

Appendix A

Great Billing Conservation Area - Summary of Responses

Results of public consultation held between 30th October and 10th December 2017 (Officer's response, where appropriate, are in italics).

Billing Parish Council

The Parish Council welcomes the comprehensive Appraisal & Management Plan, which contains much information on the history and features that create the special character, the current review and the opportunity to comment.

They consider the existing boundary to the Conservation Area should be retained.

The Parish Council believes extra planning controls through an Article 4 direction should be introduced, but should only cover features that are important to enable the village to retain its special character; they should be consulted on the scheme and on any planning applications that arise.

Agree that stone boundary walls are a feature of particular significance and should be fully protected. Part of the original stone wall to the estate is still intact on Penfold Lane and should be protected if possible.

The plan includes a number of buildings marked as important that were not shown as such on the previous plan and their inclusion should help protect the special character of the village. There are several omissions from the plan of buildings previously identified as important or mentioned in the appraisal text, including the converted outbuildings, barns and stables on Manor Farm Road, Oldways on Elwes Way, the row of cottages on the path leading to the church and Nos.16 & 18 Pound Lane. Some typographical errors require correction.

The consultation draft refers to overhead power cables and poles as unsightly and a negative feature; the PC requests the Borough Council presses the power and telephone companies to give priority to the undergrounding of these cables but with an assurance that the historic cobbled path that runs across Church Walk and Elwes Way is preserved.

(Officer response: The support of the Parish Council for the appraisal and for a possible Article 4 Direction in principle is noted; further consultation on an Article 4 is recommended. The Appraisal and plans have been corrected to include buildings that are mentioned in the text or previously identified as of significance. The wall on Penfold Lane, although of interest, is remote from the Conservation Area and is not recommended for inclusion. The cobbled path is also now identified as historically important).

Individual comments:

- The Conservation Area boundary should be realigned to take account of new development on Cumbrae Drive, built since the last review in 1989; the boundary should be the wall running between the Catholic Church and 7A Cumbrae Drive and then south of properties 7A, 7, 5A and 1 Cumbrae Drive. The estate is out of vogue with the older part of the village and could not be considered as part of the conservation area.

(Officers agree with this suggestion. At present, the Conservation Area includes land previously part of Home Farm that was developed for housing in the 1990s (after the last review), resulting in the anomaly of the conservation area boundary now partly cutting across modern houses and gardens of properties on Cumbrae Drive. The Appraisal provides the opportunity to review and rationalise the boundary to ensure that the Conservation Area remains an area of special historic interest, in accordance with guidance in the NPPF).

- Do not agree with the boundary change shown on the plan & request officers view the stone wall that runs to the rear of 9 Cumbrae Drive, which we would like to still be included within the Conservation Area.

(The wall has been inspected and is of traditional dry stone construction, in good condition, that now forms the rear boundary between properties on Cumbrae Drive and High Street; it would originally have been part of a field boundary to Home Farm. Although not prominent, it is of historic importance and it is considered that the wall should be retained within the Conservation Area, but with the houses on Cumbrae Drive excluded).

- Approve of additional planning restrictions through an Article 4 direction, subject to further consultation specifying the type of alterations that would in future require planning permission.
- Support in principle an Article 4 direction, but would not want it to be unduly restrictive but should include retention of stone boundary walls; note that there would be further consultation.

(Detailed consultation would be undertaken, specifying the restrictions that would apply if supported by residents)

- The draft appraisal is most impressive and, when finalised, will be of great interest to residents and a valuable source of reference; important that historical facts are correct and more significant buildings and features are included – notably the stone farm buildings in the curtilage of Home Farm,

Oldways on Elwes Way, converted farm buildings on Manor Farm Road and the Old Dairy & ice house on Church Walk. The cobbled path which ran from the Hall across Church Walk to Elwes Way should be recorded and retained as a historic feature. Support an Article 4 in principle.

(The factual corrections and additional significant buildings - many of which were identified as important in a 1990 conservation area leaflet following the last review - have now been incorporated within the Appraisal)

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- Strongly agree that conservation area designation is important to the future of the village; important the village retains the features to key buildings and ensure new buildings are in keeping. Support strict guidelines in the appraisal on new development that fits the village and conservation area

- Agree with the elements listed in the draft appraisal, in particular that retention of stone boundary walls is essential to maintain the distinct character of the village. Buildings shown as “important” on the consultation leaflet are different to those in the appraisal – notably along Manor Farm Road.

(Stone walls that are prominent within the conservation area are identified as of significance on the plan accompanying the Appraisal; the converted farm buildings on Manor Farm Road are now included as being important to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area)

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- Please keep the existing Great Billing Conservation Area – the existing boundaries are logical and clear. Please introduce the Article 4 direction to help preserve the existing aesthetic and character of the conservation area.

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- Existing boundary to the conservation area should be retained. Agree that overhead power cables, telephone cables and poles are unsightly and detract from the street scene – request NBC urge power and telephone supply companies to give priority to undergrounding the cables but ensure control over re-surfacing the roads. Would welcome extra planning restrictions through an Article 4 direction for Great Billing.

(The appraisal identifies overhead power cables as being a negative feature and states that any opportunity to place them underground would be welcome, but there is no commitment to fund the measure).

