

Report to: Planning and Licensing Committee

Report Ref: PL1901
Meeting Date: 23rd September 2019
Agenda Item: 7
Prepared By: Town Clerk



Subject: Conservation Area Appraisals Budget

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 BACKGROUND TO CONSERVATION AREAS

Conservation Areas are designated by planning authorities (i.e. Cheshire East Council) to protect areas which have outstanding historic or architectural interest. The intention of Conservation Areas is to preserve or enhance. Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and provides a basis for planning policies whose aim is to conserve all aspects of character or appearance, including landscape and public spaces, which define the area's special interest. The Local Plan Strategy, Neighbourhood Plan and SADPD all have policies targeted towards Conservation Areas.

A Conservation Area Appraisal is a document that defines the Conservation Area and provides the basis for its management; the appraisal is a material consideration in planning decisions. Appraisals assess areas where improvement is needed to ensure the Conservation Area remains special and identifies any areas which are at risk and require additional protection.

An appraisal involves reviewing the boundaries of the area, the Knutsford reviews in 2005 resulted in two new Conservation Areas.

1.2 KNUTSFORD CONSERVATION AREAS

Knutsford has five designated Conservation Areas:

1. Town Centre (designated 1989, appraisal 2005)
2. Legh Road (designated 1976, appraisal 2005)
3. Cross Town (designated 2006, appraisal 2006)
4. Heathfield Square (designated 2006, appraisal 2007)
5. St John's (designated 1994, no appraisal)

The Conservation Areas are shown on the Proposals Map of the Neighbourhood Plan (p. 100).

1.3 POLICY BACKGROUND



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The Town Council's current strategy, the 2020 Vision, set out an aim of working with partners to protect the heritage and character of the town and in the action plan set by the Planning and Licencing committee, the council stated it would undertake a review of the Conservation Areas.

The Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan commits the Town Council to:

Work with Cheshire East Council and local heritage groups and organisations to review all of the Town's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans and Article 4 Directions in order to ensure that all are up to date, are reflective of the existing built environment and are relevant in the continued protection and enhancement of these heritage assets.

Discussions with Cheshire East Council have confirmed that they do not have resource to undertake a review of the Conservation Areas in the foreseeable future. Cheshire East Council has confirmed that should a review be undertaken, they would be able to take the reviews forward to adoption.

In December 2018 the committee resolved (PL18/157) to defer consideration of requesting a budget to commission Conservation Area Appraisals to the 2020/21 budget.

A working group had agreed that reviews should be undertaken in the following priority:

1. St John's Avenue
2. Legh Road
3. Heathfield Square
4. Cross Town
5. Town Centre

2.0 APPRAISAL COSTS

In 2018 the Town Clerk contacted five companies which specialise in undertaking Conservation Area Appraisals: WYG, Townscape, Mel Morris Conservation, Kathryn Sater Associates and Simon Peake/Rachel Kerr.

A background to the companies is in appendix A.

	Mel Morris	Townscape	Kathryn Sather	Peak and Kerr
St John's	2,796	4,800	3,500	2,300
Heathfield Square	1,896	2,800	2,700	2,300
Cross Town	1,896	4,000	3,100	2,300
Town Centre	4,648	4,000	9,800	2,800
Legh Road	4,192	4,000	5,800	2,800
Total (individual)	15,428	19,600	24,900	12,500
Discount	3,054	1,960	1,550	2,500
Total (all)	12,374	17,640	23,350	10,000
Total (St/He/CT)	5,514		8,250	



3.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should consider submitting a request for a budget for the 2020/21 financial year to undertake reviews of the Conservation Areas. The committee could consider submitting a request to undertake all reviews in a single year (most cost effective, but a large financial cost in a single year) or to plan to undertake reviews over a number of years.

Kathryn Slater Associates and Mel Morris Conservation appear to offer the most experience in preparing Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and would both appear equally well suited to be commissioned by the Town Council. On the basis of cost, therefore, it is recommended that the committee consider Mel Morris Conservation as the preferred contractor.

