

CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA



Thursday 13th August 2009

at 6.00 p.m.

at

**Heugh Gun Battery,
Moor Terrace, Hartlepool, TS24 0PS**

(www.heughbattery.com for further information and directions. The Gun Battery is open 10am – 4:30pm on a Thursday with the last entry at 3:30pm should you wish to visit prior to the meeting, admission prices available on the website)

MEMBERS: CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond
Councillor Rob Cook, Chair of Planning Committee
Mrs Sheila Bruce, Hartlepool Civic Society
Mrs Maureen Smith, Hartlepool Archaeological and Historical Society
Mr Brian Walker, Greatham Parish Council
Mrs Pat Andrews, Headland Parish Council
Ms Julie Bone, Headland Residents Association
Mr Lloyd Nichols, Seaton Carew Renewal Advisory Group
Mr Richard Tinker, Victorian Society
Mrs Andy Creed-Miles, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
Mr Brian Watson, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Mr Andy Riley, Royal Institute of British Architects
Ms Julia Patterson, Park Residents Association
Mr Ian Moore, Princess Residents Association

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last meeting held on 5th March 2009
3. Matters arising
4. Update on Visual Appraisal of Church Street and Seaton Carew
5. Grange Conservation Area Appraisal
6. Draft Visual Appraisal Greatham

7. Conservation Areas at Risk
8. Any Other Business

CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

5th March 2009

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm at The Marine Hotel, Seaton Carew

Present: Andy Creed-Miles, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
Maureen Smith, Hartlepool Archaeological and Historical Society
Richard Tinker, Victorian Society

Officers: Stuart Green, Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development)
Sarah Scarr, Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager
Peter Graves Conservation Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

Also present: Mr E Smith

27. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from The Mayor, Stuart Drummond, Julia Patterson, Brian Walker and Brian Watson.

28. Appointment of Chair

In the absence of The Mayor and Councillor Rob Cook, the Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development) facilitated the meeting.

29. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2008 were confirmed as an accurate record.

30. Matters Arising

Officers confirmed that the Greystones planning application was on the verge of approval, subject to conditions.

31. Windows Policy Update

The Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development) outlined the results of the public consultation on windows policy and subsequent response by the Planning Committee. Of 2,200 questionnaires sent out to residents in

the eight conservation areas only 87 had been returned, a response of just over 4%. The majority (78%) of respondents had been in favour of the proposed new policy with 20% against. The views of a number of interested parties had also been sought, including the Headland Conservation Area Advisory Committee, the Regeneration and Liveability Portfolio Holder and this committee had also been sought. All had expressed their support for the proposals. However English Heritage had expressed their disappointment 'that the Council is now proposing the tabled amendments to conservation policy for the borough' and their opposition to its acceptance. They had also commented that they might be obliged to consider the value of allocating public funds toward a local authority whose policies were counterproductive to the aims and objectives of a heritage grants scheme.

These responses were taken to the Planning Committee on 18th December 2008. At that meeting the committee had requested further information on the costs of UPVC windows, therefore the meeting was adjourned until such information could be provided. The committee reconvened on 19th February when members were advised that a survey of local and national UPVC windows had shown prices ranging from £450 to £988 for the same single, double-glazed, UPVC sash window. The average cost was £655. The average price of a timber sash window was £886. This was felt to compare favourably with the higher end UPVC windows which would inevitably replicate a traditional sliding sash window more closely than those priced at the lower end of the market.

Following a lengthy discussion a compromise policy was reached. Details of the agreed policy were appended to the report for the committee's attention, along with the results of the consultation and the comments made by the Headland Conservation Area Advisory Group and English Heritage

Members expressed their support for the new policy. With regards to the stance taken by English Heritage the Assistant Director advised he was eager to keep dialogue going between English Heritage and the Council despite the decision to deviate from national policy. The intent was to monitor future patterns on the use of this policy, in an effort to demonstrate that no significant damage was being done to Hartlepool's heritage. Further discussion took place around the subject of grants available for improvements to private properties with the Assistant Director advising that the current economic climate meant this was somewhat limited at the moment.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

