

Appendix 1
Report to the Executive of the District Council
4 July 2005

**EXECUTIVE
4 July 2005**

Item No: *
Subject: **Residential Design
Guidance and Review of
Conservation Areas in
Stratford-upon-Avon**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Beese**
Lead Officer: **Andrew Ford**
Contact on 01789 260332

SUMMARY	To consider the responses to the consultation exercise, and to recommend the adoption of the design guidance as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). To approve the extensions to the conservation area boundary as recommended in the character study.	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Examination of residential character for Stratford on Avon District Council – draft report for public consultation (March 2005).	
CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN		
CONSULTEE	✓	DETAILS AND DATE OF CONSULTATION
WARD MEMBERS	✓	Councillors Bates; Beckett; Beese; Cockings; Lloyd; Moore; Organ; Perry; Seaman; Short; and Thomas on 10/6/05
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN	✓	Councillor Topham on 13/6/05
PORTFOLIO HOLDER	✓	Councillor Beese on 13/6/05 Councillor Giblin (Shadow) on 13/6/05
LEGAL SERVICES	✓	Head of Legal Services on 31/5/05 - Peter Cruden
FINANCIAL SERVICES	✓	Director of Corporate Services (Finance) on 31/5/05 - Richard Burrell
PERSONNEL SERVICES		
OTHER DEPTS	✓	Director of Operational Services on 31/5/05 - Trevor Askew Development Control Manager on 31/5/05 - Les Greenwood
CORPORATE STRATEGY/EMAS	✓	Rob Walsh, Head of Policy and Public Relations on 31/5/05
Summary of RECOMMENDATION		<p>(1) That the Council endorses the changes set out in Appendix 1 and authorises the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) to make such final editorial amendments to the draft Character Study report as may be necessary prior to its publication.</p> <p>(2) That the Council adopts as supplementary planning guidance the general design principles and area specific design guidance, contained in the final Character Study report to be published as a separate document.</p> <p>(3) That the Council approves both the extensions to the existing town centre conservation area designation to include Avenue Road/Tiddington Road and the extension to the Shottery conservation area, as recommended in the final Character Study report</p>
FINAL DECISION SOUGHT	No	Further consideration by Council

1. Introduction and Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To summarise the responses to the consultation exercise on the draft 'Examination of residential character' study report and to agree the design guidance for adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). In addition to outline the responses on the conservation area recommendations and seek approval to extend the existing town conservation area boundary to incorporate the designations as proposed in the character study.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The commission of the technical work was in response to recent pressures on residential areas of the town from redevelopment, particularly on what are referred to as 'backland plots' identified in PPG3. There has been growing public concern about the increase in applications for redevelopment proposals in the older, established residential areas and the impact of these proposals on the neighbouring character. In response, the District Council has sought to prepare design guidance for residential areas in the town and to seek recommendations on the appropriateness of conservation area designation for specific areas.
- 2.2 In November 2004 consultants were appointed from the School of Planning and Housing in the Faculty of the Built Environment at the University of Central England in Birmingham (UCE). Work on the project began in early December 2004, with the consultants surveying the following areas of the town:
- Bridgetown area (including Tiddington Road)
 - Loxley Road
 - Welcombe and Clopton
 - Evesham (including Shottery) and Alcester Roads

The draft study report provides a detailed character analysis and a set of general design principles developed to help guide new residential development. In addition, a recommendation is also made as to the suitability for conservation area designation. A copy of the document has been placed in the Members' Room or further copies are available from the Lead Officer.

- 2.3 Executive gave approval for the draft study to be published for public consultation at the meeting of 11 April 2005. The consultation exercise began on 16 May and lasted 4 weeks until 10 June 2005. This took the format of a leaflet setting out the general design principles and the summary of the character assessment for each area, along with the conservation area recommendation and representations form. These were sent to statutory consultees, relevant amenity groups in Stratford, and individual residents within each of the study areas. The full version of the report was made available on the District Council's website, with copies placed at Elizabeth House and public Library. A public exhibition was also held, for part of the consultation period, in the main Council Offices. Finally, a meeting was held with members of the Town Design Group (TDG) during the consultation period. The TDG has had a steering role throughout the project, and the meeting provided opportunity to comment on the draft study and provide feedback to the consultant team from UCE.

3. Nature and Analysis of Representations

- 3.1 Approximately 1700 individual residents and 200 amenity groups and organisations representing statutory consultees were sent summary leaflets. Council members and other officers were consulted. A total of 156 representations were received, from individual residents, specific groups and

organisations. The greater part have been from individual residents or relevant resident associations. Representations were also received from English Heritage and CPRE, which, although providing detailed comments, were both generally supportive of the character study. English Heritage, in particular, gave its support for the conservation area designations recommended in the study.

