

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 9th MARCH, 2009

**HIGH ERCALL CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN AND
PROPOSED BOUNDARY EXTENSION**

REPORT OF HEAD OF PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To adopt the High Ercall Conservation Area Management Plan to provide a sound basis for considering planning applications and for developing initiatives to improve the areas.
- 1.2 To seek member approval to amend the boundary of High Ercall Conservation Area.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet endorse the report and approve:

- **the adoption of the High Ercall Conservation Area Management Plan to provide a sound basis for considering planning applications and for developing initiatives to improve the area.**
- **the proposed revised boundary to the High Ercall Conservation Area**

3. SUMMARY

- 3.1 The Council is required to formulate management plans for all Conservation Areas within its boundary (Government Planning Policy Guidance PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment). The development of management plans is also in line with English Heritage's best practice guidelines. The intention is that a clear and concise Management Plan for each Conservation Area will provide a sound basis for its future management. This report seeks the approval and adoption of the Management Plan which has been drawn up for the High Ercall Conservation Area (see Appendix 1).
- 3.2 Members approval is also sought for the adoption of a revised boundary to the High Ercall Conservation Area. During the preparation of the recent Conservation Area Appraisal for High Ercall (2007) it became

apparent that there was an opportunity to amend the boundary which had not been amended or reviewed since its designation in 1981. This review raised questions regarding some of the boundaries of the High Ercall Conservation Area which the revised boundary seeks to address.

- 3.3 As part of the adoption processes both the management plan and the proposed boundary extension have been subject to full public consultation between November 2008 and January 2009. The consultations resulted in a number of comments, most of which were encouragingly positive and supportive of the changes and, where appropriate, suggested revisions that have been incorporated into the final draft document.
- 3.4 It is expected that the management plan and any subsequent amendments to the High Ercall Conservation Area boundary will rationalise the boundary to ensure that the overall character identified in the Appraisal of 2007 is preserved and enhanced.

4. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 4.1 Cabinet Meeting: 31st March 2008
- 4.2 Members may recall that at the above meeting it was agreed, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Management, and having been subject to public consultation, delegated authority was granted to review and amend the boundary of the High Ercall Conservation Area and to draw up management proposals for the High Ercall Conservation Area.

5. INFORMATION

High Ercall Conservation Area Management Plan

- 5.1 Councils are advised by Government to review their Conservation Areas periodically and to undertake Conservation Area Appraisals and prepare Management Plans to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the character of Conservation Areas and in addition to address any areas within them that require proactive improvement (PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment). Such Management Plans form clear guidance for any future development or enhancement proposals. The Management Plan sets out how the Council's Local Policies and national guidance will be practically applied to alterations and developments, giving useful advice on what is likely to be acceptable or not acceptable within the Conservation Area. It also identifies the rights and responsibilities of owners, occupiers, developers and the Council within the Conservation Area. The Management Plan will remain effective until it is reviewed again.

- 5.2 The consultation for both the Management Plan and the proposed boundary extension ran for 8 weeks between November 2008 and January 2009. As well as letters sent to all properties in the wider Parish with the help of the Parish Council, copies were also available at local libraries, the Council's website and Council Offices. Hard copies of both the Management Plan and the Proposed Boundary Extension were sent to all properties within the existing and proposed extension zones of the Conservation Area. The proposals were publicly debated at a Parish Planning meeting at the Parish Hall in November, where some 40 attendees had the opportunity to review and comment on the proposals.
- 5.3 All comments were thoroughly considered and amendments made where relevant to produce the final draft (see Appendix 1). The majority of comments were positive, particularly from the Parish Council. It is now proposed to adopt that the amended Management Plan should be adopted as a framework against which future development proposals can be assessed.

Revision to the boundary of High Ercall Conservation Area

- 5.4 As part of the preparation of the High Ercall Conservation Area Appraisal (Cabinet Meeting 31st March 2008), which was subject to public consultation in November/December 2007, a review of the boundary was undertaken in accordance with English Heritage's 'best practice' documents '*Guidance on the Conservation Area Appraisals*' and '*Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*' (2006).
- 5.5 During the preparation of the Appraisal and subsequent public consultation, the Council was also approached by the Parish Council to consider extension of the Conservation Area. The potential for extension had already been identified during the Appraisal when officers had noted that in parts the boundary was drawn tightly in places, for example giving a width of 10 metres along Shrewsbury Road. Additionally it was identified that the south-western edge the boundary had been drawn at one point covering half a field, but excluding the other half with no physical indication on the ground to justify or delineate a clear physical geographical boundary. This field itself is of good character representing one of the few open green areas in the Conservation Area. The site has also been identified as having some archaeological significance.
- 5.6 The Shropshire County Archaeologist working on behalf of this Council has indicated good survival of ridge and furrow and potential for archaeological remains. It also has a number of mature boundary oaks which are currently protected under Tree Preservation Orders indicating possible historic field boundaries.
- 5.7 There were also a number of structural omissions within the boundary; principally these were the exclusion of some important listed buildings in

the original designation, other historic structures to the northern end of the Conservation Area which provide important terminal points to views within the area, and gateway buildings which enhance the points of entry. These are identified within the document and attached map (See Appendix 2)

- 5.8 The proposed northern extension covers a fine group of listed Almshouses and an associated listed wall which are highly prominent on entry into the Conservation Area fronting the B5063 from Telford. Likewise the Tollhouse on the same road provides a fine character gateway building and has obvious associations with the evolution of the street pattern in High Ercall. The Cleveland Arms presents an impressive terminal point for the Conservation Area from the Shrewsbury Road looking north but is not currently covered by the Conservation Area designation inexplicably. A map showing all proposed extensions can be seen in Appendix 2.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 6.1 There are no direct equal opportunity issues arising from this report.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.1 The primary purpose of the Conservation Area designation and particularly the Management Plans is to improve the quality of the historic built environment within the Conservation Areas. It is expected that the management proposals will form the basis for the overall improvement of the Conservation Area by addressing issues raised in the Appraisal and during the management review.

8. LEGAL COMMENT

- 8.1 The Local Planning Authority is required to protect Conservation Areas in accordance with government guidance and the Council is required to consider whether it should designate new or extend existing conservation areas under section 69 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 8.2 Both the proposed Management Plan and extension to the Conservation Area referred to in this report have been publicised and subject to local consultation in accordance with government guidance
- 8.3 If the recommended extension is approved the extent and effects of it are required to be published in at least one local paper and the London Gazette; notified to the Secretary of State and English Heritage and registered as a local land charge.

9. LINKS WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

There are links with the corporate priority of creating a safe, clean and sustainable environment. The proposals also supplement existing local policies for the enhancement of the historic environment including Policy CS15: Urban Design within the adopted Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The extension of the High Ercall Conservation area is not expected to create a significant level of additional planning applications. The Management Plan and any proposed extension is to be managed within existing allocated resources.

11. WARD IMPLICATIONS

The Conservation Area Management Plan and revisions to the High Ercall Conservation Area boundary will have implications for Ercall Magna ward.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

High Ercall Conservation Area Character Appraisal (see Appendix 1)
High Ercall Proposed Boundary Extension (See Appendix 2)

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