

# CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

27 January 2011



## Agenda

**Location**     **Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT**

MEMBERS: CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond  
Councillor George Morris, Vice Chair of Planning Committee  
David Bentham, Hutton Avenue Residents Association  
Ms Joan Carroll, Hartlepool Civic Society  
Mrs Maureen Smith, Hartlepool Archaeological and Historical Society  
Ms Julia Patterson, Park Residents Association  
Mr Richard Tinker, Victorian Society  
Mr Brian Walker, Greatham Parish Council  
Ms Jo Lonsborough, Elwick Parish Council  
Mr John Cambridge, Headland Conservation Area Advisory Committee

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of last meeting held on 7 October 2010
- 3 Matters arising
- 4 Update on Limestone Landscapes Initiative
- 5 Seaton Carew Management Plan
- 6 Programme of Conservation Work 2011-12
- 7 Any other business

# CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

7 October 2010

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm at Bryan Hanson House, Hartlepool

Present: David Bentham, Hutton Avenue Residents Association  
John Cambridge, Headland Conservation Area Advisory Committee  
Joan Carroll, Hartlepool Civic Society  
Jo Lonsborough, Elwick Parish Council  
Julia Patterson, Park Residents Association  
Richard Tinker, Victorian Society  
Brian Walker, Greatham Parish Council

Officers: Sarah Scarr, Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager  
Peter Graves, Townscape Heritage Initiative Manager  
Sarah Bird, Democratic Services Officer

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from The Mayor, Stuart Drummond and Councillor Rob Cook.

### 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2010

These were accepted as an accurate account.

### 3. Matters Arising

#### Jesmond Road Primary School

The meeting was informed that there had been an application submitted to English Heritage for listing of this building and a decision was expected at the end of November.

#### **Decision**

The Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager agreed to inform members of the outcome of this application.

### 4. Update on Stranton Conservation Area Appraisal (Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager)

The Committee were reminded that a visual assessment had been undertaken

in the Stranton Conservation Area and the draft consultation document had been brought to the previous meeting, the final document had been circulated in the Stranton area for consultation during September 2010. Forty one responses had been received and a breakdown of these responses had been circulated to the committee prior to the meeting. The majority of Respondents were supportive of protecting the character of the area and the feedback from this and the result of officer survey works would be used to develop the appraisal document.

Investment in the area from New Deal for Communities and the Local Authority had enabled minor shop front repairs and re-roofing. Comment was made that the Comet/Allied Carpet building was discordant with other buildings in the area.

### **Decision**

The Committee noted the consultation which had been carried out in Stranton.

## **5. Locally Important Buildings** (*Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager*)

The committee was reminded that Hartlepool had 200 listed buildings which were properties which had been designated by the government as structures of special architectural or historic interest. However, English Heritage and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport both encourage the formation of a Local List of buildings, structures and landscapes which enhance the heritage of the town. A series of criteria had been devised for assessment of such structures which would be similar to that of national listing although there would be no grades distinguishing different levels of importance. A press release would be issued and information available on the website as to how nominations could be submitted. Once received nominations, which were not necessarily buildings but could be any structure or landscape, would be assessed by an independent panel. Inclusion on a local list would raise awareness of the structure/landscape although would not in itself impose restrictions on development.

It was clarified that the last review of historic buildings in Hartlepool had occurred in 1989. It was likely that the local list would be completed within a year, following nominations and consultation.

### **Decision**

The Committee commented on the proposed application form and guidance note and made minor amendments.

## **6. Church Street Management Plan** (*Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager*)

The committee was informed of the proposals for a Church Street Conservation

Area management plan following on from the visual appraisal which had been reported to the committee previously. There had been a grant budget of £55,000 which had provided grants of up to £10,000 to encourage re-occupation of empty properties and up to £3,000 per property for decoration. Advice had been given in relation to roller shutter design and advertising.

Suggestions were made as to street furniture and tree planting and the Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager asked that the Committee make any further comments via email.

### **Decision**

The Committee noted the proposals outlined in the Management Plan.

