

Report of the Assistant Director of Planning and Sustainable Development

FULFORD ROAD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL: RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND FINAL DRAFT FOR APPROVAL

Summary

1. This report presents the results of a public consultation exercise on the draft Fulford Road Conservation Area Appraisal which includes a boundary review. The report recommends that, following minor revisions to the report, the document be adopted.

Background

2. A conservation area appraisal defines in detail the special architectural and historic interest of an area; by doing so it explains why an area is worthy of protection and it provides a clear basis on which to formulate and evaluate development proposals. An important aspect of the appraisal process is a review of the appropriateness of the existing boundary.
3. The draft appraisal was approved for consultation by Planning Committee on 24th September 2009.

Consultation

4. The consultation exercise ran from 19th October until 30th November 2009, a period of six weeks, and it was facilitated by the Community Planning team. Public consultation used the following methods:
 - a) Leaflets summarising the appraisal, with a tear-off comments slip, were distributed to all properties within and surrounding the existing conservation area (1718 leaflets). The map in Annex B shows the existing Conservation Area boundary and delivery area for the leaflet.
 - b) Copies of the appraisal document were made available at the Council offices in St Leonard's Place, Fulford Library, The Fulford Arms and Fields Fayre Sandwich Shop, as well as on the Council website.
 - c) An exhibition of the appraisal was held, followed by discussion as an agenda item at Fishergate Ward Committee meeting on 6th October 2009.
 - d) A letter to consultees and appropriate amenity bodies (see list of consultees in Annex A).
 - e) A press release was sent to York Press.

36 replies were received representing a response rate of just over 2%. Many of the responses received were very detailed. The full list of responses is recorded at Annex C with specific comments from officers alongside.

Character

5. Question 1 in the summary leaflet asked, **“In your opinion does Fulford Road have any other qualities not mentioned in this character appraisal summary?”**
6. Responses did not identify any new positive qualities pertinent to this conservation area, though issues were raised in relation to providing better interpretation of the area and suggesting the use of further way-marking for pedestrians and cyclists to encourage use of local facilities and routes away from the main road. Comments about anti-social behaviour and, more positively, about the provision of a river bus were considered to be outside the scope of the appraisal. Several factors were raised which concern other conservation areas such as: the Battle of Fulford, development at Germany Beck and Fishergate traffic gyratory.
7. Annex C provides a full list of the comments received, along with the officer response. Some points of clarification have been made and some matters will be referred to other departments for action eg condition of bus shelters. In summary the following additional points have been raised:
 - traffic volume, speed and noise
 - highway improvement schemes
 - trees should be reinforced with new and appropriate planting
 - concern as to whether CA status will prevent passive solar measures on roofs
 - buildings of local interest to be noted with reference to the developing informal local list
 - desire for better quality surfacing and reinstatement of pavings and verges
 - more views to be included
 - explain how the document relates to the local planning policy context
8. It is proposed that points of clarification or correction will be incorporated into the text. Please see Annex C for a list of officer recommendations and proposed changes to the document.

Boundary

9. Question 2 in the summary leaflet asked, **“Do you think the boundary for the Conservation Area is correct? If not, how do you think it should be changed?”**
10. A number of suggestions for further boundary changes were put forward and each of these has been reassessed by officers in consultation with the independent conservation consultant who carried out the appraisal. Most of the changes proposed would mean further expansion of the area and it has been

important to assess the merits of each suggestion against the requirement to preserve the special qualities of the area ie to ensure that the character and appearance of the area as a whole is not devalued.

11. Suggestions for further extensions to the conservation area included areas of housing such as: Alma Terrace, Howard Street, Fulford Cross, Broadway West, and Danesmead. It is considered that the latter two areas and Alma Terrace are typical of their era (rather than special) and that street trees would be protected through being in Local Authority care. Only Howard Street and Fulford Cross exhibit qualities beyond the ordinary. The houses on Howard Street have some consistency of architectural detail, though their street context is ordinary and their contribution to the wider townscape is negligible. Although the houses in Fulford Cross belong to the English Domestic Revival style, as exemplified by Parker and Unwin at New Earswick, their layout is typical of the majority of council housing projects resulting from the 1919 Housing Act and the frontage houses onto Fulford Road have not been designed to respond to the scale of this major road. It is considered that none of the above examples meet designation criteria. It is recommended that Fulford Cross is considered in due course for local list status instead.
12. A couple of representations (one from Housing) were made which questioned the inclusion of Ordnance Lane (area D). This line of development was recommended for inclusion as it would reinforce the military associations of the area and the row of buildings to the east, away from Fulford Road, has some architectural quality. In reassessing its contribution to the special interest of the area it is now recommended that Ordnance Lane is not added to the conservation area. Section 4.15 of the draft Appraisal stated that “the area would not justify conservation area status in isolation but in association with Wenlock Terrace housing it is considered to add further interest and diversity, and to justify inclusion”. Records indicate that the buildings were built at the start of the C20th to accommodate staff of the military hospital. However the hospital pre-dated the buildings by 50years (it is now demolished) and its formal symmetrical design had no influence on the later accommodation. Similarly the row is mostly single aspect, facing the rear of the earlier Wenlock Terrace properties, to which it is unrelated in scale or function. Ordnance Lane is a cul-de-sac and buildings noted as being of positive value to the conservation area (ref map p 22) are located over 50m from the public thoroughfare. Furthermore the single house adjacent to Fulford Road presents its back to the main road, reinforcing an identified place of weakness in the townscape. For these reasons it is recommended that Ordnance Lane is not included in the conservation area. Instead the proposed new boundary line (area F) should be continued north to recognize the importance of the road side aspect in any new future proposals. The small cluster of trees in Ordnance Lane outside this line should also be assessed to see whether they are worthy of protection.
13. Sir John J Hunt Memorial Homes and Connaught Court/former Fulford Park have already been included in the Fulford Village conservation area. The Battle of Fulford is mentioned more appropriately in the Fulford Village Conservation Area Appraisal (approved Oct 08). New Walk Terrace is part of the New Walk/Terry Avenue conservation area (designated in 1975) which acknowledges the special qualities of the planned landscape promenade along the riverside.

