

**Report of the Assistant Director of Planning and Sustainable Development**

**THREE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS FOR STRENSALL, STRENSALL RAILWAY BUILDINGS AND TOWTHORPE VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREAS: RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND FINAL DRAFTS FOR APPROVAL**

**Summary**

1. This report presents the results of a public consultation exercise on the three separate draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals for the neighbouring conservation areas of Strensall (No.23, 19.16ha), Strensall Railway Buildings (No.31, 1.58ha) and Towthorpe Village (No.32, 8.81ha). The appraisals include a review of existing boundaries. The report recommends that, following minor revisions to the appraisals, they are approved as supporting documents to existing City of York Council conservation policies. The appraisals would also inform the emerging Local Development Framework.

**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 appraisals were approved for consultation by Planning Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

**Consultation**

4. The consultation exercise ran from 10<sup>th</sup> December until 28<sup>th</sup> January 2011, a period of six weeks, and it was facilitated by the Community Planning team. Strensall and Towthorpe Parish Council were actively involved in leaflet delivery and hosted the exhibition. Public consultation used the following methods:
  - a) A single leaflet summarising the three appraisals and boundary changes, with a tear-off comments slip, were distributed to all properties within and surrounding the proposed conservation area (approximately 440 leaflets as opposed to the whole parish which would be approximately 2372 households). The map in Annex B shows the existing Conservation Area boundaries, proposed amendments, and delivery areas for the leaflet.

- b) Copies of the appraisal document were made available at the Council offices in St Leonard's Place, Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council Office, Strensall Library, The Half Moon, The Ship Inn and Delicious at York Delicatessen, as well as on the Council website and Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council website.
- c) An exhibition of the appraisal was held by representatives of the consultants and the City of York Council, followed by discussion as an agenda item at Strensall Parish Council meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2011.
- d) A letter to consultees and appropriate amenity bodies (see list of consultees in Annex A).
- e) A press release was sent to the York Press, and posters advertising the exhibition and meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> January and also where the appraisals can be viewed were placed in local venues in order to promote it to the wider village residents. An article also featured in the December/ January parish 'Outreach' magazine which was delivered to each property in Strensall and Towthorpe.

31 replies were received representing a response rate of 7% within the leafleted area. 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, do Strensall, Strensall Railway Buildings and/ or Towthorpe have any other qualities not mentioned in the character appraisals?”**
- 6. Responses did not identify any new positive qualities pertinent to these conservation areas though further information was received in respect of the signal box within the Strensall Railway Buildings conservation area and this allows some clarification of the text. No comments were received in respect of the proposed renaming of the Towthorpe conservation area (previously Towthorpe Village which appeared to misrepresent the agricultural hamlet – see note on page 1 of Towthorpe appraisal). In addition, the River Foss Society have drawn attention to the significant industrial archaeology of the Foss Navigation through Strensall and their recording work should be referenced in the text.
- 7. Annex C provides a full list of the comments received with officer responses alongside. These include points of clarification, particularly in respect of existing protection of the surrounding landscape outside the built-up areas, and in respect of the openness of the Towthorpe Conservation area which is “washed over” as greenbelt. Matters such as additional tree protection, action on redundant and problem buildings within Strensall, and on street lighting will be referred to the relevant sections of the Local Authority for action. In summary the following additional points have been raised:

- need to survey the village trees and those affecting immediate settings and views with the intention of providing protection through Tree Preservation Orders
  - open views to the south across fields and between buildings to be acknowledged in the Strensall Conservation Area appraisal
  - the extent of survival of the former locks, bi-pass channels & landing areas running north-eastwards from Strensall New Bridge and out beyond the conservation area as far as the double lock at Lock House should be mentioned in the Strensall Conservation Area Appraisal
8. Please see Annex C for a full list of officer recommendations and proposed changes to the documents.

### **Boundary Reviews**

9. Question 2 in the summary leaflet asked, “**Do you think the boundaries for the three Conservation Areas are correct? If not, how do you think they should be changed?**”
10. With a notable exception (Strensall Railway Buildings Area A) responses generally indicated support for the boundary changes as proposed. A number of suggestions were made for extending the boundaries to include the wider landscape which has protection through various other means such as green belt status, Common Land registration, SSSI or SINC status. Existing designations have been checked with the countryside officer and they are considered the appropriate means of protection for such areas outside the main body of the built-up area.
11. Suggestions for including additional buildings have been assessed not only on individual merit but whether they would make a special contribution to the character and appearance of the area as a whole. It is important to ensure that the special qualities of each conservation area are not devalued through quite ordinary inclusions.
12. **Strensall** - Suggestions for amendments to the conservation area included:
- *Areas bounded by Ox Carr Lane and Flaxton Road encompassing the properties that front these roads running from Pasture Close and up to Lords Moor Lane to preserve the heritage and landscape of the area (Annex C 3). The open fields between the railway line and the village. These areas were discounted for reasons in 10 & 11 above.*
  - *Add the other two canal locks and former tow path linking the three locks (Annex C 27). One lock is within the greenbelt and well outside the village, and the other is just north of Strensall Bridge in an area protected as open space (GP7). The former tow path is now recommended for inclusion (ref Annex E).*
  - *Remove modern houses in Northfields which are out of context in the conservation area (Annex C 6). This was considered as Area A in the boundary review, though the idea was rejected on historical rather than architectural grounds.*

