



## CABINET REPORT

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Duston Village Conservation Area re-appraisal and management plan</b>
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**AGENDA STATUS:** PUBLIC

<b>Cabinet Meeting Date:</b>	<b>14 October 2009</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Listed on Forward Plan:</b>	Yes
<b>Within Policy:</b>	Yes
<b>Policy Document:</b>	Yes
<b>Directorate:</b>	Regeneration & Growth
<b>Accountable Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Richard Church
<b>Ward(s)</b>	Nene Valley

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To advise the Cabinet of the Council's duty to re-appraise Conservation Areas within the Northampton Borough administrative boundary. To inform Cabinet of the responses to a draft Duston Conservation Area Appraisal and management plan. To seek approval of the conservation area appraisal and management plan following amendments made as a result of public consultation including significant amendments to the boundary of Duston Conservation Area.

### 2. Recommendations

It is recommended that

- 2.1 That the responses to the consultation and officer responses are noted.
- 2.2 That the attached appraisal and management plan, including the proposed boundary amendments, be approved

### **3. Issues and Choices**

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#### **Background**

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 69 and 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate as and formulate proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation.
- 3.2 The Duston Conservation Area was first designated on 24 March 1977 and the boundary remained unchanged since that date.
- 3.3 Consultation took place on a draft of an appraisal and management plan. The draft defined the special character of the area to make it worthy of conservation area status. It also identified measures to maintain and enhance the identified character. The conservation area boundary defines the historic core of the former village of Duston, which is characterised by many traditional buildings.
- 3.4 The draft appraisal proposed major alterations to the existing boundary. The purpose of the alterations is to include areas currently outside the boundary but which make a significant contribution to the character of the area. It also seeks to regularise boundaries to ensure it includes all of a building's curtilage or garden. See Appendix 1 for the proposed boundary changes that were consulted upon.
- 3.5 Consultation took place both internally and externally on the draft appraisal and management plan. Consultation took the form of a leaflet being distributed to every property within the extended conservation area, local residents associations and amenity groups, partner organisations (WNDC, English Heritage), ward members, portfolio holder and Historic Environment Champion. A number of copies of the draft appraisal were made available at the Parish Council office at the Duston Community Centre. Copies were also placed in local libraries the Central Library and other civic buildings like Northampton Borough Councils One Stop Shop. The Council's Communications Team also put out a press release. The consultation ran from 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 to 24<sup>th</sup> August 2009.

#### **Main changes proposed as a result of consultation**

- 3.6 A schedule of detailed responses, officer replies and resultant changes to the appraisal and management plan is included at appendix 2. There has been no significant alteration to the document as a result of consultation feedback, although the boundary of the conservation area has been amended in three areas. One of these changes (the extension to the south) was made as a direct result of comments by local residents. Another minor change was made to rationalise the boundary so that it included an entire domestic property. Most respondents completed a feedback questionnaire that was also circulated (Copy attached at appendix 3). A total of 31 responses were received. The principal issues raised were:
  - safeguarding the character of the area
  - emphasising the survival of the village
  - establishing the proper boundary for the conservation area

- 3.7 The revised appraisal and management plan taking into account the changes made as a result of the consultation is included in appendix 4. NBC Natural and Built Heritage team request that Cllr Richard Church is able to provide a forward for final appraisal and management plan as per the comments he made for the recent Hardingstone re-appraisal.

### **Options**

- 3.8 The appraisal and management plan could either be:
- a) adopted by Cabinet with the changes made as a result of the consultation as recommended
  - b) adopted by Cabinet as above, but with other changes Cabinet feel are appropriate,
  - c) rejected by Cabinet either as a whole or in part.
- 3.9 Option A is considered the most appropriate action as it would provide the Duston Conservation Area with a more detailed analysis and evaluation of its status which will enable more informed statutory protection. It will give a more up to date evaluation of the special characteristics of the area that are deemed worthy of protecting or enhancing. The management plan will also assist in ensuring that the future of the area is appropriately protected and enhanced.
- 3.10 Option B could be considered appropriate if the changes suggested by Cabinet are regarded as sound and in accordance with best practice guidance with regard to appraisals and management plans.
- 3.11 Option C is not considered to be appropriate. There would not be an up to date character appraisal and management plan. This is inconsistent with national policy. It would weaken the Council's potential to carry out to the best of its ability the statutory duty placed upon it in seeking to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **4.1 Policy**

The Council has a statutory duty to evaluate areas of the Borough for designation as conservation areas. It has a 5-year rolling programme relating to the re-appraisal of all existing conservation areas. It also has a duty to formulate proposals for their preservation and enhancement once designated. When undertaking the re-appraisal and formulating proposals for management, regard has been given to national guidance such as Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment and guidance published by English Heritage relating to conservation areas. The Northampton Local Plan: policy E26 is also relevant. The appraisals and management plans assist in considering the appropriateness of planning applications and potential future improvement works.

### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

Re-appraisals and management plans form part of the remit of the natural and built heritage team. Therefore the fieldwork and consultation necessary to inform the

documents is incorporated into existing resources. The Built and Natural Heritage team has a Conservation and Improvements budget which can be used to assist with the implementation of the management plan, but whilst this may contribute to some of the improvements, the majority of expenditure to effect change will be undertaken by third parties such as the Highway Authority.

#### **4.3 Legal**

Boundary amendments to existing conservation areas will require advertisement in the London Gazette and one local newspaper. Legal Services provide this service on behalf of the Council and they have been consulted on the proposal. The cost of advertisement will be met from existing budgets.

#### **4.4 Equality**

No equality and diversity issues have been identified relating to this report. An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken and approved. The opportunity to have copies of the document in large print, Braille, audiotope or translation to another language was provided

#### **4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)**

Local residents, businesses, residents' associations and amenity groups, Duston Parish Council, partner organisations (WNDC, English Heritage), ward members, portfolio holder and Historic Environment Champion.

#### **4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes**

Protecting the historic environment helps improve the quality of the environment, conserving Northampton's unique sense of place and identity. This can be regarded as being consistent with Priority 1 'we will help our communities become a safer, greener, and cleaner' and Priority 4 'we will promote economic development and growth in Northampton'.

#### **4.7 Other Implications**

None

### **5. Background Papers**

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#### **5.1 File 348/04 – Collingtree Conservation Area**

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