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PARTNERSHIP & REGENERATION COMMITTEE
23 FEBRUARY 2012

Report of the Director of Planning and Housing Services

**DRAFT CHARACTER APPRAISAL FOR SOMERSAL HERBERT
CONSERVATION AREA**

SUMMARY

The report advises Members of the contents of a Draft Character Appraisal for Somersal Herbert Conservation Area and seeks authority for it to be subject to a period of public consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the contents of the Draft Character Appraisal for Somersal Herbert Conservation Area as set out in the attached document (CD), be approved and be subject to a six-week public consultation period as set out in paragraph 2.4 of this report.
2. That the outcome of the public consultation exercise be reported back to a future meeting of this Committee.

WARDS AFFECTED

Norbury

STRATEGIC LINK

Conservation Area Character Appraisals are undertaken for designated and proposed Conservation Areas. These will be of considerable assistance in delivering the Council's corporate aim of protecting and enhancing the environment.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In April 2003, this Committee approved a programme for undertaking Conservation Area Character Appraisals across the District (Minute 705/02 refers). The Committee subsequently approved revisions to the original programme in September 2004 (Minute 207/04 refers) and again in September 2008 (Minute 147/08 refers).
- 1.2 The latter report identified a programme for undertaking Conservation Areas Character Appraisals on an annual basis until 2017 when appraisals for all 33 existing Conservation Areas would be completed.
- 1.3 To date, Conservation Area Appraisals have been undertaken and approved by this Committee for Matlock Bridge; Sudbury; Cromford; Matlock Bath; Castle Top / Lea Bridge / High Peak Junction; Ashbourne; Matlock Bank; Brassington; an extension to Matlock Bridge; Carsington & Hopton; Middleton by Wirksworth; Lumsdale, Bonsall and Longford Conservation Areas. Old Matlock Conservation Area has also been recently appraised and is subject to a report on the agenda of tonight's Committee meeting. Appraisals have also been undertaken for potential Conservation Areas at

Bradley and Tansley but these did not result in the designation of a Conservation Area in these locations. A Draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Somersal Herbert has been prepared and authority is sought for it to be subject to a period of public consultation.

- 1.4 The completion of Conservation Area Character Appraisals is important as they demonstrate that the Local Planning Authority is able to make decisions based on an understanding of the special character and appearance of its local historic environment.
- 1.5 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, emphasises the importance of the Development Plan which includes the need to have firm policies for conservation where conservation and development are clearly linked. The designation of a Conservation Area should be based upon a clear definition of the factors that give the area its special character and appearance. Planning Policy Statement 5 : *Planning for the Historic Environment* (2010), stresses the need for Local Planning Authorities to both recognise and have evidence of the significance of the historic environment and heritage assets in their areas, and that this information is publicly documented.
- 1.6 In 2006, English Heritage produced a Policy Statement '*Conservation Area Character Appraisals*' for use by Local Planning Authorities in their assessment of both new and existing Conservation Areas. The advice set out areas which should be included such as the origins and development of the settlement; the influence of former uses; the archaeological significance; the architecture and history of the buildings; the contribution of unlisted buildings; the character and relationship of open spaces; the building materials, textures and colours; local details, the setting of the area within the wider environment and a definition of neutral and negative factors. It also recommended a summary of special interest; a planning policy context; problems, pressures in the area and a comprehensive assessment of the Conservation Area boundary.

2. SOMERSAL HERBERT CONSERVATION AREA

- 2.1. Somersal Herbert Conservation Area was originally designated in December 1979 and no further review or amendments to the boundary have been made to date. A Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal has now been completed. In the interests of efficiency and sustainable use of resources, the contents of this Appraisal are included on the attached CD. Paper copies of the Appraisal can be provided on request, from the Conservation Officer (see contact details below).
- 2.2. The Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal has been prepared in accordance with the 2006 English Heritage Policy Statement and includes a landscape appraisal, a section on planning policy and legislation and a justification for the boundary.
- 2.3. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas to be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area but wider public consultation is recommended on both the assessment of the special interest and proposals for the area. The Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide which accompanies PPS5, identifies that there needs to be a comprehensive evidence base, sufficient for devising a positive and pro-active strategy for the historic environment. The emphasis is on understanding and assessing the significance of the historic environment and on making the information publicly available, particularly via the Historic Environment Record maintained and monitored by Derbyshire County Council.

2.4 It is recommended therefore, that in order to comply with this advice, a six-week consultation exercise be undertaken. The proposed consultation process for the Draft Somersal Herbert Conservation Area Character Appraisal is identified in the table below:-

Action	Date
Consultation period Six-week period	Thursday 15 th March 2012 to Thursday 26 th April 2012
Notifications Somersal Herbert Parish Council Ward Member for Norbury – Cllr K. Bull Derbyshire County Council Member :- Cllr A. Lewer Derbyshire County Council – Conservation and Highways Departments. Parochial Church Council (via the Vicar) As there are no proposed changes to the Conservation Area boundary, it is not proposed to notify residents and owners individually.	Thursday 8 th March 2012 5 working days in advance of formal consultation period and 12 working days in advance of advisory meeting
Publicity Posters advertising the 6-week period and advisory meeting for the public:- Parish Council Notice Board Possible other venues around Conservation Area Approved Public Notice for insertion in the Ashbourne News Telegraph	Thursday 8 th March 2012 Thursday 8 th March 2012 (submit for insertion by Friday 2 nd March 2012)
Documents Paper copies made available at :- Ashbourne Leisure Centre Somersal Herbert Parish Council Insertion on the web-site	Thursday 15 th March 2012 to Thursday 26 th April 2012
Advisory meeting for the public - Venue Somersal Herbert	W/C 26 th March 2012 Venue tbc

2.5 The outcome of the public meeting and the representations received during the consultation period will be reported back to a future meeting of this Committee. Once this Committee approves a final document, based on receipt of those representations, the Conservation Area Appraisal will be included within the Historic Environment Record as noted above.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT

3.1 Legal

The proposals are in accordance within the statutory framework. The legal risk is, therefore, low.

3.2 Financial

The cost of the Conservation Area Character Appraisal Programme can be contained within existing budgets, therefore, the financial risk is low.

4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, legal and human rights, financial, personnel and property considerations.

5. CONTACT INFORMATION

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6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Description	Date
Reports to Partnership and Regeneration Committee	14th April 2003
	16 th September 2004
	4 th September 2008
Planning Policy Statement 5 : Planning for the Historic Environment - Communities and Local Government	March 2010
The Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide - English Heritage / Department of Culture, Media & Sport / Communities and Local Government	March 2010
Guidance on Conservation Area Character Appraisals - English Heritage	2006

7. ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 – Map of Conservation Area
CD of Conservation Area Appraisal