

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON HELPSTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN (November – December 2007)**

- Resident

Request to consider making a reference to past and future provision of allotments in Helpston

Response

This comment is noted, although the appraisal has not been altered to accommodate the above comment. Provision of allotments is not dealt with through the Conservation Area Appraisal. Comments have been passed on to Allotments Officer, PCC

- Resident

1. When is the earliest date the boundary extension would come into effect?
2. What is the position with any planning applications awaiting a decision?

Response

1. The final report, as amended, would be taken forward through PCC committee process for proposed adoption, Spring 2008
2. Planning applications are determined in accordance with the approved Local Plan and other material considerations. The present document is subject to consultation and so has limited 'material' weight.

- Resident

Why does the proposed extension exclude the even numbers (south side) Glinton Road as far as no. 36, which are all late 1800's properties?

Response

Four pairs of semi-detached properties are shown on the 1886 O.S. map. These properties are the beginnings of ribbon development along Glinton Road which gathered pace from the mid 20<sup>th</sup> C. All properties have been altered and retain little original architectural features. The properties do not have distinctive architectural character or historical significance to justify inclusion in their own right in an extended conservation area. This area was examined as part of the appraisal but was judged to be of insufficient quality / historical character for inclusion

- Resident

Support extension of the conservation area.

Response

Comment noted

- Resident

Proposed boundary extension south of the Old School, Glinton Road does not follow any physical boundary within the field. Suggest including the whole field in extension. All other boundaries align with other physical boundaries

Response

These comments are noted. The former paddocks to the south of the Old School and east of Woodgate, shown on the 1886 O.S. map, are now part of a larger agricultural field. It is considered inappropriate to include the whole 'modern' field which is not a 'home' field historic to Helpston. The proposed boundary has been amended to follow the rear boundaries of properties to Glinton Road (West) and Woodgate (East).

- Resident

1. Support conservation area boundary extension.
2. Development at Church Farm, Maxey Road is unsympathetic and out of keeping with adjoining properties. New development should be sympathetic to the character of the area, compatible in terms of height, design, scale and building materials.
3. Further tree planting is supported, particularly on the approaches to the village (East & West).
4. Encourage the repair of existing boundary hedges and stone walls which have fallen into disrepair.

Response

1. Comment noted

2. Comments agreed – the Appraisal will help achieve this.
3. Comments noted.
4. Comments noted – refer to 10.6 Management Plan

- Resident

1. Text corrections
2. Comments on possible alterations to the school entrance off West Street and impacts that should be taken into account

Response

1. The Appraisal has been amended accordingly
2. These comments are noted. Any enhancement works would be in partnership with the school, Parish Council, residents and Highway Authority.

- Resident

Object to extending the conservation area:

1. Existing conservation area is successful, covers the main historic parts of the village.
2. Proposed extension covers properties from 1960's without significant conservation interest.
3. Helpston residents care for gardens and their properties in a sensitive way.
4. Existing planning process sufficient to meet needs of proposed extended areas.

Response

These comments are noted, although the appraisal has not been altered to accommodate the above comments. The report has identified that it is not only the buildings of Helpston within the currently defined conservation area that are significant in the village's heritage. It is acknowledged that many buildings themselves are not of sufficient architectural or historic character and appearance in their own right to justify extending the conservation area. The significance for the character and history of the village is the land and historic paddocks they occupy. The historic field patterns directly associated with the buildings that existed in 1886 – the enclosure field systems, 'home' fields tracks and ponds are likely to follow boundaries that have existed since at least medieval times. These are significant elements which define the character and appearance of Helpston and for that reason are considered worthy of inclusion in the conservation area. A comparison between the 1886 O.S. and current map shows the relationship between the land proposed for inclusion and surviving historic field patterns.

- Resident

Further extension to include over 1 acre of farmland is not supported. Believe it would affect farming business in the future.

Response

Comment noted, although the appraisal has not been altered to accommodate the above comments. The present conservation boundary was designated in 1975 and it believed not to have affected agricultural operations. The proposed extended boundary is likewise not expected to affect future farming practice.

- Resident

1. Suggested type and scale of infill development to open paddock in West Street outside the conservation area and village envelope, to improve the appearance and 'grain' of West Street.
2. Suggested improvements to the King Street and B1443 West Street 'T' Junction.

Response

1. The land is outside Helpston Village envelope (Policy H8 – Village Envelope, H13 - Housing in Open Countryside and LNE1 Development in the Countryside, Peterborough Local Plan, would apply to residential development proposals). The possibility of extending the conservation area boundary west to Torpel Manor has been considered but this area is too distant to form a conservation area that retains architectural and historic consistency, continuity and meets designation criteria.
2. Transport issues are outside the scope of the Conservation appraisal. Comments have been forwarded to the Highway Authority.

- Resident

1. Support the proposals.
2. Include specific objective in the management plan to encourage local landowners to manage land within the conservation area specifically to support biodiversity?
3. Suggest acknowledgement in the plan the encouraging local landowners to build new stone walls and offer help in identifying grant opportunities to support this.