## **7. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

The Chairman ruled that the following items of business should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B) (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay.

### Tunstall Court

The Committee were shown plans which had been submitted in relation to the premises and commented on these.

### White House Farm, Greatham

A member of the Committee expressed concern that because of a health and safety risk demolition work had taken place with this building. However a new planning application and reasoned statement on how the building had become unsafe would be required and the building replaced like for like.

### 12 Tower Street

A member of the Committee asked whether there had been any input from the conservation department in relation to this application and was informed that comments had been made regarding roller shutters.

### Member Attendance at Committee

The Committee asked that there be more Member attendance at the Committee and it was agreed to ask another Member of the Planning Committee to attend.

### Limestone Landscape

The Committee was updated in respect of the bid funded by the Heritage

Lottery Fund and what type of work was expected to take place, e.g. improvement of footpath links and local history research.

## **8. Date and time of next meeting**

Members were informed that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 27 January 2011 at 6.00 pm. Venue to be confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 7.25 pm.

CHAIR

**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** UPDATE ON LIMESTONE LANDSCAPES  
INITIATIVE

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report is to update committee members on the successful outcome to a stage 2 application by the Limestone Landscapes Initiative to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for grant funding of £1.9 million. The Limestone Landscapes Initiative was last reported to the committee at the meeting on the 15th July 2010.
- 1.2 The stage 2 application consisted of a series of interlinked projects based on the geology, ecology, landscape, history and architecture of villages, increased public access and interpretation of the landscape and education projects. Two specific projects related directly to Hartlepool. 'The Village Atlas Project' based on Elwick and the 'Leg it across the Limestone Landscapes' which is designed to increase and improve public footpath access around and between Hart and Elwick. There are a number of related projects (10 out of the total 25 within the bid) which may also benefit Hartlepool to some degree and these are detailed in the report. The Partnership and projects within it will have a 3 year life span from 2011 to 2014.

## **2. BACKGROUND - LIMESTONE LANDSCAPES PARTNERSHIP**

- 2.1 The Limestone Landscapes Partnership is a funding initiative based on the underlying limestone geology of the area and stretches from South Shields in the north to Hartlepool in the south and partly out to Bishop Auckland in the west. The underlying limestone geology has produced a unique fauna and flora, a distinct built history in the form of the villages and settlements within it and the agricultural and industrial activities which have taken place as a result of the geology, moulding the lives of those that have lived in the area.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Limestone Landscapes Partnership is to develop a variety of projects with partners from local authorities, other public bodies, voluntary groups, private individuals and trusts that enhance this unique area and its character. The Partnership is interested in specific projects which have links to the biodiversity, geology, history and architecture of villages, archaeology and historic landscapes within the limestone landscape.

### 3. PROJECTS SPECIFIC TO HARTLEPOOL IN THE APPROVED BID

- 3.1 **Village Atlas** – The Village Atlas project is based at Elwick Conservation Area. The purpose of project is to achieve an understanding of Elwick's historic environment including the surrounding landscape, archaeology, historic buildings, with links to the local ecology and geology. The Partnership will fund the cost of specialist consultants to engage with the local community at Elwick to form a local project steering group. The steering group will undertake broad community consultation ensuring the maximum influence of the community in the production of the Village Atlas. The Village Atlas will include maps over time and key areas of ecological and geological interest. Overall there are six villages in the programme with Elwick in the first year of the overall project from April 2011. The approximate cost will be £23,000.
- 3.2 In the case of Elwick the Limestone Landscapes Initiative has been asked to consider a change in emphasis of the project to include as an outcome an Elwick Village Environmental Master Plan which the various historic and ecological atlas projects could feed in to. The recently completed Conservation Area Visual Appraisal for Elwick Conservation Area identified an opportunity to enhance The Green at Elwick. It also identified a safety issue arising from the village being used as a through route to the nearby A19. A Master Plan could consider these issues and produce a conscious design for the centre of Elwick, including the traffic and safety concerns. The funding from the Limestone Landscapes can generate a plan for Elwick with costed individual projects, which can then be adopted by the village with the Parish Council acting as an agent to bid for resources for the identified projects contained in the Plan to improve the appearance of Elwick over time.
- 3.3 **Leg it Across the Limestone Landscape** - As the name of the project suggests the aim of this project is to increase access to the countryside by walking but also to increase the opportunity to visit historical sites and areas of geological and ecological interest. There are also physical, emotional and mental health benefits through exercise and contact with the natural environment. The overall project funding is just over £192,000 with Hartlepool benefiting from 57% of this budget at just under £114,000.
- 3.4 The project in Hartlepool is split into two parts. The first will be to improve the existing access within the Heselden, Nesbitt, Crimdon and Thorpe Bulmer Denes just north of Hart village but also in Durham County administrative areas including the installation of two footbridges, and the creation of circular walks linked to the Haswell Walkway. The Denes are of exceptional quality with the geology exposed from erosion and old quarry workings. Historic sites near the Denes include the medieval church site at Monk Heselden. The second part of the project is to improve and extend the public rights of way network around Hart Village creating circular walks and a new footpath link from Hart to the Haswell Walkway. Footpath links to Elwick are proposed creating circular routes enabling access to the local heritage at Elwick, like the medieval fish ponds west of Elwick.

