

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 4 NOVEMBER 2014

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC
PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

LITTLE BERKHAMSTED CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

WARD(S) AFFECTED: HERTFORD RURAL SOUTH

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To enable Members to consider the Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> That	
(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area Appraisal be supported;
(B)	authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary; and
(C)	the Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area Appraisal be supported for adoption;
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:	
(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed; and

(B)	the Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

1.0 Background.

1.1 East Herts has a rich environmental heritage which includes 42 Conservation Areas. The East Herts Local Plan commits the Council to review its Conservation Areas, a requirement which is also set out in national legislation.

1.2 The review of Little Berkhamsted's Conservation Area is the one in a series of reviews undertaken in 2013/2014. These reviews are now being presented for Members consideration. In each case a report is presented when a public consultation exercise has been undertaken in relation to each individual settlement.

1.3 Each document identifies the special character of the respective Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detract from the identified character. Existing boundaries are reviewed and, where appropriate, practical enhancement proposals are suggested.

1.4 Once Members have considered each Appraisal, and the document has been adopted by the Council, they will become a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications.

2.0 Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area Appraisal

2.1 Little Berkhamsted's Conservation Area was designated in 1981 and the Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area Appraisal was completed in 2014. There was a period of public consultation from July until September 2014. A public meeting jointly in association with Brickendon Conservation Area Appraisal was held on 31 July 2014 at which about 30 members of the public were in attendance. Responses were received from the Parish Council and from one other person. The headline issues are set out in the following

paragraphs:

- 2.2 *General content of Appraisal:* The Appraisal sets out a revision to the Conservation Area boundary to (1) include parts of Stockings Lane and Old Manor House complex and Culverwood House and (2) adjust the boundary at the northern end of Breach Lane to reflect physical boundaries on the ground. It identifies the key environmental features and the manner in which they can be controlled. In relation to Little Berkhamsted the most relevant ones are: Listed Buildings including structures in their curtilages; non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection; other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection and important open land and spaces.
- 2.3 *Listed buildings and structures in their curtilages:* These are protected by legislation and have been identified in the Appraisal.
- 2.4 *Non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection:* Thirteen such buildings have been identified that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and these should be retained through the planning process. A number of these buildings have distinctive features whose adequate protection could formally be achieved through the introduction of an Article 4 Direction which removes Permitted Development Rights. A general paper on this subject in relation to all Conservation Area Appraisals will be presented for Members future consideration.
- 2.5 *Other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection:* A number have been identified and include walls. These are important to the rural qualities and character of Little Berkhamsted. Most are protected by virtue of being within the curtilages of Listed Buildings or above prescribed heights (which means that it is necessary to seek consent before demolition is undertaken). Those within the Conservation Area are protected by virtue of being above prescribed heights (which means that it is necessary to seek consent before demolition is undertaken). An extensive walled garden, currently beyond the Conservation Area, north of Stockings Lane, is not protected. However its protection from substantial demolition will be provided if

Members agree the proposal to extend the Conservation Area in this location.

2.6 *Important open land and spaces:* The Appraisal has identified several such important open spaces that materially contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area that should be protected through the planning process.

2.7 *Enhancement proposals to deal with detracting elements:* A number have been identified and mainly include walls in need of repair. It is accepted that such improvements will often only be carried out with the co-operation of owners and other local bodies and organisations. However the District Council may have a role to play in some instances, for example by offering technical advice; by determining applications and where appropriate offering grant assistance.

3.0 Consultation Feedback

3.1 The Parish Council supported the document.

3.2 Other comments received through the consultation process are set out in the table included as **Essential Reference Paper B** arranged in the subject order set out above.

3.3 **Essential Reference Paper C** is a copy of the Little Berkhamsted Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan as it appeared at the consultation draft stage with any necessary track or other changes. Further minor changes will be incorporated reflecting the status of the final document once Members have considered it for adoption.

3.4 In summary it is recommended that the Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be adopted and be used in the process of determining planning applications.

4.0 Implications/Consultations

4.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential**

Reference Paper A.

Background Papers

None

Contact Member: Cllr Mike Carver – Executive Member for
Strategic Planning and Transport
mike.carver@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and
BuildingControl
kevin.steptoe@eastherts.gov.uk