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# Report

**Subject** : Amesbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan  
**Report to** : The Cabinet  
**Date** : Wednesday 1 October 2008  
**Author** : Principal Conservation Officer  
**Cabinet Member for Planning:** Councillor Paul Clegg

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**1. Report Summary:**

This report briefly describes the background to the conservation area appraisal and proposed management plan for Amesbury Conservation Area, the process that has been undertaken, the consultation responses, and the views of Northern Area Committee, and recommends the final draft of the document for approval by Cabinet.

**2. Background to the Appraisal and Management Plan:**

There are 70 conservation areas in Salisbury District 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".

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.

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



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### **3. Planning Policy Context:**

The local planning authority is required by the legislation to periodically review its 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.

There is also guidance from central government in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994)*, which advises that the local authority should formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. This is achieved by producing management plans for each conservation area.

Salisbury District Council has encapsulated the broad principles of the government guidance in its existing local plan policies (policies CN8-CN17). This will shortly be reviewed as the council starts to produce new policies through the local development framework. Planning applications that affect the character of the conservation area should be considered on their individual merits, in the light of the Local Plan policies, and taking into account all other material considerations. The appraisals and management plans are used to guide and inform the decision-making process.

The importance of conservation area appraisals and their associated management plans is expressed in Central Government Best Value Performance Indicators BVPI 219a, b and c. These indicators measure the number of conservation areas, the number of conservation areas that have published appraisals, and the number of conservation areas that have published management plans respectively.

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 Document:**

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.

So far the only published appraisal that has been done is for the Old Sarum Airfield Conservation Area (at the time of designation). No other appraisals have been published, and no management plans have been published at all. The first batch of nine conservation area appraisals and associated management plans are currently being presented to the relevant area committees for final comments. Northern Area Committee expressed a wish for the Amesbury Conservation Area and Management Plan to be fast tracked, due to imminent pressures from development in the conservation area.

The process that has been undertaken in producing the final document is outlined later in the report. It has been a lengthy process of preparation, consultation and redrafting. Whilst the draft document has carried some weight to date in assisting with the determination of planning applications and for use in planning appeals, it is hoped that the report will obtain Cabinet's final approval to enable it to be weighed appropriately as a material consideration in the planning process.

## **5. The Completed Document:**

The final draft 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 amendments to the boundaries to take account of the changes that had taken place in the intervening period).

## **6. Article 4 Directions:**

The proposed management plan for Amesbury presently makes suggestions 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 replacing 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.

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 LGR, it is not proposed to take this part of the document forward at present.

## **7. Methodology and Public Consultation:**

Conservation consultants were employed by the council to produce draft conservation area appraisals and management plans, and began carrying out surveys of twelve conservation areas from September 2005 onwards. The survey work was carried out in accordance with the guidance mentioned above. The draft documents were reformatted and illustrated by council officers in preparation for public consultation.

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 the evidence base as set out in the approved Statement of Community Involvement.

The first stage of the public consultation exercise, involving four conservation area appraisals and management plans (Amesbury, Dinton, Steeple Langford and Hindon), was undertaken in July/August 2007, and ran for six weeks. Letters and CDs, containing copies of the documents were sent to a number of people, including the chair and vice chair of the relevant area committee, ward members, portfolio and deputy portfolio holder, parish and town councils, and local organisations. Copies of the documents were placed on the council's website. An advert was placed in the Salisbury Journal and site notices were displayed in the conservation areas. A presentation was made to the parish and town councils, and exhibition panels were produced.

A second consultation exercise was carried out in February 2008 for a further five conservation area appraisals and management plans (Broad Chalke, Wylke, Durrington, Tisbury and Downton).

Following the main consultation exercise, a further consultation was carried out directly with owners/occupiers affected by proposed changes to the boundaries of the conservation areas. This process, which has involved further amendments to the boundaries, has only just been completed.

A summary of the responses received for the consultation on the Amesbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan can be found in Appendix 1. Officers examined all of the responses received in conjunction with the consultants, and amendments were made to the document where necessary. The table in Appendix 1 shows the actions that were taken to address the issues that were raised.

The document was presented to the Northern Area Committee on 28 August 2008. The minutes of this meeting said:

*That members wish to see the 'Proposals for Enhancement' from page 23 onwards removed from the main body of the document and included in a separate appendix which clearly identifies them as indicative examples of the type of development that may occur in Amesbury, rather than firm proposals.*

**8. Recommendation(s):**

- (1) Approve the conservation area appraisal for Amesbury, subject to amendments to the document suggested by the Northern Area Committee;
- (2) Approve the recommendations in the management plan, including the proposed boundary changes for the Amesbury, subject to amendments to the document suggested by the Northern Area Committee.

**9. Background Papers:**

Draft Amesbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan September 2008.