- 3.5 **Other related projects-** There are a number of related projects which can complement the above two projects, from which residents, schools and visitors to Hartlepool can benefit. These are detailed below.

**Field Boundary Restoration** – This project is to restore field boundaries including hedge rows and dry stone walls. The funding will provide 75% grant aid support to landowners for restoration or re-establishment of field boundaries. The intention of the project is restore the appearance of the traditional landscape and in so doing can complement the above two main projects by undertaking hedgerow restoration next to improved or new public footpaths.

**Lost in a Sea of Rig and Furrow** – The limestone landscape is essentially a medieval landscape and within it there are surviving examples of the medieval field system including rig and furrow (sometimes referred to ridge and furrow). There are extensive areas of rig and furrow surviving around Elwick village for example. The project is to survey the surviving examples of rig and furrow and produce a guide and management plan of the historic rig and furrow.

**Limestone Festival** - The purpose of the project is to celebrate and publicise the limestone landscapes for residents and visitors. This will consist of events organised during the summer months, consisting of guided walks, educational field training (involving schools and community groups) and green exercise.

**Children's Club** – The project is to create three clubs for children across the Limestone Landscape area for those aged 6 -12 years to learn about the geology, history and wildlife of the area. The activities will consist of guided walks, classroom learning and craft activities. Children at Elwick Primary School for example could benefit as ancillary activity to the Village Atlas project.

**Green Exercise** – This project has already been touched on in the other projects but the aim is to encourage health and well being by walking and running in the countryside.

**Book Production** - The project is to produce three books on the geodiversity, architecture and archaeology of the limestone landscape to explain and increase the appreciation of the limestone landscapes.

**Community Archaeology** – The project is to enable members of local communities to discover more about their heritage through participation in archaeological research projects and to learn survey and excavation techniques. The project will be lead by professional archaeologists funded by the Partnership. The nearest project to Hartlepool is Hawthorn at the former medieval church site at Monk Heselden. The archaeological results can provide information for interpretative panels as part of the walk experience under Leg it Across the Limestone Landscape.

**Field Training for Staff and Volunteers and Day School Programme** – These are two related projects consisting of lectures and workshops, with the



first for professionals and volunteers to help them become more informed in leading guided walks and talks and the second aimed at interested individuals and groups to enable them to become more informed about the geology, ecology and history of the limestone landscape area.

**Land Management Best Practice** - A small project of three day events over the three year Partnership period but aimed at landowners and land managers to provide information on habitat restoration and the significance of the limestone landscape to produce better management of the landscape.