32. Grange Conservation Area Appraisal

The Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development) gave a brief update on the ongoing Grange Conservation Area Appraisal. The North of England Civic Trust had been commissioned to carry out the appraisal in November 2008. Since that time a steering group of local representatives had

been assembled to guide the process, comprising ward councillors and interest groups from the local area. At their first meeting the main issues were discussed and the methods of consultation agreed upon. These would include leaflet drops, walkabouts and consultation sessions at local schools involving demonstrations by local craftsmen (subject to the availability of funding)

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

33. Draft Visual Assessment Seaton Carew

Members were advised that there was a need to review the eight existing conservation areas across the borough. Full appraisals took time and as an interim measure visual assessments would be carried out in other conservation areas to ensure that a short description was available to define the character. Seaton Carew was the latest area to be considered in this way. A draft visual appraisal of Seaton Carew Conservation Area was enclosed with the papers for members' consideration and comments prior to public consultation.

Members discussed the need to attract more visitors to Seaton Carew, suggesting future provision of indoor attractions such as a swimming pool, cinema and ice cream parlour. The Assistant Director acknowledged this but advised that any development would need to be put on hold subject to the findings of an ongoing investigation into coastal defences. Members felt that a central focal point was needed to attract more visitors to the area. Reference was also made to the Longscar building. The Assistant Director reported that talks had taken place with the owners regarding their aspirations for the site..

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

34. Any Other Business

Staincliffe Hotel

The Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager reported that the nomination to list the Staincliffe Hotel had been rejected by English Heritage. The reasons given had been that the current building was too altered from the original to warrant listing. The nomination had followed a planning application to demolish the existing hotel and replace it with two properties one a hotel the other apartments. Following refusal of the listed building nomination officers would now return to the applicants, the intent being to request detailed justification for the demolition of the building and further consideration of the

proposed design of the new buildings.. .

Tunstall Court

The Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager advised that the planning application approved by the committee for a care community for the elderly was the last consent granted on the site. There was a question mark over whether the work would progress given the current economic climate as no indication of a timescale for the development has been provided. Officers continued to remind the site owners of the need for on-site security.

Future meetings

The Democratic Services Officer indicated that the Council diary for 2009/10 was currently being formulated. Members requested that future meeting dates be forwarded to them when they became available. The Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager would identify a suitable venue for the next meeting once the date was confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 7.45pm.

Subject: Update on Visual Appraisals of Church Street and Seaton Carew

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the current visual appraisals for Church Street and Seaton Carew Conservation Areas.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Appraisals are a means of assessing the key factors contributing to the appearance and character of existing and potential conservation areas, local authorities are encouraged to undertake conservation area appraisals. There is no formal requirement for the form and content of appraisals, or the methodology to be used.
- 2.2 Both appraisal reports follow a similar format based on the framework given by English Heritage in its advisory document "Guidance on conservation area appraisals". Both documents describe each conservation area giving their location, setting, main architectural qualities and a history of each area. An assessment is included of the current condition of each conservation area both in terms of their strengths and weaknesses and how the latter might be improved. The full reports including plans are attached to the report with the summary and conclusions given below.

3 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The documents were prepared by Officers who carried out research looking at existing documents alongside physical surveys of the conservation areas. The documents that were produced outlined the current position of the conservation areas however the conclusions and action plans were compiled on completion of the public consultation.
- 3.2 Both conservation area appraisal reports have been subject to public consultation. The consultation took the form of inclusion on the Council's website, a press release, with copies of the reports available in Seaton Carew library and Hartlepool Art Gallery in Christ Church and letters sent to Ward Members including a copy of the report inviting comments. One consultation reply was received (from a Seaton Carew Ward Member). The reply was that the difference between the area north of Station Lane and that to the south of the Lane should be maintained with the area to the north maintained as residential in character for quiet enjoyment such as walking while the area to the south should be the commercial area and the area in which any development should occur but conforming to the requirements of conservation area policy. The sea front should be kept clear of any development and clutter. The comments made on the Longscar Hall

were that it was an “outstanding problem” an example of “bad development” and an “eyesore”. Any environmental improvement to The Green should be with community involvement particularly if the War Memorial was included.