**10. Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Amesbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix 2: Amesbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation responses table

Appendix 3: Amesbury Boundary Changes Consultation Responses table

**11. 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 (POD)** : N/A
- **Climate Change** : N/A
- **Community Safety** : N/A
- **Environmental** : N/A
- **ICT** : N/A
- **Equalities** : N/A
- **Council's Core Values** : Being environmentally conscientious.
- **Wards Affected** : Amesbury West and Amesbury East

## Amesbury Consultation Responses

Respondent	Issue No.	Issues Raised	Officer Comment	Action
Salisbury Civic Society	1	Agree with the CAA	N/A	N/A
	2	Agree with the boundary extensions	N/A	N/A
	3	Newbuild on the corner of London Road/Countess Road should respect character of extended CA, i.e. 3-storey, which appears as 2-2.5-storey	Agree.	Amend appraisal to say that any development on this site should be traditional scale (no greater than 2 ½ storey)
County Archaeologist		No comments	N/A	N/A
Amesbury Town Centre Residents' Association	4	Broadly agree with document	N/A	N/A
	5	A345 should be diverted to reduce traffic flow through the residential area	The area is more mixed than residential. Impact of traffic was not acknowledged as being the primary concern in the cons area.	N/A
	6	Number of detractors: Old Co-op store, old Logan's store, the old terraces in the High Street, the windows in Abbey Square	Acknowledge there are detractors. A number of things can be controlled under the planning legislation in conservation areas, and there are measures to address general townscape issues.  Noted.	N/A
	7	Some poor planning decisions cited, e.g. the co-op, 43 Church Street and adjacent property, and these sorts of mistakes should be avoided in future	Acknowledge potential confusion.	N/A
	8	41 Church Street is listed, but is not mentioned on the list of buildings of local importance.	This was not identified in the survey.	Amend appraisals to make note that the list of locally important buildings do not include the listed buildings (these are identified on one of the maps).

	9	Barn at rear of 39 Church Street (Burden's Undertakers) should be on list of BAR		AM to check on site.
Development Services (Judy Howles)	10	P.3 – origins of place name indicate the town may have grown up 'beside' Amesbury	Noted, although does not change the essential understanding of the town and background to the conservation area.	N/A
	11	P.5 – map of archaeological potential should include Vespasian's Camp, SAM should be excavated.	This has not been identified separately because it is scheduled, and this overrides any archaeological potential issues. Archaeology should be protected until either threatened or a well-reasoned argument has been made to EH.	N/A
	12	P.9 – 'The centre' is not of special character, so should it be in the CA?	Do not agree. The centre is of importance for its landscape qualities; openness, mature trees and grass and the value of this to the setting of historic buildings. The buildings around it enclose the space in a positive way.	N/A
	13	P.11 – Because of the alterations to the Avon Buildings (windows, doors) it is not worthy of CA status	Do not agree. Despite the window replacement this terrace is of good townscape character.	N/A
	14	P.12 – The Conservation area should include the chequered cottages on Flower Lane (good character from high wall and storage sheds)	Flower Lane – there is an error on the map showing the proposed boundary of the conservation area.	Plan to be amended to include cottages.
	15	:and Port Royal opposite (a bungalow from the 'camp settlement')	What is the character of this building?	To be checked with respondent.
	16	P.13 The buildings at the corner of Countess Road and the High Street are too high – an example of what not to do in the future. See appeal decision.	-	JS to check appeal decision.

17	P.19 – Fig 30 has been superseded – this wall has been built upon its entire length	Noted.	Replace Fig 30 with photo of Vine Cottage (AM to take photo).
18	P.19 - Fig 31 has been demolished in part and rebuilt	Noted, however photo shows example of good cob wall.	N/A
19	P.24 – The centre- green area - is visual amenity. Appraisal overlooks the function of the A345 (heavy through traffic) and advantage of entering car park without traversing the shopping street. Best way to enhance would be more planting, NOT building.	Having carefully re-examined this, we are of the opinion that new buildings could create an active, positive frontage.	N/A
20	P.24 - Garage site – omit the advice on this (see appeal decision). The ground is higher than site opposite. Also danger of taking pedestrians across busy road if shops proposed here.	Established use in the area is mixed.	JS to check appeal decision.
21	P.26 – A replacement pedestrian bridge would be needed if this one removed. Replacement with one of modern design?	Pedestrian safety could be consideration of the design. There is good justification for removing this unattractive bridge: By reintroducing a narrowing of the carriageway on the historic bridge, this would serve as a good traffic calming device and preserves and enhances the character of the historic buildings.	N/A
22	Arch. Pot Map – Include Vespasian’s Camp	See previous comments on SAM.	N/A
23	Char Areas Map – Omit the Centre.	The centre is integral to character of area and is enclosed by historic buildings.	N/A
24	Church St & High St should read as one.	Disagree. Church Street and High Street have very different character, and should not be read as one.	N/A
25	Add Flower lane, but omit Avon Bldgs.	Agree to add Flower Lane, but do not agree about Avon Bldgs (see previous comments).	Amend to include Flower Lane. Amend document.

