 2 show the actions that were taken to address the issues that were raised. As a result of comments in respect of the Milford Hill appraisal, the document was more substantially amended and a further consultation held in January 2010.

6. The Completed Documents

6.1 4 conservation area appraisals and management plans have been through the consultation process and have been produced in a finished format. Three of the appraisals (Milford Hill, Britford and Old Manor Hospital) are relatively modest documents. Each document contains an executive summary at the beginning. The first part of the document contains the appraisal, which attempts to explain the character of the conservation area, and identifies such things as the architectural qualities of the buildings, prevalent local materials, the importance of open spaces and views, as well as the negative elements that exist. The second part of the document contains the management plan, and this identifies such things as buildings at risk, proposals for enhancement, and suggested changes to the boundaries of the conservation areas (NB. Most of the conservation areas were designated more than 20 years ago, and it was necessary to propose changes to the boundaries to take account of the changes that had taken place over the intervening period).

6.2 In contrast, the Salisbury City appraisal is a much bigger document although set out in a similar way. However, rather than breaking down the conservation area into 'character areas' the approach has been to look at the character of each of the medieval chequers and significant areas such as The Close and main thoroughfares.

7 Summary of Recommendations for Salisbury Conservation Area

7.1 The summary of recommendations arising out of the appraisal of the Salisbury Conservation Area is the:

- disaggregation of Salisbury into four distinct conservation areas namely: Salisbury City, Britford, Milford Hill and Old Manor Hospital;
- amendments to the boundaries of Salisbury City, Milford Hill and Old Manor Hospital (none to Britford);
- the identification of buildings at risk;
- the highlighting of unlisted buildings of local importance;
- suggestions for the improvement of the public realm.

8 Article 4 Directions

8.1 The management plan also includes proposals for Article 4 Directions, i.e. the removal of certain householders' permitted development rights. At present, there are a number of alterations that householders can make to their properties without the need for planning permission, even in conservation areas, for example replacement windows. The character of conservation areas can be completely eroded by piecemeal, uncontrolled changes to domestic properties. Each conservation area has been assessed to determine what the potential threats are, and whether the conservation area would benefit from such alterations being controlled.

8.2 It should be noted that the proposals for Article 4 Directions must undergo a separate, legally-prescribed consultation with individual landowners, which needs to take place within a six-month period. Due to current resource issues and changes brought about by local government reform, it is not being proposed to take this part of the document forward at present.

9 Recommendation:

9.1 That the City of Salisbury, Britford, Milford Hill and Old Manor Hospital Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans be presented to Cabinet with a recommendation to approve the document, including the proposed boundary changes to the conservation area.

Andrew Guest

Area Development Manager (South)

Report Author: Jocelyn Sage, Senior Planning Officer (Conservation)

Background Papers: City of Salisbury, Britford, Milford Hill and Old Manor Hospital Conservation Area Appraisals. Available at

<http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=148&MIId=7306&Ver=4>

Appendices: Appendix 1: City of Salisbury, Britford, Milford Hill and Old Manor Hospital Management Plan Consultation responses tables

Implications:

- **Financial:** There are no financial implications in respect of this report. All the work has been completed, and the costs already contained within existing budgets.
- **Legal:** A further report would need to be brought before committee and cabinet in respect of the Article 4 directions which have their own statutory procedures (and human rights implications).
- **Human Rights:** Consultation has been undertaken in accordance with the Council's own consultation procedures.
- **Personnel:** N/A.
- **Community Safety:** N/A.
- **Environmental implications:** N/A.
- **Council's Core Values:** Being environmentally conscientious.
- **Wards Affected:** Fisherton & Bemerton; Harnham; St Edmund & Milford; St Francis & Stratford; St Paul's.