14. A number of responses suggested including the open strip to the north of long gardens in St Oswald's Road. The reasons behind this were to give protection to the trees and to ensure that any future backland development would be of an appropriate scale and design. The current boundary occurs where there is a change in the grain of the plot boundaries. It was presumably set at this line in 1975 to exclude the independent developments which had taken place in plots to the far east and west of the open area. The main quality of this zone is its openness, which is not experienced from public areas, and the remaining trees. It contributes an open setting to the long gardens on St Oswald's Road and provides further separation from Broadway West. The area should already be protected from further development through the legal duty to value these considerations in any development proposals coming forward. Also there are no further points of access for further development. It is recommended that the boundary stays where it is but the trees within this area should be assessed for protection.
15. The Christian Science Church, the former Post Office and the whole of the Imphal Barracks site have also been mentioned for inclusion within an extended boundary area. Conservation Area status is not considered appropriate for the two individual buildings. Although they provided a religious and community service and the buildings are of some interest in their own right, the two buildings have a poor relationship with their immediate physical and historical context. The Post Office has since been converted into a dwelling. We suggest that the comments set out in section 4.18 of the Appraisal stand. Section 7.5 explains why the whole of the Infantry Barracks site has not been included in the conservation area boundary.
16. It is therefore proposed that the boundary is extended as recommended in the Appraisal, with the exclusion of Area D.

Options

17. Option 1 - Approve Fulford Road Conservation Area Appraisal with the changes suggested in Annex C of this report.
18. Option 2 - Approve Fulford Road Conservation Area Appraisal with further changes or fewer changes than proposed above.
19. Option 3 - Do not approve Fulford Road Conservation Area Appraisal and boundary review proposals.

Analysis

20. Option 1 - All responses to the consultation were given full consideration and assessed in relation to government policy and English Heritage Guidance. The amendments set out in Annex C reflect the outcome of deliberations. With these amendments incorporated into the document it is considered that the appraisal would be a robust document, providing a sound basis for developing management proposals and also for making development decisions.
21. Option 2 - Proposals for minor changes could be incorporated into the document if they are supported by relevant arguments. Any proposals for

further boundary extensions should involve an additional period of consultation if they include areas not considered before. It is considered that the exercise so far has resulted in full consideration of the boundary options.

22. Option 3 - Production of the appraisal, including the requirement for boundary review, is in accordance with national guidance on heritage protection. Approval of the document would assist the Authority in fulfilling its statutory obligations under Section 69 of the (Listed Building and Conservation areas) Act 1990. We are unaware of any valid reasons to resist the appraisal.

Corporate Priorities

23. The appraisal would assist in improving the actual and perceived condition and appearance of Fulford Road Conservation Area which in turn would support the strategic objective of creating a Sustainable City. It would also provide a more informed basis for decision making and for policy formulation.
24. The appraisal would contribute towards the Local Authority's statutory obligations with regard to conservation areas in their control.

Implications

Financial

25. Production of the document will be met by existing budgets

Human Resources (HR)

26. No implications

Equalities

27. Different formats of the finished appraisal will be made available on request.

Legal

28. No further implications.

Crime and Disorder

29. No implications

Information Technology (IT)

30. No implications

Property

31. No implications

Other

32. No other implications

Risk Management

33. There are no known risks associated with the report.

Recommendations

34. Members are asked to approve, for planning purposes, Fulford Road Conservation Area Appraisal as proposed in Annex D and as amended by Annex C.

Reason: The document is a thorough analysis of the character and appearance of the conservation area and it has been prepared in accordance with current guidance from English Heritage. As a document it is clearly written and accessible to a wide range of users. The consultation method and range accords with previous practice. Information and views of consultees have been carefully considered in the amendments proposed. The adoption of the document will assist with the formulation and determination of development proposals within the conservation area and adjacent to it.

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Design Conservation and
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Specialist Implications Officer(s)

There are no specialist implications

Wards Affected: Fishergate

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

PPG 15 Planning Policy Guidance: Planning and the Historic Environment 1995
Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals English Heritage 2006

Annexes

- Annex A List of consultees
Annex B Map showing conservation area boundary, and area of public consultation
Annex C Schedule of consultation responses with proposed amendments
Annex D Consultation Draft Fulford Road Conservation Area Appraisal