- 3.2 The issues raised are summarised below and a more detailed summary of comments relating to each of the study areas is provided in Appendix 1. The comments have provided important local insights into the character analysis and the draft report has been amended accordingly. Copies of the original representations have been placed in the Members' Room for inspection.
- 3.3 Overall, the comments received generally agree with the character analysis provided for each of the study areas and support the recommendations for the design guidance and conservation area designations. However, what is clear from the public consultation exercise is that there is a resistance from residents to the subdivision of plots for redevelopment at a higher density. There was also a degree of criticism directed at the District Council either for not having undertaken action earlier on this matter, or, conversely, that the exercise was an inappropriate use of resources.
- 3.4 The recommended extension of the town centre and Shottery conservation areas received a high degree of support. However, the consultation process has suggested further extension or revision of the conservation area boundaries at Tiddington Road and Shottery as follows:
- Tiddington Road - the boundary should be extended to include all the residential development towards Tiddington village. In addition the drawing of the proposed boundary should be amended to exclude the site to the rear of 54-66 Tiddington Road, which has an extant planning permission for residential development.
 - Shottery - the boundary be extended to run along the back of the properties on Quinneys Road and returning north to the existing conservation area boundary along Hathaway Lane.

The northern extent of the Avenue Road designation to include Benson Road was challenged on the grounds that the area was of lesser architectural quality. Finally it was suggested that Shipston Road should be designated as a conservation area.

- 3.5 The consultants have had an opportunity to consider these representations and have concluded the following:
- Tiddington Road;
 - i) The boundary as recommended in the draft report is satisfactorily drawn. It represents a clear demarcation between substantially different residential development in terms of the architectural quality, historical development and plot form. However consideration will be given to the designation of the wider area as an 'Area of Townscape Interest'.
 - ii) It is considered acceptable to include the site to the rear of 54-66 Tiddington Road within the conservation area. The designation would clearly be material to the consideration of a detailed scheme, although negotiation over the reserved matter stages should have regard to the legal status of the extant permission and the timing of the designation.
 - Shottery – the conservation area boundary should remain as recommended in the character study report. The additional area is not of sufficient architectural quality to be included within the proposed extension. A case could be made that a designation could provide a 'buffer' for the existing

conservation area. However, in my opinion it would be more appropriate to consider this in a future when review of the overall Shottery conservation area.

- Avenue Road / Shipston Road – the northern area of the proposed extension to the conservation area in Avenue Road is considered to represent a coherent group which is of sufficient quality to meet the criteria for designation. The view remains that the quality of the character area is not sufficient to designate the Shipston Road as a conservation area, and the Tramway is protected by the existing designation.
- 3.6 In referring to the conservation area designation in Avenue Road and Tiddington Road the consultant's study recommended a separate designation to the existing town centre conservation area in order to highlight the differing character. This has received a degree of support. However, my preference is to designate the new areas as an extension to the existing conservation area. This designation is based on a comprehensive study by consultants in 1992, which despite looking at individual areas in the town proposed a single designation. To maintain consistency I recommend this approach for the new conservation area designations and the report should be amended accordingly. It is already intended that the modest extension to the Shottery conservation area would become part of the existing wider designation.
- 3.7 Elsewhere, the recommendation to designate 'Areas of townscape interest' also received support. I therefore retain the view that the Council should look into the implementation of this suggestion, in particular the policy framework that might support it. This would be either through policies in the Local Plan Review or via a new policy within the Local Development Framework.
- 3.8 Two issues of a substantive nature have emerged from the consultation exercise. The draft study upon which comments were invited is a technical document, providing a substantial amount of detailed work to support the recommendations relating to both the design guidance and conservation area designation. The supporting information sought to make clear the aims and objectives of the study, as well as the eventual purpose and scope of the outputs. However, it is apparent from the general nature of the responses that the impression has been formed, particularly in relation to the design guidance that it will restrict future development of 'backland' plots as a matter of principle. This is not the case, and it is important at this stage to make it clear that the purpose of the design guidance is to seek an improvement to the design and setting of new development and to establish general principles for residential areas in the town.
- 3.9 Following on from this point, a number of representations from residents in Tiddington Road challenged the recommendations in the draft study as unlawful and give notice that a judicial review would be pursued if the SPG was to be adopted. The grounds for the objection relate to the Inspector's Appeal decision on land to the rear of 54-66 Tiddington Road, and failure to include mention of the extant permission and its likely implementation. In addition the representations suggest that the study fails to comply with PPS12, on the grounds that the study is recommending a restriction on proposals for development of 30 dwellings per hectare, and that as drafted it unlawfully restricts landowners rights over the use of their land under the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 3.10 In reconsidering the study's analysis of Tiddington Road, I feel it would be appropriate to revise the text to acknowledge the planning history and appeal decision relating to the site at the rear of 54-66 Tiddington Road. The eventual design guidance that will be published as the SPG will be prepared in accordance with the relevant Planning Policy Guidance and emerging Planning Policy

Statements issued by central government, as well as 'parent' policies in the adopted District Local Plan and Draft Review. As has been indicated in para. 3.8, the SPG is not intended to be a restrictive document preventing further development in these areas, assuming it is acceptable in all other respects.

