

**CONSERVATION AREA  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
AGENDA**



**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006**

**at 6.00 p.m.**

**in**

**The Middlegate Room, Borough Hall, Headland**

**MEMBERS: CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond  
Councillor Bill Iseley, 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  
Mr Ian Campbell, Park Residents Association  
Mr Ron Clark, Princess Residents Association

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2006 (*to follow*)**
- 3. ANY MATTERS ARISING**
- 4. STREET FURNITURE AND SURFACE TREATMENTS**
- 5. GRANTS**

6. **PLANNING COMMITTEE WORKING PARTY MINUTES FOR INFORMATION**

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

# CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

7 September 2006

### Present:

P Hunter, Headland Residents Association  
Mrs Sheila Bruce, Hartlepool Civic Society  
Mrs Andy Creed-Miles, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings  
Mr Brian Walker, Greatham Parish Council  
Ms Pat Andrews, Headland Parish Council  
Brian Watson, Royal Institute Chartered Surveyors  
Ms Julia Patterson, Park Residents Association  
Ron Clark, Princess Residents Association  
Mr Richard Tinker, Victorian Society  
Stuart Green, Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development)  
Sarah Scarr, Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager  
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: Ian Campbell, Park Residents Association

### **37. Tour of Park Conservation Area**

Prior to the commencement of the meeting Committee members went on a brief tour of the Park Conservation Area

### **38. Appointment of Chair**

In the absence of both The Mayor and Councillor Iseley it was agreed that Stuart Green would facilitate the meeting.

### **39. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from The Mayor, Stuart Drummond, Councillor Bill Iseley, Ms Julie Bone (Headland Residents Association), Lloyd Nichols (Seaton Carew Renewal Advisory Group), Maureen Smith (Hartlepool Archaeological and Historical Society), Rachel Wilson (Park Residents Association) and Mr Andy Riley (Royal Institute of British Architects).

### **40. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2006**

Confirmed

## 41. Matters Arising and Updates

### (i) Conservation Grant Scheme

Sarah Scarr reported that the Conservation Grants Scheme had been launched at the Windows Workshop and publicised in the Hartlepool Mail and on Radio Cleveland. Fifty-eight expressions of interest had been received from across all the conservation areas, though the majority were from the Headland and Grange areas. Officers are currently visiting those people who have expressed an interest to discuss the grant and prepare a schedule of works. Stuart Green highlighted that there was no set deadline for the grants scheme; there was, however, only a limited amount of finance available, £50,000. If this funding was utilised quickly, it would strengthen the case for a larger fund next year.

The meeting noted that it would be of great benefit to have some successful applications to create more publicity for the scheme in the future. It was also commented that there may be some merit in using the scheme to particularly support window projects as these seemed to create the greatest strength of feeling. Whilst acknowledging that point, Stuart Green stated that the approved scheme criteria were much wider and that factors such as structural condition and overall visual impact were also important.

### (ii) Headland Conservation Area Advisory Committee

The Portfolio Holder has approved a proposed Headland Conservation Area Advisory Committee. Whilst some discussions involving the Portfolio Holder, ward councillors and the Parish Council have been held over the composition of the committee, precise details are still to be agreed. The process of establishing a steering group for the Headland Conservation Area appraisal could lead to the establishment of a CAAC.

### (iii) Headland Conservation Area Appraisal

In relation to the appraisal, Stuart Green reported that Ferguson McIlveen had been contracted to undertake the work and the process had started with the first Steering Group meeting this week. There would be two major consultation exercises as part of the appraisal.

Ron Clark, Princess Residents Association, indicated that he had attended the first Steering Group meeting where the appraisal had been discussed. Questions had been asked as to how far the leaflet drop on the consultation exercise should go. The Church had strong views that it should be quite wide as their parish extended beyond the parish council area and they received visitors from a very wide area. The meeting had agreed that views from a wide area should be sought.

Stuart Green considered that it was important that views from a wide area were sought. Essentially, anyone from anywhere could comment during the process and comments from visitors as well as residents would be valuable.

