

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 6 FEBRUARY 2018

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT AND COUNCIL SUPPORT

ASTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT
PLAN

WARD(S) AFFECTED: Datchworth and Aston

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To enable Members to consider the Aston Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan following public consultation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: That

(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Aston Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be supported;
(B)	authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the document which may be necessary; and
(C)	the Aston Conservation Area Appraisal and

Management Plan 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 Aston Conservation Area is one of a series of reviews being undertaken and this is a recently completed one for consideration.

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 document and it has been adopted by the Council, it becomes a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications.

2.0 The Aston Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

2.1 The Aston Conservation Area was designated in 1979. This Appraisal document was completed in 2017 and went through a period of public consultation from 7 September 2017 to 19th October 2017. There was a public meeting held on 7th September 2017 at the Aston

Village Hall at which about 25 persons attended. A modest number of representations have been received. They can be divided into several categories: firstly issues associated with conservation area boundaries, secondly an issue with contemporary design in the conservation area: thirdly environmental enhancements and elements out of keeping with the conservation area. A summary of these comments and officer responses are included as **Essential Reference Paper B**. The headline issues are set out in the following paragraphs:

- 2.2 Conservation area boundaries. The document considers the conservation area boundaries and proposes a number of alterations. These are:
 - (a) Include properties at Aston End Road and north side of School Lane.
 - (b) Exclude Nos. 3 - 5 Astonbury Farm Cottages which date from the mid-20th century.
 - (c) Exclude treed area south of Gregor House and south of Broadwater Lane because the land lies within Stevenage Borough Council.
 - (d) Exclude Nos. 6- 8 Aston End Road.
 - (e) Make minor adjustment to revise boundary opposite The Lodge at Dene Lane to better reflect existing features on the ground.
- 2.3 The document identifies the key environmental features and the manner in which they can be controlled. In relation to Aston most relevant ones are: listed buildings; non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection; other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection and important open land and spaces.
- 2.4 *Listed buildings and structures in their curtilages*: These are protected by legislation and have been identified.

- 2.5 *Non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection:* A number have been so identified. Some non-listed residential buildings have architectural features of high quality whose formal protection could be achieved through the introduction of an Article 4 Direction should Members decide to proceed with this option.
- 2.6 *Other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection.* A number have been identified and include walls and tombstones in the churchyard which are important to the character of the village.
- 2.7 *Important open land and spaces.* The following particularly important open spaces have been identified: open land in the village centre used as a cricket pitch; open land between the churchyard and Aston Dene; the churchyard.
- 2.8 Trees play a particularly important role in many locations.
- 2.9 *Enhancement proposals to deal with detracting elements.* Several have been identified.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.
- 3.2 A summary of comments received through the consultation process and officer responses are set out in the table is included as **Essential Reference Paper B**.
- 3.3 **Essential Reference Paper C** is a copy of the Aston

Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan as it appeared at the consultation draft stage with any subsequent track changes to text and alterations to accompanying plans that incorporate any necessary changes. Further minor changes will be incorporated reflecting the status of the final document once Members have considered it for adoption.

Background Papers

Written representations received through the consultation process.

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/documents/s42853/Aston%20CAA%20-%20background%20papers%20reps.pdf?j=22>

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