**Heritage Training Days** – This project is aimed at supporting traditional skills to help maintain historic buildings. The project is part of the Heritage Skills Initiative (HSI) which has been running for 5 years or more which is aimed at ensuring that traditional skills continue. The project is aimed at owners of period properties, professionals like architects or surveyors and building contractors. The project consists of a series of one day taster days on lime mortar, lime pointing, stone carving, blacksmithing and understanding timber sash windows. More in depth courses are proposed from 2 to 6 days in the form of stone masonry and blacksmithing master classes aimed at those in the industry who already have considerable building skills and wish to extend these. The HSI has tended to base its courses in Durham and Northumberland due to the facilities available, so the extension of courses to south Durham and Hartlepool would be beneficial.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Besides the two main projects where there are direct benefit to Hartlepool there are other benefits of some degree over a wide ranging area of education, health and community involvement from 10 other projects (out of 25 projects overall in the programme) within the Limestone Landscapes Initiative. The overall cost of the projects described above (including the two main projects) is £924,575. All of this will not occur in Hartlepool itself but the potential benefits will still be substantial.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That the Committee note the report.

**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods**Subject:** SEATON CAREW MANAGEMENT PLAN

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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report is to update the committee on the Seaton Carew Conservation Areas Management Plan following on from the Seaton Carew Conservation Area Visual Appraisal reported to the Committee in 2009. A copy of the Management Plan will be sent separately from these papers to members of the committee.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 English Heritage in their advice to local authorities' in their publication "Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas" (February 2006) indicates that an appraisal of a conservation area needs a set of policies, strategies and actions identified to actively manage change in a conservation area. Change in a conservation area is inevitable and the purpose of a management plan is to direct this change in such a way that it strengthens rather than undermines the conservation areas special quality.
- 2.2 Existing national legislation and policy advice in the form of the "Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990" and "Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment" with its supporting Practice Guide from English Heritage provide guidance on how to manage development in conservation areas. Many of these national policies are translated locally to Hartlepool via the Local Development Framework (previously the Hartlepool Local Plan) which provides specific policies to manage listed buildings and conservation areas. However every conservation area has development issues more or less specific to that Area which a Conservation Area Appraisal like that undertaken in Seaton Carew is intended to identify.

**3. Management Issues**

- 3.1 The Visual Appraisal for Seaton Carew indicated that although investment in the past has provided a good foundation for establishing the character of the conservation area and setting a benchmark for other future developments there are still a number of issues that need to be addressed. These issues are:
- Building maintenance.
  - Alterations to buildings.
  - Alterations to shop fronts including roller shutters and signage.
  - Development opportunities
  - The street environment.

#### 4. Management of area to date

- 4.1 Most recently the management of Seaton Carew Conservation Area has been by way of the planning process. Existing policies from both nation and local guidance including supplementary guidance on shop fronts have been the main tool used to control development within the conservation area to ensure that it reflects the character of the area.
- 4.2 This form of management of the area is, therefore, influenced by the level of applications submitted within the Seaton rather than other, more proactive approaches used in this area in the past e.g. grant schemes. As a result the level of change in Seaton has been gradual in recent years.

#### 5. Proposed Management Measures

- 5.1 Five issues have been identified in the management plan as relevant to the future management of the Seaton Carew Conservation Area:
- Building maintenance.
  - Alterations to buildings.
  - Alterations to shop fronts including roller shutters and signage.
  - Development opportunities
  - The street environment.

Further information on each of these issues is provided below along with a brief outline of the suggested measures that are considered to address these problems in the management plan.

- 5.2 **Building maintenance** – One issue that can affect the appearance and quality of the Conservation Area is the lack of building maintenance. Advice from English Heritage encourages timely maintenance of buildings in order to prevent major and costly repairs becoming necessary later. The Management Plan proposes negotiation through the development control process and, where necessary, the use of statutory powers to encourage good maintenance within the area.
- 5.3 **Alterations** – Buildings in the area are characterised by a strong vertical emphasise and the use of common materials such as slate or day pantiles for roofs and stone or brick for external walls. Many properties have Victorian or Edwardian additions in the form of bay windows at first floor. The Management Plan proposes resisting alterations to properties with materials which are unsympathetic to the character of the area along with discouraging the introduction of oversized windows.
- 5.4 **Alterations to shop fronts including roller shutters and signage** – The appraisal highlighted that there were a number of tradition shop fronts with relatively simple decorative features. The introduction of roller shutters to such properties would ham the character of the area. As with Church Street

Conservation Area the production of a document to inform owners of properties of the preferred designs within the conservation area is proposed.

