

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

16 November 2011

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 MEDWAY GAP CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS – RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Summary

Conservation Area Appraisals have been prepared for Larkfield Church, Cobdown Farm and Holtwood Conservation Areas and subject to public consultation as an integral part of the Character Area Appraisal of the Medway Gap area. They are recommended for adoption subject to some minor changes.

1.1 The Appraisal

1.1.1 A series of Conservation Area Appraisals have been prepared as an integral part of the Character Area Appraisal process. Conservation Area Appraisals are much more detailed than the Character Area Appraisals and are published in a different format and are prepared under different legislation. They are nevertheless produced following a similar process of stakeholder engagement and public consultation which means that it has been sensible for them to be prepared in tandem with the Character Area Appraisals for a particular community.

1.1.2 This has been the case with the Conservation Areas which lie within the Medway Gap area. The response to consultation on the Character Area Appraisal for the Medway Gap is dealt with under a separate item on the agenda. In the Character Area Appraisals SPD Conservation Areas are left as a 'hole' in the area for particular treatment. It is the purpose of this report to fill those 'holes' by recommending adoption of the three Conservation Area Appraisals, subject to some minor changes. Ditton also lies within the Medway Gap area, but already has a relatively up-to-date published Appraisal.

1.1.3 No changes to the boundaries of the Conservation Areas were proposed.

1.2 Response to Consultation

1.2.1 Public consultation on the Conservation Area Appraisals took place as an integral part of the consultation on the Character Area Appraisal of the wider area. Details

of the consultation process are described in the report on the response to consultation on the Character Area Appraisals. Copies of the comments received will be available to view at the meeting and can be inspected, on request, prior to the meeting. The process was identical, except in the case of the Conservation Areas, a copy of the complete Appraisal was delivered to every household in each of the Conservation Areas. This is similar to the practice adopted previously for all other Conservation Area Appraisals.

- 1.2.2 The response to consultation in relation to the Conservation Area Appraisals has been limited (see **Annex A**) which we can only presume indicates that residents are generally content with what they contained. We have received some comments about the good quality of the documents, particularly from East Malling & Larkfield Parish Council. Some points of detail and minor cartographic matters have been drawn to our attention and these will be corrected.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 Conservation Areas are designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The cost of preparing the Appraisals has been met from the LDF Budget and Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. Best value is achieved by preparing them at the same time as preparing the Character Area Appraisals for the rest of the settlement

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 It is important there are up-to-date Appraisals of the Conservation Areas in the Borough to provide a firm basis for development control.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report.

1.7 Recommendation

- 1.7.1 The Conservation Area Appraisals for Larkfield Church, Cobdown Farm and Holtwood be referred to Cabinet with a recommendation that they be adopted as a material consideration for development control.

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

Draft Conservation Area Appraisals for Larkfield Church, Cobdown Farm and Holtwood

Steve Humphrey
 Director of Planning Transport and Leisure

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The Appraisals simply describe the character of the built environment. The Management Proposals have to be read alongside LDF and other policies which specifically address disability and other equality issues.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	The Appraisals simply describe the character of the built environment. The Management Proposals have to be read alongside LDF and other policies which specifically address disability and other equality issues.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.