4. Member Comments made during Consultation

- 4.1 Cllr Cockings supports the wording of the recommendations for Areas 6 & 7 of the Evesham Road character area in the study.

5. Corporate Strategy/Environmental/Financial/Legal Implications and other officers' comments

- 5.1 In publishing the design guide principles for each of the study areas as SPG it will be necessary to have regard to the relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan, in particular ENV1, ENV24, ENV26 and H13. In addition the document will also support Policy PR.1 and Policy DEV.1 in the Local Plan Review, as well as the principles of the adopted District Design Guide. Policy EF.12 and Policy EF.13 of the Local Plan Review provide for conservation area designation, and control of development within them. Following the adoption of the Local Plan Review it will be necessary to readopt the SPG as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in accordance with the District Council's approved Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 5.2 The study, findings and recommendations provide an important source of background information to assist in the application of these policies.
- 5.3 The study is a technical document and it will therefore be necessary to extract the detailed design guidance embedded within it and publish it as a separate document in a format that is easily useable.
- 5.4 The financial implications of the recommendations within this report will be contained within existing budgets.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The study provides a comprehensive assessment of the character of each of the study areas, providing a useful source of information, in addition to complementing the 1992 'Conservation Area' study. The contents have undergone an inclusive process of public consultation, and the comments received are generally supportive. The consultants have been given the opportunity to consider the alterations to the draft study and have given their general approval to the amendments.
- 6.2 The eventual design SPG will provide useful information that will be of benefit for all parties in considering future development in the town, and provide companion guidance to the District Design Guide and Town Design Statement.
- 6.3 The recommendations for extension of the conservation areas are based on both in-depth analysis and emerging guidance on designation from English Heritage.

RECOMMENDED:-

- (1) That the Council endorses the changes set out in Appendix 1 and authorises the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) to make such final editorial amendments to the draft Character Study report as may be necessary prior to its publication.**
- (2) That the Council adopts as supplementary planning guidance the general design principles and area specific design guidance,**

contained in the final Character Study report to be published as a separate document.

- (2) That the Council approves both the extensions to the existing town centre conservation area designation to include Avenue Road/Tiddington Road and the extension to the Shottery conservation area, as recommended in the final Character Study report.**

COLIN STAVES
Acting Head of Planning and Building Control

Appendix 1

Nature and Analysis of Representations by Individual Study Area

1. Alcester Road

There was general agreement of the description and analysis of the character of the area. The recommendation to consider designating as an 'Area of townscape interest' received a strong level of support. Local residents articulated the view that the Alcester Road area has undergone a significant level of recent development and that further development should be resisted.

Support was given for the recommendations, and in particular to reinstate the hedges on the south side of the road. In addition improving the access across Shottery Brook was considered worthwhile and that there were also opportunities to improve habitat along the watercourse.

Consideration should be given to extending the character analysis further along Alcester Road and to the area north of the existing study area.

The area of open space within Area 1 of the study is locally valued for its amenity value and should be retained.

SDC Response: The District Council will explore the opportunities to designate an 'Area of townscape interest' as indicated in the main report. The recommendation to improve access to Shottery Brook, and reinstatement of hedges will be brought to the attention of the relevant officers in Operational Services.

Consideration will be given to extending the character analysis further along Alcester Road and to the area north of the existing study area dependent on resources.

The draft report will be amended to reflect the importance of the area of open space to residents in Meadow Close.

2. Avenue Road

There was general agreement of the description and analysis of the character of the area. The recommendation to designate as a conservation area received a strong level of support. Local residents are concerned that the Avenue Road area had experienced a significant degree of recent development interest, and that new building should be restricted in the future.

Several request that specific buildings be mentioned, in addition to those already identified in the character study. Consideration is given to the Listing of No.68 Maidenhead Road.

The importance of trees within the overall 'streetscape' was recognised, particularly their contribution to wildlife habitat with the upkeep of the public realm also considered as being important. The study's identification of parking problems and increased traffic levels in recent years was endorsed.

