



To: Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate
Change: Councillor Tim Ward
Report by: Head of Planning Services
Relevant scrutiny
committee: Environment 12/3/13
Scrutiny
Committee
Wards affected: All

UPDATE ON PRO-ACTIVE CONSERVATION WORK Non-Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 This report reviews the work that has been completed in 2012-13 as part of the current pro-active conservation work programme. The purpose of the report is to update members on the work has been completed, what is outstanding, and what is proposed for 2013-14. The report also notes the spend to date on the programme.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to approve the following:

- a) To note Appendix 1 which comprises an update of the programme of pro-active conservation work undertaken in 2012-13 and work still to be completed in 2013-14.
- b) To agree the budget carry over from 2012-13 to support the remainder of the programme.

3. Background

3.1 For the past several years, a series of projects have been completed under the pro-active conservation work programme including reviews of several Conservation Areas and their boundaries, and various Suburbs and Approaches Studies. The following report details the work undertaken in 2012-13, the work still being completed, and the work proposed for 2013-14. The information is presented in a table for ease of reference. The table is attached as Appendix 1.

- 3.2 The original pro-active conservation work programme was set up in 2008-9. A look back at work completed since then reveals the following achievements so far:
- Completion of nine Conservation Area Appraisals (either updates or new documents), including appraisals for Trumpington, Mill Road and St. Matthews (now “Mill Road”), Storey’s Way, Conduit Head Road, Chesterton and Ferry Lane, West Cambridge, New Town and Glisson Road, Castle and Victoria, and Riverside and Stourbridge Common
 - Completion of seven Suburbs and Approaches Studies, Huntington Road, Madingley Road, Barton Road, Newmarket Road, Long Road, Hills Road and Trumpington Road
 - The total spent on the pro-active conservation work since 2008 is £65,103.83.
- 3.3 The project work for 2013-14 will focus on updating existing Conservation Area Appraisals and on document storage, including improvement of conservation information databases in digital format and related data collection. Supporting the Local Plan review will remain a high priority, this year and next.
- 3.4 A budget carry over is needed to enable the proposed work programme to be completed in full. The Executive Councillor is requested to agree a carry over into 2013-14 of £24,885.20 (the current budget balance at the time of preparing this report). Together with a separate budget for historic wall painting signage restoration of £15,000. The total available budget to fund outstanding work totals £39,885.20. The current outstanding project work is expected to cost £36,500 (see total at end of Appendix 1), which provides for a small amount of contingency within the available budget. Much of the outstanding work should be completed in 2013, however larger projects e.g. certain Conservation Area reviews, will have to be completed in 2014 (such as the review of the Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal and the Kite Conservation Area Appraisal for example).
- 3.5 Some flexibility may be necessary in respect of the final budget amounts allocated to individual projects, and so may require re-allocation of monies across projects. If this is required, officers will ensure the Executive Councillor is in agreement with doing so first, and minor variations in budget expenditure within the overall budget envelope will not normally be reported to Environment Scrutiny Committee.

- 3.6 The Principal Conservation and Design Officer post in planning services has now been filled and improved the capacity within the team to undertake the full range of work set out herein (though consultant support and a budget to support same is necessary for specific pieces of work as noted in Appendix 1).

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

Funding has been earmarked from the existing Pro-active Conservation Programme budget as noted.

(b) Staffing Implications

Officers in the Urban Design and Conservation Team are leading the work and procuring the services of a specialist consultant to undertake the bulk of the Conservation Area Appraisal work for example.

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

There are no direct equality or diversity implications.

(d) Environmental Implications

The environmental implications of the programme is considered to be positive as it supports the quality and continuity of the city's historic environment which is positive for residents, business and tourism alike.

(e) Procurement

Specialist consultants have been procured to undertake some of the work, and the budget accounts for this cost.

(f) Consultation and communication

Consultation with residents and stakeholders is a key part of the Pro-active Conservation Programme. This relates in particular to the review of Conservation Area Appraisals. Officers consult on draft appraisals for example and inform those whose property will be impacted by a new Conservation Area designation and invite comment in reply. Relevant ward members are kept informed as and when area-based projects are undertaken and consulted upon.

(g) Community Safety

There are no direct community safety implications.

