



To: Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport: Councillor K Blencowe
Report by: Director of Environment
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment 28/06/2016
Wards affected: Trumpington

Barrow Road – Conservation Area Appraisal

Non-Key Decision

1. Executive summary

Following resident's promotion of a conservation area at Barrow Road, the preparation of an appraisal (largely carried out by residents) and formal public consultation on a draft appraisal document during March 2016, the consultation response – overwhelmingly in support of a conservation area - is summarised in this report and the Executive Councillor recommended to designate a conservation area.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

2.1 To approve the Barrow Road Conservation Area Appraisal document.

2.2 To authorise designation of a conservation area at Barrow Road delineated as set out in the appraisal and appendix 3 of this report.

3. Background

3.1 Under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

(1) Every local planning authority—

(a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and

(b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas

(2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.

3.2 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”.

3.3 The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport agreed to the preparation of a draft conservation area appraisal for Barrow Road (minute 16/43/ENV) as part of approval of the pro-active conservation programme.

3.4 Barrow Road has general significance for the city because it remains one of the most complete examples of Cambridge’s rapid suburban expansion during the inter-war years. Developed by Trinity College in the 1930s with most houses designed by the same architectural practice, its layout and architecture are said to exemplify the combination of Arts and Crafts architecture and town design inspired by the Garden City Movement that was typical of the time.

3.5 With the support of residents, the City Council published for consultation, a Conservation Area Appraisal for Barrow Road off Trumpington Road to the south of the city. This Appraisal forms the basis of a proposal to designate the older phases of Barrow Road as a Conservation Area.

3.6 The formal public consultation period was held from the 1st to the 31st of March 2016. The public consultation was promoted on the City Council website with a link to the draft Appraisal and a comments form. A hard copy of the document was available at Cambridge City Council Customer Service Centre for reference. The amenity societies, English Heritage, County Highways and Planning, the Environment Agency, and Ward Councillors were consulted as statutory consultees.

3.7 The consultation received 39 responses, of which at least 31 were from residents of Barrow Road. All except three noted below expressed unreserved support for the appraisal and conservation area designation. There was agreement with the way that the key characteristics of the area have been described in Section 7 of the Appraisal, and with the Guidance in Section 9 which sets out the sort of requirements that would protect and maintain the character of the road. Comments included that the detailed and thorough Appraisal provides an excellent outline of the merits of Barrow Road in terms of both architectural and road design and makes a convincing

case for designating the road a conservation area. A summary table of the responses has been included as Appendix 1. The C20th Society responded in support. A former Cambridge University director of architecture also wrote in support of the appraisal and designation.

3.8 Two residents supported but with some qualification that forms of extensions allowed in the past would now face greater scrutiny. The officer response to this is that the appraisal comments at sections 7 and 8 on what would be expected to be achieved. A further owner wishes the house to be left out of a possible conservation area as he is concerned inclusion would make future maintenance / repair of the house unaffordable and that the rest of the conservation area would not suffer by the exclusion of the house. The officer response to this is that the designated area has to be based on architectural or historic interest and that the house in question is part of the earlier layout and is contemporary with the houses opposite. It should therefore be included.

3.9 Cambridge Past, Present and Future (CPPF) supports designation and makes detailed comments about the content of the draft appraisal. The response from CPPF is too long to detail with other responses and so is attached here separately as appendix 2. In particular, CPPF consider that the initial designation should be Barrow Road but that in the future, Bentley and Porson Roads should be included within the conservation area. The Officer view however is that Porson Road is not sufficiently consistent with Barrow Road to form part of a conservation area with it. The Porson Road houses are a post-war development, architecturally undistinguished and different in character to Barrow Road and lack the special historic or architectural interest necessary for inclusion within a conservation area.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

Financial costs of the designation of a conservation area would be advertising and officer time and are within existing budgets.

(b) Staffing Implications

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

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

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. There are additional responsibilities on householders living within conservation areas who will need to apply for planning permission for certain works to their dwellings and their trees.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

Permission would be required for the demolition of a building or for works to trees. Permitted development allowances are more restricted in conservation areas. Climate change rating: Nil direct impact.

(e) **Procurement**

No procurement implications.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

Consultations as set out in the report above.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no community safety implications.