SDC Response: The District Council recognises local concerns at the level of development interest. National planning policy guidance is currently supportive of this type of development, however any further applications will be considered on their individual merits and against the policies in the Local Plan and regard for the proposed residential design guidance.

The consultants have reviewed the conservation area boundary and are satisfied with the original boundary as recommended. The recent revision to the regulations relating to the Listing of buildings allows individuals or organisations to apply to English Heritage. The District Council will support any application to List the building identified.

3. Banbury Road

There was general agreement of the description and analysis of the character of the area. The recommendation to consider designating as an 'Area of townscape interest' and the design guidance recommendations received a strong level of support. A range of suggested amendments and additional information to include in the report.

The importance of the Grammar School playing fields to the character of the area should be more fully recognised. Footpaths are poor in places and require repair.

The levels and speed of traffic along the Banbury Road was consistently identified as a significant problem.

Concern expressed that the area lacks appropriate retail and community facilities to support the Bridgetown development.

SDC Response: The District Council will explore the opportunities to designate an 'Area of townscape interest' as indicated in the main report. The draft report has been amended as appropriate to include the suggested revisions.

Issues and concerns relating to the traffic problems will be brought to the attention of the Highway Authority.

The District Council notes the views concerning retail and community facilities in the area.

4. Clopton Road

There was general agreement of the description and analysis of the character of the area. The recommendation to consider designating as an 'Area of townscape interest' and the design guidance recommendations received a strong level of support. A range of suggested amendments and additional information to be included in the report.

The trees on Clopton Road, within the public realm, need short to medium term management.

The study should have included character analysis of the commercial/industrial area of Clopton Road where it joins Birmingham Road. The latter should be identified for a separate character study and appropriate design guidance.

SDC Response: The District Council will explore the opportunities to designate an 'Area of townscape interest' as indicated in the main report. The draft report has been amended as appropriate to include the suggested revisions.

The study specifically sought to focus on residential areas, however the District Council will give consideration to a future study of the Birmingham Road.

5. Evesham Road

There was general agreement of the description and analysis of the character of the area. The recommendation to designate as a conservation area received a reasonable level of support. A range of suggested amendments and additional information to be

included in the report.

Conservation area designation should be extended as detailed in the main report. Consideration given to the Listing of the row of 'arts and craft' cottages on Shottery Road.

SDC Response: The draft report has been amended as appropriate to include the suggested revisions.

The recent revision to the regulations relating to the Listing of buildings allows individuals or organisations to apply to English Heritage. The District Council will support any application to List the buildings identified.

6. Loxley Road

There was general agreement of the description and analysis of the character of the area. A range of suggested amendments and additional information to be included in the report.

The importance of the open spaces provided by the golf club, rugby club and adjacent allotments should be recognised. Views out into the open countryside are also important, particularly in giving the impression of the openness of the countryside between Loxley Road and Tiddington Road when approaching the town.

The study's identification of parking problems and increased traffic levels in recent years was endorsed.

Concern was expressed at the level of change of use to commercial facilities and the associated parking.

SDC Response: The draft report has been amended as appropriate to include the suggested revisions and the concerns raised have been noted.

7. Shipston Road

There was general agreement of the description and analysis of the character of the area. The recommendation to consider designating as an 'Area of townscape interest' and the design guidance recommendations received a strong level of support. A range of suggested amendments and additional information were provided to be included in the report.

A clear view was given that it is important to preserve the setting of the Tramway and that any further development in the Areas identified adjacent to it should be sensitive to this issue. The problems of flooding, particularly in Areas 2, 3a and 3b were also highlighted.

The levels and speed of traffic along Avenue Road was consistently identified as a significant problem.

SDC Response:

The District Council will explore the opportunities to designate an 'Area of townscape interest' as indicated in the main report. The draft report has been amended as appropriate to include the suggested revisions.

Issues and concerns relating to the traffic problems will be brought to the attention of the Highway Authority.

8. Tiddington Road

There was general agreement of the description and analysis of the character of the area. The recommendation to designate as a conservation area received a strong level of support. There was some expression of concern that Tiddington Road had experienced a significant degree of recent development interest, and that new building should be restricted in the future. A range of suggested amendments and additional information were provided to be included in the report.

The importance of the open spaces provided by the golf club, rugby club and adjacent allotments should be recognised.

Levels of traffic and congestion along Tiddington Road were consistently identified as a significant problem.

SDC Response: The substantive issues relating to the study area have been addressed in the main section of the report. The draft report has been amended as appropriate to include the suggested revisions.

Issues and concerns relating to the traffic problems will be brought to the attention of the Highway Authority.

If you find the text in this document difficult to read, we can supply it in a format better suited to your needs.



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