- 3.3 The response to the consultation has been noted and the comments reflected in the final document for Seaton Carew Conservation Area.

4 SUMMARY OF THE APPRAISAL FINDINGS

- 4.1 **Church Street Conservation Area Appraisal** – The assessment has shown that the Conservation Area retains many of the distinctive attributes of the Victorian new town of West Hartlepool and that substantial public sector investment of the 1990’s effectively extended the life of many properties by introducing new uses in a transformed setting. The report however has also addressed the following issues in the future management of the Church Street Conservation Area:

- Concentration of empty properties.
- Low levels of building maintenance.
- Installation of shop front roller shutters.
- Maintenance of the street environment.

- 4.2 **Concentration of empty properties** – High concentrations of empty properties can have a detrimental effect upon the economic confidence of an area leading to lack of investment and low maintenance producing a spiral of economic decline. To avoid Church Street area returning to its previous position in the early 1990’s intervention and investment is needed amongst other measures (see later) to arrest this potential decline. To tackle the identified vacant properties public sector funding is required to provide some level of support to encourage new potential owners to acquire buildings and provide a new use (with job creation as an additional outcome). Such funding would need to be combined with an approach to owners and estate agents of those empty buildings with a highly targeted approach to ensure that intervention is timely.

- 4.3 **Building Maintenance** – Partly related to the issue of empty properties is building maintenance and in particular the lack of regular decoration. Should funding become available to tackle empty buildings part of this could also be directed towards the decoration of buildings. Normally decoration would not attract grant aid but in this case some assistance is considered to be beneficial. As indicated above the funding would have to be highly targeted to ensure that those in the worst decorative condition are addressed. The means to achieve this would be an approach to owners.

- 4.4 **Shop front shutters and advertising** – The integration of roller shutters into the overall shop front design or investigation of an alternative means of protecting shop front glass from damage, can

enhance the character of individual buildings and the wider appearance of Church Street. The type, design and detail of advertisements to buildings and shop fronts can equally have a positive impact on the appearance of Church Street. Some advice on the issues raised above already exists in the form of a “Shop Front Design Guide “ leaflet produced by the Council in conjunction with the New Deal for the Communities Partnership, which addresses some of the issues of roller shutters, a palette of paint colours for shop fronts and signage. Alongside this, advice is provided in the Local Plan in the form of a Supplementary Guidance Note covering shop front design and advertisements. A leaflet could be produced for owners in Church Street to emphasise some of the issues like shop front signs and advertisements. A good recent example of what is appropriate and what can be achieved is at the former Central Buildings on Church Street where a hand painted shop sign and appropriate choice of colours for the redecorated shop front has added to the quality of the surrounding area.

- 4.5 **Maintenance of Street Environment** – If building owners or new owners are to be encouraged to invest in empty buildings, decorate their buildings and be more careful in their proposals for advertisement and painting of shop fronts then the maintenance of the street furniture needs to be addressed. Subject to appropriate budgets being available a regular schedule of maintenance would address this issue.
- 4.6 **Next steps for Church Street Conservation Area Appraisal** – a plan has been produced outlining the issues in the conservation area and the way in which these can be addressed through existing working practices. A copy of this plan can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.7 **Seaton Carew Conservation Area Appraisal** – The heritage of buildings and the general environment in any seaside resort form an important part of an area therefore steps to achieve the appropriate management of Seaton Carew Conservation Area will be a foundation for a successful resort. The conservation area appraisal report has addressed the following issues in the future management of Seaton Carew Conservation Area:
- Building appearance, arising from inappropriate alterations and maintenance.
 - The design of adverts to properties.
 - The design and appearance of the street environment, including the possibility of further areas of enhancement.
- 4.8 **Building Appearance** - The report indicates the quality of the Conservation Area is reduced by inappropriate alterations to buildings, poor design and maintenance in the context of a conservation area. The report noted the example of properties on The Front where all the traditional appearance has been lost by inappropriate alterations. The predominance of long continuous horizontal amusement arcade frontages have removed the variety and interest that a number of

differing traditionally detailed frontages would provide. Part of the solution to achieve an improvement would be to provide building design advice to owners particularly concerning shop front design. A leaflet “Shop front Design Guide” already exists along with a Supplementary Guidance Note in the Local Plan providing guidance on shopfronts and advertisements. These could be adapted and expanded in a leaflet to be applicable to Seaton Carew. The Appraisal has also noted the detrimental effect of the Longscar Hall on the positive character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Although outside the Conservation Area it abuts the boundary and because of its physical size and largely unused condition has a negative effect.

