



CABINET REPORT

Report Title	DERNGATE CONSERVATION AREA RE-APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	12 th June 2019
Key Decision:	No
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	Yes
Directorate:	Planning services
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor James Hill
Ward	Castle

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to adopt a review of Derngate Conservation Area, following public consultation in January & February 2019.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 approves the adoption of the Derngate Conservation Area Re-appraisal and Management Plan (Appendix B).

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 A conservation area is defined in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. There are 21 conservation areas in Northampton.

- 3.1.2 The purpose of a conservation area is not to prevent new development but to manage change in order to maintain, reinforce and, where possible, enhance the special character and quality that justifies designation. Conservation area designation introduces controls over the way owners can alter or develop their properties and controls work to trees. Section 72 of the 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.
- 3.1.3 The Act also requires the Council to periodically review conservation areas to ensure that they still justify their special status and to determine whether boundary revisions are necessary. It also places a duty on the Council to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas.
- 3.1.4 Planning policy on conservation areas is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This states (paragraph 186) that local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies conservation area status because of its special architectural or historic interest and that the concept is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest. Local planning authorities should also maintain and make publicly accessible up-to-date evidence about the historic environment (paragraph 187 & 188)
- 3.1.5 To meet the Council's statutory obligations, Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans 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 enhance the special quality. The documents are material considerations when the Council considers planning applications.

3.2 Derngate Conservation Area Review

- 3.2.1 Derngate Conservation Area was designated in 1986. It was extended to include Guildhall Road, Hazelwood Road and part of St Giles' Street in the last review of the Conservation Area in 2006. An Article 4(2) Direction, requiring planning permission for alterations to the front of properties, was made in 2008.
- 3.2.2 As part of an on-going review of Northampton's conservation areas, a re-appraisal of Derngate Conservation Area has been undertaken. This takes into account changes in the area since the previous appraisal and changes in planning legislation (notably the introduction of the NPPF) and guidance on the content of conservation area appraisals issued by Historic England in 2016. Public consultation on the draft re-appraisal was held between 14th January and 24th February 2019. Letters and explanatory leaflets were sent to all properties in the area and the appraisal was available for viewing on the Council's web site, at the One-Stop Shop in the Guildhall and in the Central library.

3.3 Issues Arising

3.3.1 Written responses were received from the Town Centre Conservation Area Advisory Committee and from one individual. A summary of the comments received and the officer response is included at Appendix A. Where appropriate, suggestions and factual corrections have been incorporated into the Derngate Re-appraisal and Management Plan that is recommended for adoption (Appendix B). The responses can be summarised as follows:

3.3.2 Conservation area designation

Although the level of public response was low, the responses confirm support for the continuation of the Conservation Area and recognise its value in maintaining the special character of the area. It is therefore proposed that the Conservation Area be retained.

3.3.3 Conservation area boundary

The main issue arising is whether the Conservation Area should be extended? The boundary was previously extended in 2006 to include part of St Giles' Street, Castilian Terrace, Hazelwood Road, Guildhall Road/Angel Street. The Town Centre Conservation Committee suggest a further extension to the south-west to incorporate St John's Street and along Victoria Promenade to the Plough Hotel, thereby including St John's Hall of Residence and One Angel Square as examples of modern architecture and several other buildings of local interest, such as Swiss Cottage and railway worker's houses at Victoria Gardens. The suggestion has been considered by officers but the conclusion is that the historic character and appearance that defines Derngate Conservation Area would be diluted by including areas of lesser historic interest or, in the case of Victoria Gardens, properties that have previously been extensively altered. It should also be noted that individual buildings of merit could be considered for inclusion in the Local Heritage List for Northampton that is presently being formulated, whilst "Swiss Cottage" (No.1 Victoria Gardens) is a statutorily listed building. It is therefore proposed that the existing Derngate Conservation Area boundary be retained without alteration.

3.4 Choices (Options)

3.4.1 Cabinet could choose to:

- a) adopt the Derngate Conservation Area Re-appraisal and Management Plans with changes made as a result of the consultation, as recommended;
- b) adopt the Re-appraisal and Management Plans with other changes, or;
- c) adopt the Re-appraisal and Management Plans with no changes.

3.4.2 Option a) is considered the most appropriate as it would provide an up-to-date Appraisal and Management Plan for Derngate Conservation Area that has been subject to public consultation.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that it is the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review conservation areas and to determine whether any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas.
- 4.1.2 The re-appraisal is in accordance with policy contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and recent guidance produced by Historic England. Policy E26 of the Northampton Local Plan is also relevant.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 Designating and reviewing conservation areas is a statutory duty and is part of the remit of the Policy, Heritage and Environment group. The costs associated with any possible future enhancement projects will be considered separately and would be the subject of a separate report
- 4.2.2 Adoption of the Appraisal and Management Plan will assist the Council in safeguarding the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area as it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and planning appeals. Without an up-to-date Appraisal, there is a danger that the special interest and character that justified designation could be eroded.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 The Conservation Area Review will be a material planning consideration but there are no legal notices or advertising required to adopt the review as a statutory planning document.

4.4 Equality and Health

- 4.4.1 No significant adverse impacts on those with protected characteristics have been identified. An Equality Impact Assessment Screening has been undertaken and approved.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

- 4.5.1 Individual letters and a leaflet summarising the draft appraisal were sent to all properties in the Conservation Area. The ward members were also consulted.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 The appraisals relate to strategies in the Corporate Plan to protect the environment and Love Northampton by celebrating the town's history and heritage.

4.7 Other implications

- 4.7.1 None

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 Section 69;
5.2 Paragraphs 186,187 & 188 of the National Planning Policy Framework
(published by HM Government, July 2018);
5.3 Historic England Advice Note 1 – Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal
and Management (Historic England, February 2016).

6.0 Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of responses received

Appendix B: Draft Derngate Conservation Area Re-appraisal and Management Plan