13. **Strensall Railway Buildings** - Suggestions for amendments to the conservation area included:
- *Oppose 101 The Village, poor architectural merit, and derelict builder's yard - former station yard (Annex C18)*. There are social reasons for including 101 The Village; and the builder's yard is already noted as making a negative contribution to the area.
  - *Add two cottages and one house along Brecks Lane associated with the old brick and tileworks (Annex C 19)*. Their exclusion has been recommended on the basis of 11 above. These houses are much altered and the works has ceased.
  - *Network Rail concerns about the inclusion of the former station yard (Annex C 20)*. A change of wording is recommended to allay fears concerning the site's potential as a future station stop.
14. **Towthorpe** – no suggestions for alterations to the boundary were submitted.
15. It is therefore proposed that the boundaries of “Strensall Railway Buildings” and “Towthorpe” Conservation Areas are extended as recommended in the draft Appraisals. The boundary of Strensall Conservation Area is proposed to be amended as shown in Annex E. This represents the proposed boundary as shown in the draft appraisal document with the addition of the tow-path on the northern bank of the Foss as recommended in Annex C para 27.

## **Options**

16. Option 1 - Approve the draft document(s) as amended by the suggested changes in Annex C and Annex E (revised boundary map for Strensall)
17. Option 2 - Approve the draft document(s) with further changes or fewer changes than proposed above.
18. Option 3 – Do not approve the draft document(s) and boundary review proposals.

## **Analysis**

19. 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 it is considered that the appraisals would be robust documents, providing a sound basis for developing management proposals and also for making development decisions.
20. Option 2 - Proposals for minor changes could be incorporated into the documents 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.

21. Option 3 - Production of the appraisals, including the requirement for boundary review, is in accordance with national guidance on heritage protection. Approval of the documents 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 appraisals.

### **Corporate Priorities**

22. The appraisals would assist in improving the actual and perceived condition and appearance of each of the conservation areas. This aim supports the following objectives of the corporate strategy: “thriving city”, “inclusive city” “sustainable city”. It would also provide a more informed basis for decision making and for policy formulation.
23. The appraisal would contribute towards the Local Authority’s statutory obligations with regard to conservation areas in their control.

### **Implications**

24. **Financial** - Production of the document will be met by existing budgets
25. **Human Resources** - No implications
26. **Equalities** - Different formats of the finished appraisal will be made available on request.
27. **Legal** - No further implications.
28. **Crime and Disorder** - No implications
29. **Information Technology** - No implications
30. **Property** - No implications
31. **Other** - No other implications

### **Risk Management**

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

### **Recommendations**

33. Members are asked to agree Option 1, to approve the three draft appraisals (Strensall, Strensall Railway Buildings and Towthorpe Village), as proposed in Annex D1, D2 & D3 and as amended by Annex C, for planning purposes.

Reasons: The documents represent a thorough analysis of the character and appearance of each conservation area and they have been prepared in accordance with current guidance from English Heritage. The boundary reviews have been carried out in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and they conform with the latest policy guidance on the historic environment - PPS 5 and the related planning practice guide. The documents are 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 approval of the documents will assist with the formulation and determination of development proposals both within and adjacent to the 3no conservation areas.

## Contact Details

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Report Approved  Date 11 March 2011

Design Conservation and  
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### Specialist Implications Officer(s)

There are no specialist implications

Wards Affected: Strensall with Towthorpe

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

### Background Papers:

Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5 for DCLG) TSO March 2010  
Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals English Heritage 2006

## Annexes

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Annex A  | List of consultees  |
| Annex B  | Map showing public consultation area (delivery area)  |
| Annex C  | Schedule of consultation responses with proposed amendments   |
| Annex D1 | Consultation Draft Strensall Conservation Area Appraisal  |
| Annex D2 | Consultation Draft Strensall Railway Buildings Conservation Area Appraisal  |
| Annex D3 | Consultation Draft Towthorpe Conservation Area Appraisal  |
| Annex E  | Map showing proposed amendments to Strensall Conservation Area revised with further boundary extension to include Foss towpath (area D). This map would replace Map no2 within the Appraisal. |

**[Please note that colour copies of the maps will be available at the meeting]**