4. Recommend extending the conservation area to include Rice Wood, which is an integral part of the village.

#### Response

1. Comments noted
2. Comment noted, although the appraisal has not been altered to accommodate the above comment. Other source of guidance is available.
3. Comment noted (See 10.6 Stone Walls)
4. Rice Wood is identified in the Peterborough Local Plan as a Site of Local Nature Importance (Policy LNE 16) and Area of Best Landscape (Policy LNE5) and therefore has some protection. The appraisal has not been altered to accommodate the above comment. The historic and physical relationship between the village and Rice Wood is acknowledged. However, the area is considered to have limited justification to propose inclusion in an extended area.

- Resident

Support proposed conservation area extension.

#### Response

Comment noted

- Resident

1. Support for extending the area to include landscape features and other natural and historical aspects of the area. The conservation area should cover the whole of the village.
2. Building materials for new development should reflect the guidance of the Village Design Statement
3. Signage should be limited and unnecessary signage removed.

#### Response

1. Extending the area to cover the whole village is not supported. (see comments below – Parish Council reply)
2. Agreed – See 10.4 Management plan
3. Agreed – the appraisal has been amended accordingly - 10.7 the following 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point added: **Where possible, the number of poles should be reduced with signage etc being placed on one pole or lamp-post and other lamp-posts or poles removed.**

- Resident

1. Welcome Conservation area boundary extension. Comments on reference to Article 4 Directions in section on Implications of Conservation Area status.
2. Some references unclear, amendments required to text
3. Make reference to railway station buildings on maps.

#### Response

The Appraisal has been amended accordingly.

- Resident

1. Inappropriate to include modern dwellings in extended conservation area as many are not of historic merit. Imposition of conservation area status would hamper normal maintenance repair.
2. Including open fields on the outskirts of the village would hamper the current use of these fields for farming purposes.

#### Response

1. Comment noted (see comments above - historic field patterns/'home' fields, being a significant part of Helpston's character.
2. The present conservation boundary was designated in 1975 and it believed not to have affected agricultural operations. The proposed extended boundary is likewise not expected to affect future farming practice.

- Helpston Parish Council

1. What is the criteria for excluding properties from the conservation area?

2. Will PCC planners be able to cope with the potential increase in volume of planning applications that his review may lead to?
3. Consider extending the conservation area boundary to include - Woodland Lea, Glinton Road, West Street, The Railway Signal Box and proposed Stamford Homes Acoustic Barrier. – to protect the identity and nature of the village as a whole.

#### Response

Conservation Areas are defined in legislation as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance”. An appraisal of an area’s special architectural or historic interest should be undertaken to justify designating a conservation area or extending an existing conservation area.

There is no national template for such an appraisal. However, guidance is given by English Heritage in ‘Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals’. It is important therefore to identify and define the ‘special interest’ of an area in justifying designation, to evaluating what makes an area special. The distinctiveness of an area can come from more than the appearance of its buildings. These help shape its character – the spaces formed between buildings, landscape, etc.

Many of our conservation area boundaries were too tightly drawn on designation in the 1970 / 80’s. The original boundaries tended to concentrate heavily on the built form, the historic buildings and settlement pattern found in the core of a village. These areas clearly have historic and architectural significance worthy of conservation area designation. More recently has been the awareness of the contribution of historic fields, paths and paddocks to the character of a settlement.

The Draft Helpston Appraisal has identified the special character of the present conservation area: the buildings, spaces, materials – trees, walls, hedges, townscape street patterns etc. The appraisal has also shown that the surviving historic field patterns and enclosures associated with the villages historic buildings are also an important part of the village’s heritage. A comparison between the 1886 O.S. and current map shows the relationship between the land proposed for inclusion and surviving historic field patterns. The proposed extension to the conservation area is to recognise the significance of these pre-19<sup>th</sup> C field systems in the character of Helpston.

The possibility of extending the conservation area boundary west to Torpel Manor and east to the Helpston station area has been considered but these are considered too distant to form a conservation area that retains architectural and historic consistency, continuity and justifies ‘special interest’ throughout.

Extending a conservation area to include neutral and/or negative areas and little special character or distinctiveness would detract from and could undermine or weaken the significance of the ‘core’ of the conservation area.

Extending a conservation area to cover the whole of a village is normally considered inappropriate unless the area provides definable ‘special interest’ (architectural or historic interest). There is the possibility that in doing so this would weaken the defence of planning policies in considering planning appeals. Conservation Area designation should not be seen as means in itself to restrict or control change.

There are no criteria for excluding properties from a conservation area. A conservation area should have definable ‘special character’. Conservation areas can include properties which do not have architectural or historic character to justify inclusion in their own right. However, it would be expected that such an area provided a ‘special character’ in other respects to justify inclusion.

While the areas beyond the proposed extended conservation area illustrate the history and growth of the settlement they are considered not to have architectural and historic consistency (special character) to justify inclusion. Any additional planning work arising from extending the conservation area has been considered and can be managed within current resources.