



To: Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth
Report by: David Roberts, Head of Policy and Projects
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment Scrutiny Committee
Wards affected: Castle

DRAFT APPRAISAL FOR HOWES PLACE PROPOSED CONSERVATION AREA
Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The City Council has duties under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to periodically review its Conservation Area designations, boundaries, and consider any new areas, and under Section 71 of the Act to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.
- 1.2 This particular area of Huntingdon Road was identified as an area to be considered for designation as a Conservation Area following the 2008/09 Suburbs and Approaches study.
- 1.3 Consultants drafted the Appraisal and proposed boundary. A period of public consultation was held in 2009, and the majority of the responses were in favour. However concerns were raised that the proposed boundary did not take into account the adjoining NIAB development site.
- 1.4 It was agreed that a decision on the proposed Conservation Area be postponed until after that on the planning application for the NIAB site. This was considered by the Joint Development Control Committee in July 2010, and the draft Appraisal and Conservation Area boundary have been revised accordingly. The revised boundary and Appraisal were the subject of a further consultation (by letter and via the website) which ended on 17 September 2010.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to approve designation of the Conservation Area and the content of the draft Appraisal.

3. Background

- 3.1 Funding of £30,000 per year for pro-active conservation work has been agreed for each of the financial years 2008-9, 2009-10 and 2010-11.
- 3.2 The Huntingdon Road Suburbs and Approaches study was carried out as part of the 2008-9 Pro-active Conservation programme. It identified Howes Place as a potential Conservation Area, and consultants were engaged to carry out the survey work.
- 3.3 Conservation Areas are defined as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
- 3.4 Amenity societies, English Heritage, County Highways and Planning, Environment Agency, the Ward Councillors and the County Councillor were consulted as statutory consultees.
- 3.5 The initial formal public consultation period was held in July and August 2009. The public consultation was promoted on the City Council website with a link to the draft Appraisal and a comments form that could be completed on-line. Letters were sent to all properties in the area.
- 3.6 The consultation received 8 responses: 7 in support of the proposed Conservation Area, and the appraisal and 1 against. A summary of the responses has been included as Appendix 1.
- 3.7 Those in favour also pointed out the lack of acknowledgement of the planning permissions already granted on the NIAB site, but welcomed the proposed designation. The one response against was with regard to the lack of acknowledgement of permissions granted at the NIAB site, the current applications awaiting determination and the consequent confliction of interests.
- 3.8 As a result of the comments received, amendments were made to the draft Appraisal, and consideration of the proposed Conservation Area was postponed until after the approval of the planning application for the NIAB site. The Appraisal text and the draft Conservation Area boundary have been amended to take account of the approved planning applications.
- 3.9 A second consultation was carried out from 20 August until 17 September 2010, where the majority of responses were in favour, and where not the document has been altered to suit. Full details of these responses are included in Appendix 2. An additional chapter has also been created specifically to take into account the permissions granted regarding the adjoining NIAB development site.

- 3.10 Comments were also made regarding the proposed inclusion of Nos. 198 and 200 Huntingdon Road and the appropriateness of this with regard to the character of the area. It was agreed that the proposed boundary is now tight around the Howes Place properties and the original NIAB building, and as such Nos. 198 and 200 Huntingdon Road are not considered to make a positive contribution to the established character of this area. These properties have now been excluded from the proposed Conservation Area boundary.
- 3.11 The permissions granted included C/07/0005/FUL for the NIAB headquarters; this application involves demolition of nos 14-15 Howes Place. 187 houses north of the access road were approved under C/07/1124/REM. The larger part of the development, bordering the proposed Conservation Area and comprising 1593 houses, was approved (C/07/0003/OUT) subject to a Section 106 agreement by the Joint Development Control Committee on 14 July 2010.
- 3.12 The revised draft Appraisal is included as Appendix 3.
- 3.13 Members have 2 recommendations to consider. The first is to approve the designation of a new Conservation Area, and therefore where the boundary lies; and the second is to approve the draft Appraisal.
- 3.14 Approval of designation of a new Conservation Area at the NIAB and Howes Place location: the area is a 1921 architect designed development of 15 houses and a 3 storey institutional building. Later additions have been sympathetically integrated into the original plan using the original formal landscaping. The buildings and landscape retain their essential characteristics and are little altered externally, with the exception of the large extension (to be replaced as part of the approved headquarters proposals, which involve the demolition of nos 14-15 Howes Place). The relationship of the main NIAB building with Nos.1 – 13 Howes Place is still maintained despite the private sale of properties in Howes Place. It will not be affected by the demolition of nos 14-15 Howes Place (which are separate from nos 1-13, on the other side of the road). The area should therefore be designated as a Conservation Area in order to protect and enhance its special character.
- 3.15 Approval of the Appraisal: the draft Appraisal provides a detailed assessment, in accordance with national best practice, of the areas special architectural or historic interest. That assessment shows that the area, and its proposed extension, clearly meets the statutory Conservation Area criteria of an “area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. It is therefore recommended that the draft Appraisal be approved and adopted.

3.16 The consultants have raised, within the draft Appraisal, the potential for Article 4 (2) direction(s) restricting specified “permitted development” rights; these could be used to help retain original features of the area, for example timber sash windows and front boundary walls. Any such direction would have to be the subject of separate consultation, coupled with preparation of guidance on such features and how they can be retained. This may be something to be considered in the future.

4. Implications

Staff

The extensions to the Conservation Areas will result in some additional workload arising from planning and tree work applications that involve properties and trees in the Conservation Area boundaries.

Finance

The financial implications are set out within the report above.

Environmental

The environmental implications are set out within the report above.

Community Safety

There are no direct community safety implications.

Equalities and Diversity

There are no direct physical equality and diversity implications. Involvement of local people in the work followed the guidance set out in the Statement of Community Involvement.

5. Background papers

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

Planning Policy Statement 5

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps5

English Heritage: Guidance on Conservation Appraisals, February 2006

www.english-heritage.org.uk/.../guidance-conservation-area-appraisals-2006

Huntingdon Road Suburbs and Approaches study, March 2009

<http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/docs/Suburbs%20and%20approaches%20Huntingdon%20Road.pdf>

Draft NIAB and Howes Place Appraisal, for proposed Conservation Area, June 2009, revised 2010

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6. Appendices

Appendix 1

Summary of responses to 2009 public consultation

Appendix 2

Summary of responses to 2010 public consultation

Appendix 3

Howes Place Appraisal, for proposed Conservation Area, June 2009 revised 2010

7. Inspection of papers

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

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