(iv) Guidance Leaflets

Sarah Scarr commented that the Committee had in the past been shown the draft guidance leaflets. However, following a series of Planning Committee decisions that were contrary to established policy, the Committee had set up a Working Group to review the situation in relation to policies around conservation areas. It had therefore been decided that issue of the guidance leaflets should be held back until the Working Group had finished its work.

(v) Briarfield House and Lodge Development Brief

The Committee was informed that the Development Brief was approved by the Cabinet on 31 July, 2006. The site (comprising Briarfields house, lodge and the intervening garden area) will be placed on the market at the end of August, with a closing date for bids in late October.

## **42. Planning Working Group**

The minutes and agenda papers for the first meeting of the Planning Working Group held on 17 July 2006 were submitted for the Committees information. The Working Group had asked to meet representatives from English Heritage and officers were working to set up such a meeting. The Working Group had recognised the important role of this Committee and had extended invitations for its meeting on 5 October to representatives of this group.

## **43. Any Other Business**

Julia Patterson, Park Residents Association, indicated that English Heritage was promoting the idea of creating income from listed buildings and those in conservation areas by opening gardens etc. in order to offset the higher maintenance costs.

Sarah Scarr indicated that she had forwarded information to Mrs Patterson regarding the principle of enabling developments within the curtilage of historic buildings. Stuart Green commented that he was not aware of any such enabling development schemes reaching fruition in Hartlepool. It was though a recognised principle that permitted development may be allowed if it was to fund restoration of important buildings. It was not a licence to cast aside planning regulations.

In response to questions, Stuart Green commented that the works to the Cooperative Stores building on the corner of Park Road and Stranton had commenced. The building works had planning and listed building consents. There would be over forty apartments on the upper floors with commercial properties on the ground. There had been a problem for the developers undertaking the works as their appointed contractor had gone out of business. A new firm had been appointed and works had recommenced. The scheme had received a small grant from the NDC for the restoration works to the front

elevations of the building.

In relation to the tour of the Park Conservation area prior to the meeting the committee discussed some of the strengths and weaknesses of the area. There was particular concern at the classification of gardens as brownfield development land. There was concern that continued 'backland' and 'in-fill' developments could seriously affect the character of the area.

Stuart Green highlighted that the Planning Authority's stance was set out in the recently adopted Local Plan where the character and value of areas such as the Park area were recognised. It was noted that planning appeal decisions also served to influence the Planning Committee's stance on applications. Julia Patterson asked if the appropriate extracts from the Local Plan could be circulated. This was agreed.

#### **44. Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting should be held on 7 December 2006 commencing at 6.00pm.

**Subject: Street Furniture and Surface Treatments**

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 At the meeting of this committee in July a question was raised regarding Council policy on the maintenance of street furniture and surface treatments within conservation areas. This report will provide brief background information on these subjects. There will also be an opportunity at the meeting to discuss this topic with Mike Blair, Transportation and Traffic Manager.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 There are eight conservation areas across the Borough, each with its own character. The Council does not have any specific policies relating to the choice of street furniture and surface treatments within conservation areas. Each area is dealt with individually when works are carried out.
- 2.2 There are no specific Council budgets allocated to replacing street furniture and or for surfacing works in conservation areas. Works are often dependent on the availability of external funds through grant schemes such as Heritage Economic Regeneration and Townscape Heritage Initiative. The works that have been carried out in past years in Seaton Carew and the Headland Conservation Area to install stone pavements and new street furniture have been funded through such schemes.

**3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The committee discusses the report.

## **Subject: Conservation Grant Scheme**

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### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report is intended as a progress update for Members of the Committee on the Conservation Grant Scheme.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Conservation Grant Scheme was launched in July at the Windows Workshop. A budget of £50,000 has been made available to residential properties located within conservation areas that were built pre-1919 and listed buildings.
- 2.2 Grant is available for works to make properties structurally sound and watertight, and to restore and repair traditional details such as sash windows.

### **3 Current Progress of the Scheme**

- 3.1 Over sixty enquiries have been made regarding the grant scheme. The proposed works vary from repair works to windows and doors to re-roofing works. Officers have visited those people who have expressed an interest to discuss the grant and put together schedules of grant eligible works where appropriate.
- 3.1 To date three grant applications have been approved. These are for the following:
- Repair works to a canopy on a grade II listed building in the Headland Conservation Area.
  - Replacement windows to the rear of a property covered by an Article 4 Direction in the Headland Conservation Area.
  - Re-roofing works and replacement windows to a property within the Seaton Carew Conservation Area.
- 3.3 Although the level of interest has been great the number of applicants who have responded with applications has been low. Feedback from applicants suggested that they have had difficulty in obtaining the required three quotes; consideration is being given to reducing the requirement to two separate quotes, if there is evidence of this being an ongoing problem. Those applicants who have been sent information have been contacted again to encourage them to get in touch with officers to outline any problems that they have. It is hoped that this will lead to further applications.

### **4 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 The committee notes the report.



**Subject**                      Planning Committee Working Party

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**1        INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1    The Committee will be aware that a Planning Committee Working Party has been established to review conservation policy. This report will outline the current position and progress made to date by the Working Party.

**2        BACKGROUND**

- 2.1    The first meeting of the Working Party was held on the 17<sup>th</sup> July. The minutes of this meeting were brought to the last meeting of this Committee. At this meeting a request was made that representatives of this Committee meet with the Working Party to discuss conservation policy.

**3        UPDATE ON WORKING PARTY PROGRESS**

- 3.1    A second meeting of the Working Party took place on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006. At this meeting the Working Party toured Seaton Carew Conservation Area prior to the meeting. Discussion at the meeting was around local conservation policy. Members were informed of the recent Windows Workshop and a Viewpoint Survey carried out regarding conservation. Representatives of this Committee also discussed the current policies with the Working Party. A copy of the minutes of this meeting can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.2    The third meeting of the Working Party took place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The Working Party toured the Park and Grange Conservation Areas prior to the meeting. Representatives of this committee again attended the meeting. Discussions at the meeting covered current national policy including a comparison of local authority policy in similar coastal locations. The minutes of this meeting have not been finalised but will be presented to the committee in due course.
- 3.3    A further meeting of the Working Party will take place on the 12<sup>th</sup> December. It is hoped that Carol Pyrah, Director of English Heritage in the North East will attend this meeting.

**4        RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1    The committee notes the report.

APPENDIX 1

**PLANNING WORKING PARTY**

**5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2006**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Councillor Rob Cook (In the Chair)

Councillors Stan Kaiser and Edna Wright.

Also present: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2(ii)  
Councillor Sheila Griffin as substitute for Councillor Bill Iseley,  
Councillor Carl Richardson as substitute for Councillor Ray Waller.

Representatives of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee:

Mrs Sheila Bruce, Hartlepool Civic Society  
Mr Brian Walker, Great Ham Parish Council  
Ms Rachel Wilson, Park Residents Association

Officers Stuart Green, Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development)  
Sarah Scarr, Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager  
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **6. Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Bill Iseley, Gordon Henery and Ray Waller and Ms Julie Bone, Headland Residents Association and Brian Watson

## **7. Site Visit**

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Working Group visited the Conservation area in Seaton Carew and viewed many of the buildings that gave the area its distinctive character and also the issues/features that were causing some concern.

## **8. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2006 and any matters arising**

The Minutes were confirmed.

### **Matters Arising**

Stuart Green indicated that he had invited English Heritage to the meeting but unfortunately, they had been unable to attend. The Chair commented that if an additional meeting needed to be arranged to meet with English Heritage he considered the discussions with EH were important enough to warrant an extra meeting.

Councillor Carl Richardson indicated that he was very interested in the work the Working Group was undertaking and would wish to be involved in future meetings. The Chair and members of the Working Group agreed that Councillor Richardson be co-opted onto the Group.