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- Commend the sentiment of a planned possible Article 4 but criticise lack of mention of funding – should not apply something that has the potential of burdening custodians of buildings within this so-called conservation area.

Implications for fuel costs. Maintenance, pollution and health and safety risks will be huge as a consequence of fantasy, ivory towered decisions – sounds nice on paper but in practice, question how realistic it is. Local councils and government do not know the correct and exact meaning of consultation and translates into fait accompli.

(The Appraisal asks whether there would be support in principle for an Article 4 direction - subject to detailed consultation - which it is now suggested be undertaken. This will determine whether the making of an Article 4 direction is pursued and would be subject of future Cabinet approval, if there is support for the proposal. There would be no commitment to fund the cost of alterations to private properties)

Great Houghton Conservation Area – Summary of Responses

Great Houghton Parish Council

The Parish Council unanimously resolved to support the proposal appraisal and management plan at the council meeting on 14th November 2017, at which some members of the public who lived within the conservation area were also present. The council believes that protection of the area would be better ensured by the introduction of an Article 4 direction within Great Houghton conservation Area.

The Parish Council is concerned about the increase in number of HGV's using High Street, The Cross/Willow lane; concerned at unseen harm to older building due to their age and structures alongside very narrow roads that are in places without footpaths and ask for a 20mph speed limit and 7.5 tonne weight restriction be implemented within parts of the conservation area. The PC have contacted Highways and borough & county councillors but have been told that the number of HGVs does not meet requirements for investment on preventative action. The PC asks for help in explaining to Highways that the current situation of no weight limit or restriction on HGVs needs to be addressed in order to avoid damage to the stone & brick buildings within the conservation area.

(Officer response: The support of the Parish Council for the appraisal and for a possible Article 4 Direction in principle is noted; further consultation on an Article 4 is recommended to Cabinet. Concerns about highway matters are outside the scope of the Appraisal but will be forwarded to NCC as highway authority).

Individual comments:

- Understand the wish for there to be little change to the nature of the area but extending planning controls would lead to delays and red tape for people wanting to improve or enhance their property.
- None of the special character of the Conservation Area was taken into account when the extension to Brackmills was given planning permission; extensive views across the Nene Valley to Northampton have been replaced by a huge warehouse and 45 foot high earth bund. This has affected countryside views from four of the listed buildings and one important building.

(An Article 4 direction would require householders to apply for planning permission to alter their property and potentially lead to some delay, but the intention would be to protect the appearance of the area. The impact on the conservation area of the development nearby was identified and was taken in to consideration; the Appraisal should help to ensure that the rural setting of the Conservation Area is fully considered in future decisions)

- Welcome the appraisal and believe the area is worth protecting but biggest danger to maintenance of the area – traffic and large vehicles going through the village – is not mentioned; there are no restrictions on HGVs entering the village an conservation area and damaging the area.

Enforcement is an issue; a large tree was recently cut down with no request to NBC to do tree work and no action taken – the message being sent is that ignoring the rules is beneficial

(Notification of the proposal to fell the tree should have been given and the Appraisal draws attention to the legal requirement; however, the tree is question was not of sufficient amenity value to have justified protection)

- Support an Article 4 but concerned it is a little late as many alterations to houses in the conservation area have created a distinct lack of visual harmony. As buildings need repair, it would be helpful if modern additions are replaced with more sympathetic materials.

(An Article 4 direction would aim to ensure that future alterations and materials are appropriate to the character and appearance of the area but could not require previous alterations be reversed)

- The draft appraisal is well considered draft, with a balanced view of the village. Setting of the village is hugely important and valuable. Views into and out of the village are paramount in leaving a sense of a self-contained and distinct settlement; separation from Northampton and Brackmills needs to be maintained; at present, there is no blurring of the rural village with the urban spread of Northampton and the despite the proximity, the sense of separateness has been well maintained.

-Views out of the village are well illustrated but views of the village from Bedford Road & Nene Valley footpaths are equally significant in demonstrating the distinctive setting as it climbs the ridge of the valley. Similarly, there is a sense of arrival from the south; views of Northampton when descending the ridge into the village leave an impression of elevation and separation. To maintain this special separateness and setting, should be

a buffer zone and ensuring new development is distinct from and set at a reasonable distance from the village.

- Support an article 4 direction.

- Delighted that the Council deems Great Houghton an area of special architectural or historic interest; it is the nearest “intact village” to the centre of the town. The approaches have been the subject of colossal industrial development – presumably the Council has been considering bestowing conservation area status for some time? Adds to bewilderment in the village of how the Council could give permission for the development next to the boundary very recently.

Boundary gives carte blanche to developers to build houses in ex-school playing fields and warehouses to the east of High Street. Appears the Council wishes to award Conservation Area status to the village with all the restrictions while allowing others to build up to the boundaries and destroy the atmosphere you wish to retain.

The boundary should be extended to Bedford Road either side and including High Street; the boundary already include some playing field areas but pointedly exclude other areas.

(Support for the conservation area is noted. However, extending the boundary along High Street to Bedford Road, as suggested, is not recommended as it would include post-war housing of no historic interest. It would also not be appropriate to include open fields within the conservation area as a means of preventing possible future development, although the impact on the setting of the conservation area is a material planning consideration)