- 4.9 **Design of advertising** – The type of design and detail of advertisements to buildings and shop fronts can have a positive impact on the appearance of Seaton Carew as a Conservation Area. The leaflet on “Shop Front Design” mentioned above could be adapted to address good design of advertisements on buildings and shop fronts in the context of a conservation area. The integration of roller shutters into the overall shop front design can enhance the character of individual buildings and the wider appearance of Seaton Carew and the leaflet could address this issue as well.
- 4.10 **Design and Appearance of the Street Environment** – The Appraisal report has noted the condition of some of the street environment, particularly the area around the Longscar Hall, the car park to the rear of 70 to 79 The Front and to the rear of the bus station. This area has been subject to a number of environmental improvement schemes which due to the periodic availability of funding has been piecemeal and not to a single overall standard. The materials used have also not been of sufficient quality to be long lasting. An approach working to a single overall design with a limited range of high quality materials (which could be implemented over an extended period, if sufficient funding was not readily available) would provide a consistent overall outcome. The Appraisal report also notes that beside the sea front other areas seem appropriate for environmental improvements consisting of The Green (including a railing scheme suggested by residents) and the churchyard to Holy Trinity Church.
- 4.11 **Next steps for Seaton Carew Conservation Area Appraisal** - The future management of Seaton Carew Conservation Area needs to be considered in the context of the Sea Change initiative which is a possible source of public investment in the environment, buildings and heritage of seaside resorts. A number of seaside resorts in the north east region have already been successful in obtaining funding from the Sea Change initiative. An application to Sea Change has been submitted for Seaton Carew. The application focuses on the area around the Bus Station. Alongside this application a wider feasibility study is being carried out to the seafront area in conjunction with the Coast Strategy which is considering sea defences in the area.

- 4.12 As with the Church Street Appraisal a plan has been produced outlining the issues in the conservation area and the way in which these can be addressed through existing working practices. A copy of this plan can be found in **Appendix 2**.

5 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That the Committee notes the appraisals.

Appendix 1

**ACTION PLAN ADDRESSING ISSUES WHICH HAVE ARISEN FROM THE
CHURCH STREET CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

| Issue | Potential Action |
|--|--|
| Unsympathetic alterations and loss of traditional architectural details to buildings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where consent is required, resist unsympathetic alterations and loss of traditional architectural details through positive use of existing development control powers. • Encourage appropriate reinstatement of traditional architectural details in future development negotiations. • Take enforcement action against unauthorised removal of traditional architectural details where a breach of planning control has occurred. |
| Poor quality shop fronts and signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take enforcement action against unauthorised change of use or removal of a shopfront where there is a negative impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area. • Encourage appropriate reinstatement or sympathetic shopfront and signage design (following guidance in Local Plan Supplementary Guidance Note 5) • Provide a leaflet offering guidance to building owners of alterations to shop fronts similar to that provided by the New Deal for Communities Partnership. |
| Poor maintenance of buildings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek improvements to poorly maintained buildings or land by negotiation through the development control process. • Consider a strategy for using Section 215 Notices*¹ to improve quality of built environment. • Serve Section 54 Urgent Works Notices*² on listed buildings at risk, and consider use on unlisted buildings at risk, with agreement from appropriate authorities. |
| Maintenance of street surfaces and street furniture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the retention/reinstatement of traditional paving and hard landscaping. • Encourage like-for-like replacement, provided material is 'fit for purpose', where damage to street surface occurs. • Where wholesale replacement is required co-ordinate with appropriate sections to ensure consistency and quality of alternative material. • Ensure good maintenance of street furniture, and, where replacement is required that they are of an appropriate design. |

The above table provides a list of issues relating specifically to the conclusions drawn in the Church Street Conservation Area Appraisal. The implementation of the potential actions may depend on the existing and future financial and staff resources that Hartlepool Borough Council departments work within.

