

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**18 November 2009**

**Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 QUARRY HILL CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

**Summary**

**Following the decision of Council at its last meeting to revise the boundaries of the Quarry Hill Conservation Area, this report considers the response to public consultation on the Quarry Hill Conservation Area Appraisal.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 The Board 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**). 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 Area 1 Planning Committee considered the proposed boundary changes at its meeting on 15 October 2009 having regard to the response to consultation (see below) and recommended their approval by Council. Council approved the changes at its meeting on 3 November. It is now for this Board to consider whether any changes should be made to the Conservation Area Appraisal.

**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. The Council, having regard to the recommendation of the Area 1 Planning Committee, has agreed not to change the boundary. It is therefore for the Board to consider whether any changes should be made to the text of the Appraisal.

1.3.2 In relation to the request for additional text, it is clear from the Appraisal that suitable development within the Conservation Area will not be precluded. The Application of Planning Policy section of the Appraisal states:

*The Borough Council will consistently apply adopted and future planning policy to ensure high quality design which is appropriate to protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This will be applied to all development requiring planning or listed building consent **including new development** such as replacement or **new buildings**, small scale alterations and extensions to buildings, boundary treatment and, where applicable, surfacing front gardens. This approach will be followed for proposals both within the Conservation Area and those which affect its setting or impact on its character (**emphasis added**).*

1.3.3 The prospect of new development at the school was raised as part of the consultation 'walkabout' and workshop sessions and, for the sake of clarity, it is recommended that specific reference be made to potential future development proposals to serve the needs of the school in the section of the Appraisal dealing with the "Application of Planning Policy" (page 30). The following new paragraph is recommended at the beginning under the heading "Implications for Quarry Hill Conservation Area"

*Within the Conservation Area, proposals for new buildings should protect and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. New buildings are anticipated to be required to serve the needs of the Judd School, including new changing rooms on the site of the former cricket pavilion. In this context, the School Governing Body has confirmed its commitment to preserving and enhancing the school as a prominent part of the Conservation Area.*

1.3.4 It is noted that the Judd School would be pleased to implement the additional tree and hedge planting on the Judd School boundary as set out in the Management Proposals section of the Appraisal but does not anticipate paying for it. The Appraisal does not oblige the school to finance the scheme. Nevertheless, as part of the commitment to preserving and enhancing the school as a prominent part of the Conservation Area there may be opportunities either in association with future development or through fund raising or grants to introduce this enhancement

measure in the future. For this reason, no amendment is suggested to the Appraisal in response to this comment.

**1.4 Legal Implications**

1.4.1 Once adopted the Conservation Area Appraisal will be a material consideration for development control

**1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.5.1 None

**1.6 Risk Assessment**

1.6.1 None.

**1.7 Recommendations**

1.7.1 That the Quarry Hill Conservation Area Appraisal, as amended, be adopted.

The Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Brian Gates

Consultation Draft Conservation Area Appraisal

Steve Humphrey

Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure