
PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF CONSERVATION AREAS, CLIFTONVILLE

To: **Cabinet - 10 September 2015**

Main Portfolio Area: **Housing and Planning Services**

By: **Director of Community Services**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Cliftonville West**

Summary:

The report recommends that public consultation should be carried out on the designation of a further five conservation areas in Cliftonville West. The five areas are: Cliftonville Cliff Top, Northdown Road, Grotto Hill, Edgar and Sewyn Road and Norfolk, Warwick and Surrey Road.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In 2010 following the designation of Dalby Square Conservation Area, Thanet District Council commissioned “The Conservation Studio” to report on whether there was further potential to designate conservation areas in Cliftonville West Ward. The end result of this work – funded by Historic England – was the production, by the Conservation Studio of draft designation documents and management plans for six defined areas in the Ward. These documents have been available on the Council’s website since February 2014.
- 1.2 A motion was put to Council on 27th February 2014 regarding the designation of further conservation areas in Cliftonville. Council resolved that: - *“That Council calls upon the Cabinet to consult on the process of designating further conservation areas in Cliftonville, with reference to the appraisals undertaken by the Council to ensure that the architecture and quality of housing in these areas is protected for generations to come.”* Officers recommended that potential Conservation Areas in Cliftonville should be designated, prioritising those areas most at threat from detrimental change.
- 1.3 At the Cabinet meeting on 31 July 2014 it was agreed that Ethelbert Road and Athelstan Road area could be progressed for adoption as a designated Conservation Area, subject to public consultation. Following public consultation a report was submitted to the Cabinet at its meeting on 20th January 2015 where it was agreed to designate Ethelbert Road and Athelstan Road as a Conservation Area
- 1.4 The Cabinet also agreed that the remainder of the areas should be progressed as part of a management plan with consultation with the public carried out before formal designation.

- 1.5 The designation of a conservation area is intended to encourage a sensitive approach to proposals for development. The purpose of conservation area designation therefore, is not to prevent all development but rather to enable its careful management.
- 1.6 Historic England guidance suggests that in designating conservation areas the special interest should be identified based on detailed analysis of their individual qualities. To illustrate which features are important within an area or are buildings of interest, Conservation Area Appraisals have been prepared for all five proposed conservation areas. These documents provide an evaluation of the 'character' of an area and provide guidance as to what may be acceptable within the conservation area. Once adopted, they form a material consideration when considering planning applications within the designation.
- 1.7 Findings from research funded by English Heritage and undertaken by the London School of Economics and Political Science, published on 7 July, 2012 shows that heritage has an economic value and houses in conservation areas sell at a premium. This was the first, rigorous, large-scale, analysis of the economic effects of conservation areas in England. It shows that people value living in places with architectural integrity, good design and traditional character and are willing to pay more for it. It also shows that preserving the best of the past, which is what conservation areas are meant to do, can be in the interest of the owners.
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2.0 The Current Situation

2.1 Following the designation of Ethelbert Road and Athelstan Road Conservation Area, five of the six defined areas remain to be considered as potential conservation areas.

2.2 The five areas are:-

2.2.1 Cliftonville Cliff Top

The proposed area is bounded by the Lower Promenade (including the Lido and Walpole Bay Pools) to the north, the Ward boundary to the West, the buildings to the east side of Fifth Avenue to the East (which are in Cliftonville East Ward) and Cliff Terrace, Ethelbert Terrace, Ethelbert Crescent and Eastern Esplanade to the South. It includes First, Second, Third and Fifth Avenues, Lewis Crescent, The Oval, Queens Court, Newgate Gap, St Anne's Church and 'Hoser's Corner' The area includes large areas of public open space which are one of the defining features of Cliftonville but are in need of comprehensive public realm improvements.

2.2.2 Northdown Road

The proposed area stretches from Dane Hill in the west to Wyndham Avenue in the east and includes Lyndhurst Avenue, Crawford Gardens and part of north side of

Clarendon Road. This is almost exclusively a commercial area containing the best surviving shop fronts in the District.

2.2.3 Grotto Hill

The proposed area includes Clifton Place, Clifton Road, Brockley Road, Grotto Road, Grotto Gardens and the north side of part of Dane Road. This is almost entirely residential district of small houses sited in the main on the back edge of the pavement – much in contrast to the streets north of Northdown Road. The area has retained much of its historic character.

2.2.4 Edgar and Sweyn Road

The proposed area includes Percy Road, Gordon Road, and St Paul's Road and adjoins the existing Dalby Square Conservation Area to the west. The area is similar in character to Dalby Square, Dalby Road, and Arthur Road containing massive terraces with multi-level bays and the occasional detached or semi-detached dwelling.

2.2.5 Norfolk, Warwick and Surrey Roads

The proposed Norfolk Road, Warwick Road and Surrey Road Conservation Area lies to the east of the already designated Dalby Square Conservation Area, and abuts the proposed Northdown Road Conservation Area to the south. To the immediate north, the proposed Cliftonville Cliff Top Conservation Area lies along the seafront, separating the proposed Norfolk Road, Warwick Road and Surrey Road Conservation Area from the promenade and beach. The area includes Cumberland Road.

