

Lingfield Conservation Area Appraisal (Supplementary Planning Document)

Planning Policy Committee - 24 November 2022

Report of: Interim Chief Planning Officer

Purpose: For decision

Publication status: Open

Wards affected: Lingfield

Executive summary:

This report recommends the delegation of production of a Conservation Area Appraisal for Lingfield to Lingfield Parish Council, working with Surrey County Council ('SCC') Historic Environment Planning Team and in partnership with the Council.

This report supports the Council's priority of: Creating the homes, infrastructure and environment we need

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Recommendation to Committee:

That the Committee agrees to the production of a conservation area appraisal for Lingfield by Lingfield Parish Council which can then be used as the basis of a Supplementary Planning Document ('SPD') to be consulted upon and adopted by the Council.

Reason for recommendation:

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes the duty of local authorities to review, from time to time, the boundaries of conservation areas to ensure they are still relevant. Old Town and Plaistow Street in Lingfield were designated Conservation Areas by Surrey County Council in 1972. These were merged through the designation of the High Street in 1990 by the District Council to form one Lingfield Conservation Area.

A request has been received from Lingfield Parish Council that they be enabled to carry out an appraisal of the Conservation Area, commissioning SCC Historic Environment Planning Team to carry out the work. (Appendix A includes a copy of the letter from the Parish Council). The appraisal will identify the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area, set out its historic development and assess what contributes to its character and appearance. It is anticipated that the appraisal will also recommend boundary changes to the conservation area to ensure they are still relevant and in accordance with national legislation and guidance.

It is proposed that work be carried out in a way that, when complete, this Council can then carry out the necessary consultation and adopt it as a Supplementary Planning Document (an SPD) to support its statutory planning functions.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 The purpose of a conservation area designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to identify "an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". The terms of reference for the Committee allow the Committee to confirm the boundaries of a conservation area.
- 1.2 Conservation area designation introduces controls over the way owners can alter or develop their properties and controls work to trees. The purpose of a conservation area is not to prevent new development but to manage change to maintain, reinforce and, where possible, enhance the special character and quality that justifies designation. Section 72 of the 1990 Act requires the Council, when considering planning applications, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 1.3 To meet the statutory obligations, Conservation Area Appraisals are prepared and periodically reviewed. These aim to identify those features that contribute to the special character and appearance of a conservation area and provide the basis for making informed and sustainable planning decisions that aim to preserve and make these areas worthy of protection. Supplementary Planning Documents provide additional detail and guidance to support development plan policies, in this case those in the Core Strategy Parts 1 and 2.

- 1.4 The most recent example of a Conservation Area Appraisal is the Limpsfield Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, prepared in partnership between the Parish Council and this Council, with the Parish Council sponsoring the work and the District Council carrying out the consultation and other formal steps required for adoption of the document as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

2 Process

- 2.1 Lingfield Parish Council has resolved its intention to seek an appraisal of the Lingfield Conservation Area and to appoint Surrey County Council's Historic Environment Planning Team section to prepare the appraisal. SCC's Team, as professional heritage advisors to the District Council is considered to be appropriately qualified to carry out this work and indeed have prepared similar appraisals across the county. It is anticipated that, if approved, the work will commence in December 2022, with adoption by the District Council anticipated in late 2023. The Parish Council will provide information and financial resources to produce the draft Lingfield Conservation Area Appraisal (LCAA). Officers of this Council will give advice on content and process, reviewing the draft LCAA before public consultation, and carrying out the formal consultation stage necessary for adoption of an SPD. There will be a further report to this Committee prior to adoption. The project will thus be a partnership between Lingfield Parish Council and the District Council.
- 2.2 The model for this approach was successfully established locally in the Limpsfield Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. In the Lingfield case it is not intended that a Management Plan will be produced. The Parish Council's intention is to include management policies in the Lingfield Neighbourhood Plan, which is in production.

3 Resourcing

- 3.1 Lingfield Parish Council resources will be used for funding the work of the heritage consultants and local consultation.
- 3.2 Tandridge District Council will contribute officer time and expertise from within the Planning Policy team.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

The S151 Officer confirms that there are no financial implications arising from the proposal to delegate the task of producing a conservation area appraisal for Lingfield to Lingfield Parish Council.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

As noted in the report there is a duty under section 69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) ("the Act") for a local planning authority ("LPA") 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 shall designate those areas as conservation areas. Under section 69(2) of the Act from time to time the LPA shall review the past exercise of the functions noted above. The recommendation put forward in this report form part of this review process.

No formal consultation requirements are imposed by the Act, however as the report states there will be public consultation and it is anticipated that this may last 6 weeks. All the consultation responses will need to be considered.

Equality

Duty under the Equalities Act 2010

In assessing this proposal, the following impacts have been identified upon those people with the following protected characteristics (age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).

The proposed production of the LCAA would have a neutral impact on the protected characteristics.

Climate change

There are no significant environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

Background papers

None

Appendix A - Letter from Lingfield Parish Council dated 1st November 2022