5. Background papers

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

Consultation draft Barrow Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/consultations/have-your-say-on-the-proposed-barrow-road-conservation-area>

6. Appendices

1. Officer response on CPPF points

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. Summary of the consultation responses from residents.

Responses to consultation on Barrow Road were received from residents at: Nos. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 1 Barrow Close. Several non-Barrow Road Cambridge residents also responded.

Anonymised responses:

Supporting representations:

I am writing in strong support of the proposed Barrow Road conservation area. Having grown up in this road and still living in Cambridge, I am well aware of the value of the ensemble .. designed and built in a harmonious group along the lines of a "garden city". The similar style of houses, though each is different, together with their pleasing environment, including wide verges, uniform gas lamps in a style contemporary with the houses and an avenue of ornamental cherry trees, should be preserved, in the face of attempts to demolish houses one by one and replace each one with a different style of house (even if only slightly different). Barrow Road is important for the city as a whole because it is one of the most complete examples of Cambridge's expansion during the 1920's/1930's. Maintenance of the avenue of cherry trees should be required as part of the conservation area.

We are, I believe, the newest residents of Barrow Road.....We were very much drawn to Barrow Road given its unique character in the City. Whilst we had an appreciation for the road before moving here, we are constantly marvelling at the wonderful sense of serenity, space and history. Particularly given the rapid development of Cambridge, it would seem imperative to maintain such a special road for future generations.

We have lived here for 47 years and feel that the area deserves some protection from the general relaxation in development standards and densities. Please note our support for this proposal.

We truly believe that Conservation Area status for Barrow Road is the right thing to do. The road in its entirety is more than the sum of its parts - that although the individual houses are not necessarily of outstanding architectural merit, their unity of style and materials and the lay-out of the road and gardens together form a unique asset, a valuable contribution to the architectural history of the city of Cambridge.

In relation to the draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Barrow Road, and as long-term residents (my father bought no. -- in 1951), we would like to register our support for Barrow Road to be designated as a Conservation Area.

The Conservation Appraisal for Barrow road. Please, accept this email, as our support to the application of Barrow road to be designated as a Conservation Area.

As residents of Barrow Road, we are in agreement with the issues listed in Section 8 of the Appraisal document, and fully support the proposed guidance as set out in Section 9.

We are thoroughly in support of the application for Barrow Road to become a conservation area.

Thank you very much for producing the Barrow Road Consultation document. We fully support the proposal to make Barrow Road a conservation area.

We give our full support to the suggestion that Barrow Road be designated as a Conservation Area.

We are writing to give our strongest support for Barrow Road to be designated as a Conservation Area. The road is unique and should be preserved. Thank you.

With regard to the above draft appraisal, we wholeheartedly support the application of Barrow Road to be designated as a Conservation Area.

We at number XX Barrow road give our wholehearted support to the application of Barrow Road to be designated as a Conservation Area." Cambridge has a few roads that need to have a little extra care to keep them looking and in keeping with what they were set out to bring to the local area. Therefore hopefully once in a conservation area this will help to preserve the road appearance for many years to come.

Thank you for your letter of 26th February. I strongly believe that Barrow Road should be designated as a Conservation Area.

As mentioned in your letter, the houses are a good example of the Arts and Craft style of architecture of the 1930s and there are very few such examples in Cambridge. Unfortunately one unique house in the road has already been demolished and a second house (at the entrance of the road and part of a "gateway entrance") is due to be demolished. I believe that Barrow Road should be preserved and being a part of a Conservation Area will surely help to achieve this.

I very much hope that the consultation will be considered favourably by the Council, the Environment Scrutiny Committee and the executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

I have known Barrow Road for many years and from time to time visit friends and colleagues who live there. In this time I have observed the street's progressive evolution and enjoyed its special qualities at all seasons. I congratulate you on the substance and rigour of the Appraisal, which admirably describes the history of the street's development. I consider that the characterisation of the qualities of the overall layout, with its clear basis in the principles enumerated by Raymond Unwin in *Town Planning in Practice*, to be admirable. Similarly, I feel that the description of the architecture of the individual houses effectively captures their modest virtues. As is stated in the Appraisal, the quality of Barrow Road derives from the whole ensemble and not from individual parts. On an academic point, the complete register you have compiled of the architects of the houses is very welcome.