	26	Townscape – Include Flower Lane (impt boundary wall).	Agree.	N/A
	27	Exclude school as too well hidden to be cited as a landmark and poor windows.	Disagree. School makes a significant contribution to the townscape character.	N/A
	28	Include Salisbury St/Salisbury Rd junction as gateway in need of action.	Development has overtaken the production of the document, and inclusion now would be of limited use. This is adjacent to the conservation area, and its setting would be a material consideration.	N/A
	29	Boundary Review – Omit The Centre and School Lane. Add Flower Lane.	See previous comments.	N/A
	30	Management Issues – The park is an asset to the CA. Should it be an objective to seek its opening to the public?	This may be desirable but not within remit of the conservation area appraisal.	N/A
	31	Omit public realm improvements to s side of Salisbury St, as it was enhanced 10-15 years ago, and is not in need.	Noted, however, the spirit of the proposals in the appraisal is to create a homogenous townscape, and therefore covers this area too.	N/A
	32	Article 4 – not worth having any since CA already too altered.	Do not agree. There is strong advice from EH to consider the additional controls from Article 4s in order to control future development, and retain any remaining features.	N/A
South West Regional Assembly		No comments received	N/A	N/A
Network Rail		No comments	N/A	N/A



Amesbury Society	33	Area from Vespasian's Camp to South Mill is integral to town's development and contributes to character. Should it be in CA?	Importance of the Watermeadows is acknowledged as important in terms of the setting of the conservation area, and that is a material consideration in proposals affecting it. Do not consider that there is adequate justification for this area to be included in the conservation area.	N/A
	34	Southern part of Countess East area contains rare Saxon dwellings, etc. yet have no conservation status.	Noted, however do not consider that this is sufficient justification to include it in the conservation area.	N/A
	35	BARs – should include Gay's Cave and Baluster Bridge in Abbey Park.	Agreed.	Amend BAR list to include these items.
	36	There is Saxon evidence to rear of Antrobus Arms and on site of new Co-op store.	Noted, and this is mentioned in the archaeological potential.	N/A
	37	New development should use traditional materials found in the CA. Important to emphasise importance of good craftsmanship (ref. flint blocks!). Should respect the scale of the existing buildings.	Noted.	N/A
	38	Remaining cob walls should be protected – few are left.	Noted.	N/A
	39	Bins are an eyesore in the High Street.	It is acknowledged that this is an issue.	Amend appraisal to add that issue of bin provision, storage and collection should be given proper consideration when considering proposals for new development.
	40	Trees in the CA should be protected and unauthorised work enforced.	Agree.	N/A

	41	Panoramic view of watermeadows is spoilt by ruined sluices and other structures.	The watermeadows are outside the conservation area. Do not agree that views out of the conservation area are spoilt by these features.	N/A
	42	Fig 33 – these are actually the buildings fronting what was formerly Tanners Lane (Frog Lane continued west to river).	Noted.	N/A
	43	If war memorial is to be resited it should be restored to full height.	Agree.	Amend appraisal to mention this.

### Amesbury Boundary Consultation Responses

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Issue No.</b>	<b>Issues Raised</b>	<b>Officer Comment</b>	<b>Action</b>
L&S Paxton	1	5 Kitchener Road is only 5 years old and cannot see why it should be included in the conservation area. Feel this property should be excluded, otherwise no objections.	Agree	Consultants to amend proposed boundary changes to omit this property.
Mrs Doris M Richards	2	Feels that there is little left to conserve of Flower Lane since the demolition of thatched cottages, blacksmith's cottage, Redworth House etc.	The proposed amendment to the boundary would only include a small section of Flower Lane, and is considered that the part proposed for inclusion contains important characteristics of the area.	No action.
Paul Oldfield	3	Would like to support the proposals to extend the conservation area to include the NE side of School Lane, however would like reassurance regarding a number of issues (relating to works already carried out and works proposed in the future).	AM has discussed the implications of inclusion in the conservation area with Mr Oldfield.	No further action.
David R Gill	4	Number 1 The Firs is only 4 years old, and does not agree that it should be included in the conservation area. Main concern is that the conservation area will place more restrictions on the property, and is unconvinced that conservation area designation would be in his interests bearing in mind previous poor planning decisions that have taken place within his immediate setting.	There is a cohesion to Flower Lane that includes some modern buildings within it. The proposed boundary is considered to be logical. It is considered that no. 1 The Firs makes a positive contribution to the whole group.	No action.