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Report on 2012-13 Pro-active Conservation Programme

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Pro-active conservation work completed in 2012-13 and work currently being completed and planned

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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Appendix 1 – Pro-active conservation work completed in 2012-13 and work currently being completed and planned

Project	Progress to date	Estimated Cost
Trumpington Road Suburbs & Approaches Studies	Approved by Environment Scrutiny Committee in June 2012.	Paid for out of previous financial years
Castle & Victoria Road Conservation Area Appraisal	Approved by Environment Scrutiny Committee in June 2012.	Paid for from previous financial years
Local Plan Review	The Urban Design & Conservation Team has been contributing to this work at all stages to date e.g. Issues and Options report, drafting of policies, site specific assessments, etc..	Officer time
Review of Roof Extensions Design Guide (guidance is related to Policy 3/14 in the 2006 Local Plan)	Draft policy has been prepared which once agreed by the Executive Councillor will form the basis of updating the current guidance. The guidance is a useful tool in pre-application discussions and as part of application review and reporting once submitted. During 2012, it was considered that it would be premature to update the guidance until any new policy was supported by members, hence the focus on drafting new policy instead of updating guidance.	Officer time
Shopfront Design Guide – review (referred to in Policy 3/15 of the 2006 Local Plan)	Draft policy has been prepared which once agreed by the Executive Councillor will form the basis of updating the current guidance. The guidance is a useful tool in pre-application discussions and as part of application review and reporting once submitted. During 2012, it was considered that it would be premature to update the guidance until any new policy was supported by members, hence the focus on drafting new policy instead of updating guidance.	Officer time
Improved use Information Technology (IT) for cataloguing Listed Building information	Due to the vacancy of a key post in the conservation-side of the Urban Design and Conservation Team, work on improving the use of IT has not progressed as intended. Now that a Principal Conservation and Design Officer is in post (as of February 18, 2013), there is capacity in the team to undertake work such as storing building/site photographs against the list descriptions and having information from the English Heritage “Greenbacks” in an electronic format.	£5,000

<p>Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs) (Policy 4/12) – update of information</p>	<p>As noted in the 2012 programme report, the information on some of the 1,000 BLI's in the city have been reviewed by students/work experience personnel but the information prepared needs to be verified by a Conservation Officer for accuracy and completeness. It would be appropriate to get a conservation professional to finish off all the descriptions so that the list is finalised and any others put forward could be added in a more timely fashion.</p> <p>Before any review is undertaken, however, the policy position on this matter will need to be clarified as part of the Local Plan review. New policy to support the continued protection of BLIs has been drafted and will be included together with other draft policies for consideration by the Executive Councillor and the Environment Scrutiny Committee. Subject to any policy approval, officers can embark on further updates to the list of information on BLIs.</p>	<p>Subject to future Local Plan policy</p> <p>A small budget could be re-apportioned within the existing programme budget to this work as necessary</p>
<p>Historic core public realm audit & project definition</p>	<p>This audit/project has not been undertaken due to a) the need to draft appropriate Local Plan objectives and policy first and b) the Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal will be progressed in the second tranche of Conservation Area Appraisals (starting later in 2013). Such an audit will ideally best follow on from a clear policy and up to date appraisal.</p>	<p>Budget would form part of Local Plan work & Historic Core Conservation Area review</p>
<p>Conservation Area reviews (Policy 4/11)</p>	<p>The following five appraisals were set out to be reviewed in 2012 (now being completed in two tranches):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brooklands Avenue (2002) 2. Newnham Croft (1999) 3. Southacre (2000) <p>Officers have received written drafts of these appraisals prepared by the consultant (The Conservation Studio) and are currently reviewing them for accuracy and completing relevant mapping for each. Public consultation is intended to take place in March 2013 for each with the final draft appraisals to be</p>	<p>Consultant costs:</p> <p>Together these three will cost £4,000</p>

	<p>considered by the Environment Scrutiny Committee in June of this year.</p> <p>4. The Kite (1996) 5. Historic Core (2006)</p> <p>This second tranche of two appraisals involves more detailed work and planning due to their size (Historic Core) or length of time since the last review (The Kite). Officers plan to commence these two reviews this year and the budget already allocated is sufficient to support this work. For information the following represents all other Conservation Area Appraisals and their dates of approval:</p> <p>Station Area (2004) Historic Core (2006) Storeys Way (2007) De Freville Avenue (2009) Chesterton and Ferry Lane (2009) Conduit Heat Road (2009) Trumpington (2010) Mill Road (2011) West Cambridge (2011) Castle and Victoria (2012) Riverside and Stourbridge (2012) New Town and Glisson Road (2012)</p>	<p>Proposed cost of approx. £12,500</p>
Wall Painting Signage/Advertising	A report was taken to the January 2013 Environment Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Councillor agreed to continue with a pilot project of selected locations.	£15,000
TOTAL		<u>£36,500</u>

Note: the current balance in cost code 22425-0470-75897 (Pro-active Conservation Work) is £24,885.20. The wall painting signage/advertising has a separate cost code and the current balance stands at the cost agreed in January 2013 of £15,000. The available budget from both totals £39,885.20.