The committee could therefore look to commission reviews as follows:

Option A

2020/21	St Johns, Heathfield Square and Cross Town	£5,514
2021/22	Legh Road	£4,192
2022/23	Town Centre	£4,648

Option B

2020/21	St John's	£2,796
2021/22	Legh Road	£4,192
2022/23	Heathfield Square and Cross Town	£3,792
2023/24	Town Centre	£4,648

Noting that the prices are not fixed and may be subject to increase upon commissioning.



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APPENDIX A COMPANY BACKGROUNDS

Mel Morris Conservation

Mel Morris has over 25 years experience of working in historic environment conservation, of which 15 were spent as a conservation officer within large, multi-disciplinary teams. Mel is particularly experienced in working with major Grade I & II* listed buildings, museums located within historic buildings & conservation area regeneration.

Since establishing the consultancy in 2001, the range of work has included 47 Conservation Area Appraisals, several Conservation Management Plans for complex sites with scheduled monuments, and a number of challenging planning applications for private clients who own listed buildings.

Mel Morris holds a BA in History of Art and Architecture and a Diploma in Architectural Conservation. She is a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation, Royal Town Planning Institute and Association for Studies in the Conservation of Historic Buildings. Before establishing the company she worked as a Conservation Officer at Bedfordshire County Council, Derbyshire County Council and as Principal Historic Buildings Advisor for Nottingham City Council.

Example Appraisals: [Brassington](#) [Okamoor](#) [Matlock Bank](#) [Swadlincote](#)

Kathryn Sather

Kathryn Sather & Associates work widely in heritage conservation, producing Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Conservation Management Plans, Conservation Statements, Archaeological Building Recordings, Heritage Statements, Desk Based Archaeological Assessments and other assessments for the historic environment. Kathryn Sather has over 28 years experience working in building conservation.

The practice has expertise in working with local authorities producing Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans in both rural and urban areas. All the Conservation Area Appraisals that we have carried out have aimed to assimilate the council's goals for future development with best practice in the field of historic environment management. The issues highlighted in local development frameworks have been noted in order to produce appraisals that may contribute to sustainable development. Most recently Kathryn Sather & Associates have completed a Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan for Bollington Cross, Cheshire, working with the Neighbourhood Plan Heritage and Conservation Group.

Kathryn Sather has an MSc in Historic Preservation, Kate Spencer has an MA in Historic Environment Conservation and a BA in Archaeology and Jeannie Willan has an MSc in Architectural Conservation.

Example Appraisals: [Bollington](#) [Congleton West Street](#) [Coventry Far Gosford Street](#)



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Townscape

Townscape is a Chartered Town Planning and Heritage Consultancy. Townscape have been active in the planning and heritage profession for over 25 years with extensive experience and knowledge in all aspects of heritage management and practice.

Jason Kennedy is a full member of both the RTPI and IHBC and is regulated by both professional bodies. This accreditation is to be considered the professional standard in dealing with town planning and heritage matters. Townscape is also a registered professional heritage practice listed under the HESPR accreditation scheme.

Most of our recent work has been to support planning applications for development which may involve works to a listed building, works to a significant element of a conservation area or indeed where works may have a possible impact upon scheduled ancient monuments.

We have also provided short term Locum Conservation Officer support to Local Authorities, most recently to Middlesbrough Council.

We have carried out Conservation Area Appraisals for a number of local authorities including Wigan Council, Burnley Council, Sandwell Council and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

Example Appraisals: [Crickhowell](#) [Wednesbury](#)

Peak and Kerr

Simon Peak is a chartered town planner with over 15 years experience at WYG and before that IBI /Taylor Young. I have played a key role on large scale regeneration and master planning projects throughout the UK. I am a successful and capable town planner at Associate level. My town planning caseload has been in the residential, commercial and public sectors and has included a high number of large scale and complex planning applications for high profile clients. I have additional expertise in conservation planning and community consultation.

Rachel Kerr has a MSc in Planning, specialism in Urban Design. Principal Urban Designer at WYG.

Example Appraisal (when working at WYG): [Central Barrow](#)



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