On the basis of the draft Appraisal, we write to give our wholehearted support to the application of Barrow Road to be designated as a Conservation Area.

We have read the draft Appraisal with care and we have been consistently hoping that our road might become one of the protected gems in Cambridge. On this basis we wish you to record our wholehearted support for the application of Barrow Road to be designated as a Conservation Area.

Thank you for your letter requesting a response to 'A Conservation Area Appraisal for Barrow Road'
We are writing to give our strong and wholehearted support to the application for Barrow Road to be designated a Conservation Area as outlined in the appraisal.
Having lived here happily for over 30 years we are very keen to preserve the style and character of this very special environment.

Regarding the Draft Appraisal for Barrow Road becoming a Conservation Area - we would like to give our unreserved backing.

As residents of Barrow Road we would like to express our support for Barrow Road becoming a conservation area. We have read the documentation and would very much like to see it proceed.

I am writing to express the support of No -- Barrow Road for the Barrow Road Conservation Area Appraisal, both as regards to the area to be delineated and the general contents of the Appraisal. We are very happy that the City Council has managed to progress this to consultation stage.

We very much support the proposal to designate the older phases of Barrow Road as a Conservation Area. We live at -- Barrow Road and would like to see the character and architecture of the road preserved.

My view is that the Conservation Area Appraisal for Barrow Road brings out well the special value of this residential gem of Cambridge. Demolitions and radical reconstructions are already eating in to the fine, unified architectural design initiated by Trinity College. The Appraisal also emphasizes the historical interest and importance of the Barrow road region. So I give my strongest support to the proposal that a Conservation Area covering Barrow Road should be put in place.

In response to your letter concerning Barrow Road, my wife and I, who have lived in Barrow Road for 50 years, are enthusiastic supporters of the road being made a Conservation Area. With all the new building going on in Cambridge at the moment there would seem to be a strong need to conserve some of the more traditional parts of the residential areas.

In reply to your letter of 26 February I am writing to support strongly the proposal that Barrow Road be designated a Conservation Area. Barrow Road is unique and an important part of the heritage of the City of Cambridge.

Thank you for your letter of 26th February informing us that the City Council has published, for consultation, a Conservation Area Appraisal for Barrow Road.

We are writing to let you know that we have considered the Appraisal and are wholeheartedly in favour of the proposal to designate Barrow Road a Conservation Area in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation areas) Act 1990. In particular we are in agreement with the way that the key characteristics of the area have been described in Section 7 of the Appraisal, and with the Guidance in Section 9 which sets out the sort of requirements that would protect and maintain the character of the road.

We therefore hope that the City Council will approve the recognition of Barrow Road as a Conservation Area. We think that the very detailed and thorough Appraisal shows the case for this very clearly.

We are writing in response to the Conservation Appraisal for Barrow Road, as residents at -- Barrow Road. We were delighted to read the appraisal, and strongly support Barrow Road becoming a Conservation Area.

The broad grass verges, avenue of cherry trees and architecturally beautiful Arts and Crafts houses all combine to give a uniformity and beauty that would undoubtedly be eroded without such status. At a time when there is considerable architectural change across the City, we hope very much that the Council will be able to preserve the charm of this road.

I am a resident of Barrow Road and am writing to express my very strong support, also on behalf of my husband, for turning the road into a conservation area. The draft appraisal provides an excellent outline of the merits of Barrow Road in terms of both architectural and road design and makes a convincing case for designating the road a conservation area.

My understanding of the consultation I have just looked at is that you are proposing designating the Barrow Road area of Cambridge as a Conservation Area.

I am a resident of Cambridge but not resident of the area in question, but would nonetheless like to record my support and approval for such a designation.

Qualified Support:

As the document says, the general characteristics are its " low-density layout with wide green verges planted with flowering cherry trees behind which stand detached two-storey houses, built to a common building line on generous plots...the convention of preserving what can be seen from the road, allowing owners greater freedom to adapt their houses on the garden side." This is what I think needs to be conserved for the future. This is well summarised in Section 7, which I support.

I also support section 8. As a resident, I recognise that this restricts my freedom – but preserves the overall quality of the road. I support it. However, there are already breaches of these rules, and these features will need to be left in place. I think that it is important to emphasise that the preservation should be from the viewpoint of someone viewing the house on the road. In some cases, changes can be made without changing the view from the road e.g., extending houses sideways by converting a garage to domestic use and building a new garage behind an existing front wall (this is what we did in our house).