*1 A Section 215 Notice is a notice that is served on the owner or occupier when the poor condition and the appearance of the property or land are detrimental to the surrounding area or

neighbourhood. The notice requires proper maintenance of the property of land in question, and it specifies what steps are required to remedy the problem within a specific time period.

*2 An Urgent Works Notice is served under section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended, and can be served on a vacant (or vacant parts of a) listed building where works are urgently necessary for the preservation of a listed building. In exceptional circumstances there are special powers available to the Secretary of State to authorise the use of these powers to an unlisted building in a conservation area where the preservation of the building is important for maintaining the character or appearance of the area. The works that can be implemented include making the building weather tight, safe from structural collapse and preventing unauthorised entry, vandalism or theft.

Appendix 2

ACTION PLAN ADDRESSING ISSUES WHICH HAVE ARISEN FROM THE SEATON CAREW CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

| Issue | Potential Action |
|--|--|
| Unsympathetic alterations and loss of traditional architectural details to buildings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where consent is required, resist unsympathetic alterations and loss of traditional architectural details through positive use of existing development control powers. • Encourage appropriate reinstatement of traditional architectural details in future development negotiations. • Take enforcement action against unauthorised removal of traditional architectural details where a breach of planning control has occurred. |
| Poor quality shop fronts and signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take enforcement action against unauthorised change of use or removal of a shopfront where there is a negative impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area. • Encourage appropriate reinstatement or sympathetic shopfront and signage design (following guidance in Local Plan Supplementary Guidance Note 5) • Provide a leaflet offering guidance to building owners of alterations to shop fronts similar to that provided by the New Deal for Communities Partnership. |
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| Maintenance of street surfaces and street furniture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the retention/reinstatement of traditional paving and hard landscaping. • Encourage like-for-like replacement, provided material is 'fit for purpose', where damage to street surface occurs. • Where wholesale replacement is required co-ordinate with appropriate sections to ensure consistency and quality of alternative material. • Ensure good maintenance of street furniture, and, where replacement is required that they are of an appropriate design. |

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Subject: Grange Conservation Area Appraisal

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report will outline the current progress of the appraisal of the Grange Conservation Area.

2 Background

- 2.1 Appraisals are a means of assessing the key factors contributing to the appearance and character of existing and potential conservation areas, local authorities are encouraged to undertake periodically conservation area appraisals. There is no formal requirement for the form and content of appraisals, or the methodology to be used, but typically appraisals cover such subjects as historical development of the area, archaeological significance, prevalent building materials, the character of open spaces, the quality and relationships of buildings and also of trees.
- 2.2 The North of England Civic Trust were appointed to carry out the appraisal of the Grange conservation Area.

3 The Appraisal

- 3.1 Work began at the beginning of the year with background research into the area. In addition a steering group comprising Ward Councillors and interest groups from the local area was formed to guide the process.
- 3.2 Consultation took the form of two walkabouts in the area with residents. In addition residents were invited to send in their views to the Trust along with photographs of the area.
- 3.3 Pupils at local schools were also invited to take part in the consultation. Children from Lynnfield Primary School took part in an event which involved them walking round the area observing the buildings and townscape followed by a hands-on workshop with a stonemason.
- 3.4 The comments from both of these events have been taken on board and fed into the document which is currently at a draft stage. It was recently circulated round this committee for comment.

4 Recommendation

- 4.1 Committee notes the progress made on the Grange Appraisal and comments on the draft document.