- 5.5 The report has identified the adverse visual impact arising from the adoption of inappropriate signage. An approach to adverts based on hand painted fascia signs etc with the recent grant budget in Church Street Conservation Area has demonstrated that the type, design and detail of advertisements to buildings and shop fronts can have a positive impact on the appearance of the conservation area. This sentiment is outlined in the management plan along with the proposal that guidance is provided on signage in conjunction with any information produced on shop fronts.
- 5.6 **Development opportunities** – Development proposals within the conservation area can provide opportunities for enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area. The management plan proposes the requirement for applicants to provide full detailed plans of their proposal including a design statement which would analyse the surrounding area.
- 5.7 **The street environment** – The appraisal noted the incoherent appearance of the street environment which was detracting from the character of the conservation area. Public investment in the street environment has been piecemeal. The management plan proposes the adoption of a coherent design approach for the street environment including materials. Alongside the street environment the presence of trees within the conservation area is noted. The majority of trees in the area are found within the grounds of Holy Trinity Church however there are some located on the boundary of the area that provide a back drop to the conservation area. The plan proposes encouraging the planting of new and replacement trees.

## 6 Recommendation

- 6.1 The committee comments on the draft management plan for Seaton Carew Conservation Area.

## **Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

### **Subject:** PROGRAMME OF CONSERVATION WORK 2011-12

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#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 All of the Boroughs conservation areas now have completed appraisals. The next step is to consider the management of the conservation areas which will be carried out in the form of a management plan. This report will provide an update on the current management plan programme and introduce the proposed work programme for the next financial year.

#### **2 Background**

- 2.1 Character appraisals provide the basis for developing management plans for conservation areas. The proposals take the form of mid to long term strategies setting objectives for addressing the issues and recommendations for action arising from the appraisal and identifying any further or more detailed work needed for their implementation.
- 2.2 Members of this committee will be aware from previous reports that work is currently underway on management plans for both Church Street and Seaton Carew Conservation Areas.

#### **3 Proposed Management Plans**

- 3.1 Considering the current workload of the conservation staff it is reasonable to aim to provide two management plans for the coming financial year. It is important to choose conservation areas which would benefit from the early introduction of such a plan above other areas in the town.
- 3.2 The need for management plans is influenced by various factors. These include:
- Development pressures both negative and positive within the conservation areas.
  - Potential grant schemes for conservation areas
- 3.3 Officers have considered the existing conservation areas and propose that in the next financial year the following conservation areas are considered for management plans.
- 1) Stranton – the character of the conservation area has similarities with the management plans for Seaton Carew and Church Street. In addition the introduction of guidance for shop fronts and signage would also be of relevance within this conservation area therefore it is proposed that this area is addressed.

2) Greatham – there has been continued work within the Greatham Conservation Area by the Hospital of God in carrying works to maintain their property within the area along with planning applications on significant buildings. It is proposed that this area is addressed to consider how these alterations can be protected and new development within the area can be influenced.

- 3.4 With regard to the remaining conservation areas, the Headland, Park and Grange Conservation Areas all have substantial conservation area appraisals which provide a good assessment of the area. The windows guidelines which were introduced in February 2009 have addressed one of the main issues that were affecting these areas. As such they are no longer on the English Heritage list of conservation areas at risk and the need for management documents within these areas is less pressing.
- 3.5 Elwick Conservation Area will benefit from a Village Atlas project in the next financial year, as outlined in the report on the Limestone Landscape Initiative. This will address a number of the issues raised within the assessment carried out in that area and will provide the basis for a management plan in future years.
- 3.6 It would be the intention to review the work programme as necessary and bring forward management plans if there is an indication that these are urgently required and resources are available.

#### **4 Recommendation**

- 4.1 Committee notes the report and comments on the suggested prioritisation of Stranton and Greatham Conservation Areas for management plans.