It would be great for the residents to work out a plan for the trees. We should develop a plan for the long term development of uniform cherry trees. Perhaps the council has an expert who can advise!

I am broadly supportive of this initiative: I think the character of Barrow Road is worth preserving, and that it would be a shame if planning consent was given to demolish any more of the original houses and replace them with contemporary designs. I also believe the the character and charm of the road owes much to the verges, flowering trees and street lamps that are in place, and that these should be preserved. However I would like to understand more about the potential impact on planning consent for improvements to the existing houses on the street. I am wary of preserving the original buildings and not allowing sensitive and appropriate improvements. ...In addition, many of the houses on the road have already had major additions and extensions, and most of these can't be seen by their neighbours let alone from the street itself. I think such additions can enhance the properties, and I while I am ok with greater scrutiny I would not be in favour of the conservation area creating an environment where significant enhancements faced tougher restrictions than they do now. This is particularly given the case given the extensions that are already in place, including perhaps on houses whose owners are now unconditionally supportive of the conservation area: it would be very unfair if they were to enjoy any pre-conservation area benefits in improvements to their homes while denying the opportunity to more recent arrivals such as ourselves.

Objection:

I am concerned that if number -- is included in the proposed Barrow Road Conservation area, limitations or controls may be applied under its terms which may restrict any necessary changes to, or restoration or repairs of the building. I am worried that this may then make any future management of the premises unaffordable.

My mother's wish, before she lost mental capacity, was to be nursed in her own home if possible until her end, and I have been engaged in carrying out this wish now for 11 years, so I am rather anxious that any change, such as the adoption of a conservation area, with its attendant regulations, might make things even more difficult.

Note: Some of the above representations have been shortened but the core concerns have been retained.

Some short supporting representations have been omitted for economy and to reduce repetition.

Appendix 2

Officer response to CPPF's detailed points re. Barrow Rd draft Conservation Area Appraisal.

- *Section 3.1 does not mention the name of the architect*
Response: 3.1 is a general description only. The architect is referenced at 3.3 and elsewhere (especially at 5.1).
Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *It is surprising that historic maps were not included other than 20th century*
Response: As the appraisal is focussed on the history and layout of Barrow Road itself, and the latter is of the 20th century, earlier maps would not add anything. Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *Maps and photos should be larger to be read*
Response: Agreed that many of the maps and photos could usefully be larger. Recommendation: maps and photos to be enlarged.
- *Is there any archaeology of note?*
Response: The Appraisal states at 3.2 "no archaeological record of earlier activity." Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *Context in relation to the adjacent streets should be included setting the scene as overview of the area*
Response: agreed Recommendation: A more general context map be added to section 1 "Location".
- *The history is well known and included*
Response: noted.
- *What is the architectural and historic interest?*
Response: This is set out in Section 3 "Summary of Special Interest" Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *What are the key features, details, palette of materials? Include description with photos.*
Response: These are described at section 5.2 Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *Mention of mature trees, but will any be TPO'd?*
Response: It is not currently proposed to TPO particular trees. Trees are protected under a Conservation Area designation – permission being required for any lopping, topping or cutting down. Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *What about any other landscape features, hedges, fences, walls?*
Response: Features such as the wide verges, low walls and hedges are referred to at section 6 "Streetscape, Trees and Gardens" Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *References should be made to Local Plan policy- but which one!? 2006 or 2014?*
Response: Currently, both should be and are referenced at Section 2. Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *Areas that could be opportunity for enhancement should be pointed out and advice given*
Response: The road is fairly uniform in its nature and No areas are being proposed for enhancement. Future review would provide an opportunity for enhancement if it became necessary. Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal
- *The appraisal map is good, should have key with buildings of local interest and other key features shown, including areas that do not enhance*
Response: No BLIs are proposed as part of the consultation. For enhancement see above. Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.
- *Will this sit next to any other policy documents within the Council like design guides?*
Response: The appraisal would be a background document to historic environment policies within the Development Plan. Associated guidance would apply. Recommendation: no change to draft appraisal.

Appendix 3 Conservation Area Boundary

