

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS: PROCESS AND PROGRAMME
COMMENTS OF AREA COMMITTEES

Central South and West Area Committee – 9 August 2005

55. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS - PROCESS AND PROGRAMME

The Planning Services Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to support the report's conclusions and the recommendation to the Executive Board.

North East Area Committee – 6 August 2005

51. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

The Planning Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Nick Worlledge and Gemma Smith presented the report and addressed the meeting outlining the background and development of the conservation area appraisal process.

Nick and Gemma emphasised a number of points including :

- how the process had developed from the work and conclusions of the Land Use Consultants in 2002
- that each of the sixteen appraisals was expected to take on average a year to complete
- the way in which the order of priority for each appraisal area had been determined
- the consultation process and the way it was hoped to involve the community including residents and commercial interests, as part of the process

Members asked questions about the arrangements for involving local communities in the consultation process and timescales. The Committee agreed that a wide range of contact should be made with residents associations and groups who could offer more specialist advice.

In response to further questions connected to the longevity and flexibility of the appraisals, Mr. Worlledge said that the process was designed to evolve and adapt in response to changes in planning requirements and a range of other social and environmental factors.

Resolved to endorse the report.

North Area Committee – 1 September 2005

48. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS – PROCESS AND PROGRAMME

The Planning Business Manager had submitted a report (previously circulated now appended) which detailed the process and programme to be undertaken for an appraisal of the 16 Conservation areas in Oxford.

Mr Humphreys from the Wolvercote Commoners said that he supported the principle and actions of the appraisal. However when discuss conservation areas, the reason for the areas existing needed to be taken into account, for example Wolvercote and Godstow were not separate areas, but grew together, the historical background of areas had to be taken into account.

Mr Howe from the Victorian Society said that he was surprised that the only reference to a Conservation Area in North Oxford was in a recent planning application report.

Anne Spokes-Symonds asked how much notice was taken of those residents etc. that took part in the consultation exercise.

In response to questions Nick Worlledge said that the consultation had not yet taken place in North Oxford, however the consultation would be as inclusive as possible and would involve local residents and groups.

Tony Joyce said that it was important that Councillors appreciated that to carry out real and effective consultation was a large task and required a great deal of resources and Officer time and that as much support as possible was needed to support the Officers. He added that there was also a need to look at extending existing areas and creating new ones and he was concerned that parts of the City were being eroded by constant planning applications for development.

Councillor Armitage said that he was concerned that the character streets in North Oxford that were not in a Conservation Area, were being eroded or lost.

In response to question Nick Worlledge said that conservation was about protecting the best of our heritage rather than protecting all of it and that English Heritage was looking at what would be the best tool to achieve this.

The Committee agreed:

- (a) Support the conclusions in the report and the recommendation to the Executive Board to support the aims and objectives of the appraisals, the process and the priorities;
- (b) That there was a need for existing Conservation Areas in the City to be extended and new ones to be created;

- (c) That it would be welcomes if guidance was produced on what type of development would be acceptable in a Conservation Area;
- (d) To thank Nick Worlledge and Gemma Smith for their work in producing the report.

South East Are Committee – 5 September 2005

84. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS: PROCESS AND PROGRAMME

The Planning Services Business Manager had submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended.). Nick Worlledge attended the meeting with Gemma Smith to give a presentation of this report to the Committee.

Resolved:

- To support the conclusions of the report and the recommendations to the Executive Board.

Cowley Area Committee – 7 September 2005

68. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS – PROCESS AND PROGRAMME

The Planning Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated now appended) which detailed the process and programme for conducting an appraisal of conservation areas,

Judith Harley asked how the classification was decided on. In response Nick Worlledge said that the classification was a quick assessment using the number of applications and the number of buildings. He further added that there were no proposals to reduce the number or size of the existing conservation areas.

County Councillor Smith said that Oxford was a beautiful city, however there never seemed to be any opportunities to preserve more modern areas. She said that the cottages in Littlemore or the Orlit houses for example while not necessarily historic, were still part of the growth and history of the city, especially the Orlit homes which are now being demolished and will never be built again. In response Nick Worlledge said that the Government had requested Local Authorities to identify special interest areas and this was the framework that the City Council had to work to. He accepted that this might give the impression that some areas of the City were not looked at.

In response to further questions Nick Worlledge said that English Heritage and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport were responsible for the listing

of buildings. He said that while Oxford had many listed older buildings, there were some more modern such as St. Catherine's College.

Judith Harley asked if there was a list for buildings of special interest that were not on the official listed building register. In response Nick Worlledge said that there was a list, however this did not give protection to the buildings, but did raise awareness of their special interest.

The Committee agreed:

- (a) To welcome the report and the work to be undertaken;
- (b) To support the conclusions in the report and the recommendation to the Executive Board to support the aims and objectives of the appraisals, the process and the priorities;
- (c) That there was a need for existing Conservation Areas in the City to be extended and new ones created;
- (d) That consideration should be given to protecting buildings of special interest from the latter part of the 20th century.

East Area Parliament – 21 September 2005

65. CONSERVATION AREA - APPRAISALS - PROCESS AND PROGRAMME

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved: -

- (1) To support the conclusions of the report and the recommendations to the Executive Board;
- (2) To ask the Planning Services Business Manager to produce a plan showing Listed Buildings in the Conservation Areas within the Committee's area together with indications of areas of high landscape and built environment value.