Subject: Draft Visual Assessment Greatham

1 Introduction

- 1.1 There is a need to review the existing eight conservation areas across the Borough. Full appraisals have been carried out on the Headland, in the Park conservation area and work is currently ongoing on an appraisal of the Grange. This process takes time and as an interim measure visual assessments will be carried out in other conservation areas to ensure that a short document is available to define their character. Members of this committee have in the past considered visual appraisals of Church Street and Seaton Carew. A visual appraisal of the Greatham Conservation Area has been prepared.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 states that local planning authorities shall ‘determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. Once areas are designated it is then the ‘duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.’ The starting point in reviewing an existing conservation area is to carry out an appraisal.
- 2.2 Appraisals are a means of assessing the key factors contributing to the appearance and character of existing and potential conservation areas, local authorities are encouraged to undertake periodically conservation area appraisals. There is no formal requirement for the form and content of appraisals, or the methodology to be used, but typically appraisals cover such subjects as historical development of the area, archaeological significance, prevalent building materials, the character of open spaces, the quality and relationship of buildings and also of trees.
- 2.3 The local authority have committed to carrying out two conservation area appraisals a year. It is acknowledged that as an interim measure there is a need to carry out an assessment of the other existing conservation areas to review their boundaries and ensure that their character is clearly defined. In order to do this visual assessments will be carried out in these areas.
- 2.4 The visual assessments will be based on the English Heritage document ‘Guidance on conservation area appraisals’. It will include desk based work considering historic plans showing the development of the area, along with on site assessments of the current state of properties within the area.

3 Visual assessment of Greatham Conservation Area

- 3.1 A draft visual appraisal of Greatham Conservation Area has been circulated as a separate document. This draft has been circulated internally within the Council to gauge officer views and will be taken out to public consultation soon.

- 3.2 The appraisal considers the reasons for the establishment of Greatham village in the 11th and 13th centuries, which were agriculture and the care of the vulnerable. It notes that both have had a continued influence on the character and appearance of the Greatham Conservation Area. Further to this it concludes that the continued maintenance of buildings in the area and sensitive developments over an extended period have made a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

4 Recommendation

- 4.1 The committee comments on the visual assessment.

Subject: Conservation Areas At Risk

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report will outline the recent publication of the English Heritage 'Heritage at Risk Register.'

2 Background

- 2.1 In 1998 English Heritage published the first buildings at risk register. The register includes listed buildings that are grade I and grade II* which are deemed to be at risk due to neglect or decay. The register is compiled using information provided by local authorities rather than English Heritage surveying the buildings themselves. The register was expanded in 2008 to include scheduled ancient monuments, registered historic parks and gardens, registered battlefields and protected wreck sites. It also became known as the 'Heritage At Risk Register'.
- 2.2 This year in the 2009 register English Heritage have decided to include conservation areas. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of the existence of conservation areas, the issues that they face and how the local community can become involved in their management.

3 Heritage At Risk Register 2009

- 3.1 A survey was sent out to local authorities in September 2008 asking a series of questions on the state of the conservation areas within their boundaries.
- 3.2 Conservation areas defined as being at risk are those which were judged to have deteriorated in the past three years or were likely to deteriorate in the next three years.
- 3.3 In Hartlepool the following three out of eight areas were deemed to be at risk:
- Church Street
 - Grange
 - Headland
- 3.4 It is sometimes since this survey was completed and already we are working to address the issues in these conservation areas.
- 3.5 Church Street
Recent works have been carried out to paint street furniture and generally tidy up Church Street. This is the beginning of a wider scheme to invest in the properties in the area. HBC has set aside funding for properties in Church Street to carry out cosmetic improvements and repair works. A public meeting with businesses was held recently and this initiative has been widely supported. This work will contribute to a general enhancement of the conservation area.

Along side this, as mentioned previously in these papers, a document has been produced defining the special character of the conservation area. This will be used in the future for planning applications and funding bids to highlight the unique character of the area and assist in its preservation and enhancement.

3.6 Grange and Headland

At the time of completing the survey the Council's policy on windows in conservation areas was still being debated. At the beginning of 2009 the Planning Committee agreed a policy on replacement windows in conservation areas. Residents of all eight conservation areas were contacted and notified of the decision.

Further to this we are in the process of producing guidance to provide information to residents on replacement windows and doors. Once finalised the information will be rolled out across the conservation areas.

4 Recommendation

4.1 The committee notes the report.