2.3 The areas documented in 2.3.1 through to 2.3.5 are of considerable architectural interest where streets, spaces and buildings remain relatively unaltered. Each of the five areas proposed for designation has its own distinctive character and it is important to recognise this in order to improve the area's potential to secure grant funding.

2.4 Designating conservation areas can have a number of potential benefits including providing access to grant schemes, encouraging investment by property owners and others, providing additional planning safeguards and promoting sensitive alterations to buildings.

3.0 Next Steps

3.1 The next step is to receive approval from the Cabinet to undertake a public consultation exercise on the areas identified on Appendixes 1 – 5. The formal public consultation exercise is intended to solicit the views of residents, owners and relevant external agencies on the proposed designations. It is proposed that consultation on the designation of the Conservation Areas will take place for eight weeks from 11 January 2016 to 7 March 2016.

3.2 This consultation exercise would include the mailing of letters outlining the proposal to all properties within the proposed Conservation Areas boundary as well as those immediately outside. A full version copy of the draft proposed Conservation Area will be available on the council's website. A drop-in session would also be held in the area where representatives from the Council would be available to discuss the

proposal and answer questions with relevant material and maps related to the proposal on display.

- 3.3 The proposed Margate Neighbourhood Plan will complement the purpose of the conservation areas designation through the objective of the Neighbourhood Plan to promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the designated area through the development and implementation of the plan. The Neighbourhood Plan Forum will be consulted on the proposed consultation strategy.
- 3.4 Following completion of the formal public consultation exercise, a report summarising the results of the consultation would be presented to Cabinet for it to consider before deciding whether to approve the designations.

4.0 Corporate Implications

4.1 Financial and VAT

- 4.1.1 The proposals are expected to be taken forward within current budgets. However, the designation of conservation areas brings with it an expectation that the Council will commit to the enhancement of the conservation areas through a management plan which may require additional staff and financial resources to implement. Any commitment to this will be subject to the availability of grant or other funding.

4.2 Legal

- 4.2.1 There are no adverse legal implications in taking this forward.
- 4.2.2 The power to designate Conservation Areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69 of the Act imposes a duty on Local Authorities to designate as conservation areas, within their area, any area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
- 4.2.3 In the event that the members resolve to proceed with the designation of the Conservation Areas, formal notification of the designation will be advertised in a local newspaper and the London Gazette. The Secretary of State and Historic England will then be formally notified.

4.3 Corporate

- 4.3.1 The proposals support the corporate plan:-
- * Priority 1 – Support the growth of economy
 - * Priority 2 - To tackle disadvantage across our district
 - * Priority 3 - To support our community
- 4.3.2 The proposed conservation areas are likely to have a beneficial impact on the wider LIVE MARGATE housing renewal programme by helping to safeguard the area's heritage assets, encouraging investment by others and helping to make the case for further grant funding. The existing THI funding in Dalby Square is already complementing the LIVE MARGATE programme.

5.0 Alternative Options

- a) Do nothing – This may give rise to a risk that the character of the conservation area will deteriorate over time and opportunities for potential grant funding and other investment would be lost.
- b) Designate as a single large conservation area – This would mean that the special quality of individual character areas may not be sufficiently articulated and this may undermine the ability to secure grant funding.
- c) To progress designation of the five areas sequentially rather than simultaneously - This would be less efficient in terms of the use of resources and may lead to consultation fatigue. The delay may also mean that some areas may deteriorate in the intervening period.

6.0 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 The main risk associated with the proposal is that there may be objections from residents and businesses. The consultation exercise will give residents and businesses the opportunity to understand the potential benefits of designation and to raise any concerns that they wish members to consider before any designation is confirmed.

7.0 Recommendation(s)

- 7.1 To carry out an eight weeks public consultation exercise from 11 January 2016 to 7 March 2016 on the proposed designation of conservation areas at the Northdown Road, Edgar Road/Sweyn Road, Clifftop, Norfolk Road/Warwick Road/Surrey Road and Clifton Place/Grotto Gardens; and progress as part of the management plan for adoption as a designated Conservation Area subject to the public consultation.
- 7.2 To report back to Cabinet on the results of consultation on both the proposed Conservation Areas.

8.0 Decision Making Process

- 8.1 Although the decision to conduct a public consultation is in itself not a key decision, the substantive Cabinet decision to designate the areas in question is key and subject to call-in.

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| Future Meeting: Cabinet | 10 September 2015 |
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| Contact Officer: | Jacob Amuli, Senior Conservation Officer |
| Reporting to: | Simon Thomas, Planning Manager |

Annex List

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| Annex 1 | Proposed Northdown Road, Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan |
| Annex 2 | Proposed Edgar Road/Sweyn Road, Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan |
| Annex 3 | Proposed Clifftop Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan |
| Annex 4 | Proposed Norfolk Road/Warwick Road/Surrey Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan |
| Annex 5 | Proposed Clifton Place/Grotto Gardens Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan |

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| Annex 6 | Map of proposed conservation areas |
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Corporate Consultation Undertaken

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| Finance | Tim Willis, Director of Corporate Resources |
| Legal | Suki Montague, Planning and Information Officer |