

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

AREA 1 PLANNING COMMITTEE

15 October 2009

Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Council

1 QUARRY HILL CONSERVATION AREA

Summary

To consider the response to public consultation on the proposed changes to the Quarry Hill Conservation Area and recommend approval of the revised Conservation Area to Council.

1.1 Quarry Hill Conservation Area

1.1.1 Under the Constitution, whilst the consideration of Conservation Area Appraisals is a matter for the Executive, changes to the boundaries of Conservation Areas is a matter for Council having regard to the recommendations of the relevant Area Planning Committee.

1.1.2 The Planning and Transportation Advisory Board (PTAB) at its meeting on 27 May 2009 considered a draft Conservation Area Appraisal for the Quarry Hill Area of Tonbridge. One of the results of the Appraisal was a recommendation that the boundaries of the area should be changed (see **Annex A**). Area 1 Planning Committee considered the proposed boundary changes at its meeting on 11 June 2009 and approved them for the purposes of public consultation.

1.2 Public Consultation

1.2.1 Public consultation on the Conservation Area Appraisal, including the proposed boundary changes, took place between 26 June and 7 August 2009. Whilst we received a number of queries seeking clarification we received only one substantive representation which was from the Headmaster of the Judd School (see **Annex B**).

1.3 Response to Judd School's representation

1.3.1 The school requests either the deletion of part of the school grounds from the Conservation Area or alternatively the introduction of text indicating that further development (including changing rooms) is required by the school.

- 1.3.2 The Appraisal currently states '*Behind and to the side of the main school buildings, more recent development, including a sports hall, create an attractive assemblage of buildings and do not detract from the historic character.*' The area referred to in the response from the school has therefore already been considered as appropriate for inclusion within the Conservation Area as part of the Appraisal process. The school and its grounds play a major part on the character of Sub-Area C. There is a difficulty in defining the Conservation Area boundary to include some buildings and exclude others within this site, with judgements made about their architectural and townscape merit and their impact on the Conservation Area. In discussion with the working group of local stakeholders it was felt, on balance, that following the recognisable school boundary and including the whole site was preferable to its artificial sub-division following an alignment with no identifiable features on the ground. In any event, even if the area were to be excluded from the Conservation Area, any proposal would still need to be carefully appraised as part of the setting of the Conservation Area. I do not therefore recommend any change to the proposed boundary of the Conservation Area.
- 1.3.3 The other matters in the letter relate to the Conservation Area Appraisal and will be considered by PTAB at its meeting on 18 November 2009.

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 Once the boundary changes have been agreed by Council on 3 November they will need to be advertised.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 There may be a marginal increase in advertising costs relating to proposals within the new Conservation Area boundary because of its increase in size.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 It is important to review the boundaries and other changes within conservation areas to ensure they remain relevant and robust for use in the planning system.

1.7 Recommendations

That the proposed boundary changes to the Quarry Hill Conservation Area be recommended to Council for approval.

Background papers:

contact: Brian Gates

Nil

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure