

REPORT TO PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

CONSERVATION AREA REVIEWS



Report Reference	PL-23-01
Meeting Date	30 th May 2023
Agenda Item	12
Prepared by	Planning and Facilities Officer

1.0 BACKGROUND

Following the adoption of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan in 2019, the Town Council set out to meet its commitment 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.

In 2019 the council appointed a consultant to undertake reviews of the conservation areas and prepare an updated appraisal document and management plan for each. The Legh Road Conservation Area appraisal commenced in 2020. The review was impacted by COVID affecting access to the county records office and by a lack of engagement from Cheshire East Council. A draft of the appraisal was completed in 2021 but the engaged consultant decided not to continue with the commission. The Legh Road Conservation Area appraisal and management plan will be progressed for public consultation by Cheshire East Council, running from early June to early July with a drop-in session at the council offices in June.

In 2022 a consultant was appointed to undertake the remaining conservation area reviews. An engagement meeting including the consultant and the Conservation Officer created a timeline of engagement for the consultant to work to.

The remaining conservation areas were ordered with the St Johns and Heathfield Square appraisal and management plan drafts being completed early in 2023. The draft documents are currently being revised before being added to a future Planning and Licensing Committee meeting. Once agreed, the documents will be submitted to Cheshire East Council for progression to public consultation.

The Town Centre and Crosstown Conservation Areas are currently in progress. The Planning and Facilities Officer is liaising with the consultant to organise a public drop-in session for the Town Centre Conservation Area review. This drop-in session will also be held in June.

The committee is required to reappoint members to working groups at the start of the new civic year. The working group is able to co-opt non-councillor members so these do not need to be reappointed by the committee.

2.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should appoint four members to the Conservation Area Review Working Group.

ANNEX: WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1) The Working Group will comprise four councillors, determined by the Planning Committee and the Town Clerk/Planning and Facilities Officer in an advisory capacity.

The working group may invite members of the public to attend meetings in an advisory capacity on an ad-hoc usually temporary basis.

Membership to be reconfirmed/ changed by the parent body at its first meeting at start of a new Mayoral year.

- 2) At its first meeting (or first in a new Mayoral year) the working group members shall:
 - a) Review these terms of reference for approval as appropriate.
 - b) Appoint an elected member as Lead Member who should ensure the entire working group's members are kept informed and involved with progress and act as the primary reporting channel back to the parent body.
- 3) In line with the task set by the Planning committee, the purpose and remit of the working group is to:
 - a) Assist the council's appointed consultant in developing revised appraisals and management plans for the five conservation areas
- 4) The group does not have delegated powers to make decisions on behalf of the Planning committee or the Town Council nor should exceed its purpose and remit (above) without the parent body's sanction to a change to these Terms of Reference
- 5) The group reports to the Planning Committee.
- 6) The group shall provide timely reports to the parent body in the following manner:
 - a) Verbal progress reports at alternate committee meetings
 - b) Written reports as necessary and at key milestones
- 7) Meetings of the working group are not usually but may be public meetings.