## 9. Conservation Policy

Stuart Green stated that currently there was an uncertain situation regarding conservation policy in the borough. The Planning Committee Guidelines introduced in 2004 were set out in the submitted report. The Planning Committee had, however, in June and July approved applications in conservation areas that were contrary to the guidelines. This now meant that Officers would be bringing to Committee decisions that they would have previously taken using delegated powers because of the uncertainty of decisions. There were also concerns that properties where enforcement action had been considered were now affected by the recent Committee decisions. There needed to be a review of the policy relatively quickly to bring back certainty.

Some individual Conservation Areas had detailed policies to protect their individual Character; Greatham for example had its Village Statement. There were unfortunately no national conservation area rules; areas and applications had to be dealt with on their own individual merits. It may be easier if there was some guidance and this was one of the issues that could be usefully discussed with English Heritage.

Reference was made to the recent 'windows workshop' held jointly by the Council and English Heritage which had been attended by over a hundred residents. The workshop had been very well received. In response to questions, Sarah Scarr indicated that the Conservation Grants scheme had received over a sixty enquiries. It was however quite a long process to the point where an application was submitted as the property needed to be assessed, the proposals discussed with the resident, and quotes obtained before the application for funding was considered. Those present did feel that the funding for the scheme (£50,000) was only a 'drop in the ocean' towards meeting the potential demand but it was funding that was most welcome. Sarah Scarr and Stuart Green commented that the scheme had only been launched in July and the number of enquiries was very encouraging. Only two completed applications had been received so far but this was due to the time taken to get quotes for work; there was no real short cut to the process.

The result of the responses to questions in a recent Viewpoint survey on 'Local Heritage' were set out with the papers for the meeting. There were very high response rates to the questions and a very high (80%-90%) response to questions on the preservation of the town's heritage.

The Working Group discussed the involvement of English Heritage in the town in the past and the forthcoming discussions that the Group was to have with them. There was concern expressed by some present that English Heritage was unlikely to change its past attitude to conservation areas and in particular residents 'improvements' and the installation of upvc windows and doors. Stuart Green commented that whenever English Heritage were funding through grant aid any improvement or restoration works, they would understandably want a very 'pure' scheme to their standards for design and materials.

Stuart Green indicated that the Council did still formally seek English Heritage's advice on proposals for Grade 1 and 2 listed buildings but they were less involved than they used to be. The organisation itself was changing in so much that they were moving towards targeting funding at the protection and renovation of major buildings and specific themes rather than areas of interest. English Heritage did still have significant influence but there was uncertainty as to what sort of funds they would make available in the future.

The Working Group discussed the influence that English Heritage had already exercised in Hartlepool. There was concern among many people in conservation areas, and indeed some confusion, as to what they could and could not do to their homes. A point of view was expressed that rather than maintaining a hard line view on upvc, the Council would be best

served by taking a pragmatic view and setting standards for its installation. There was concern that upvc could not replicate many traditional designs used in the conservation areas. It was felt that many people simply needed to be encouraged to maintain wood window installations rather than assuming they had to be ripped out and replaced and this was more than likely to be the cheaper option as well.

After a detailed discussion on the issue of upvc installations concerns were raised about a number of specific installations that were very much out of character and in one case didn't meet the standards required under a planning approval. These issues related to buildings in the Grange and Park areas and the Working Group asked if the approved plans and photographs of the installations could be brought to the next meeting.

In response to questions raised during the debate, Stuart Green indicated that the approved conservation areas were reassessed by officers. There was a lot of intensive work involved in such a reassessment and there was a target to reassess one area each year. This year the Headland conservation area was being examined, whilst last year similar work had been undertaken in Elwick village.

In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked the representatives of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee for their attendance and invited them to attend the future meetings of the Working Group. It was agreed that the next meeting be held on Thursday 2 November 2006 commencing at 4.30pm with a site visit prior to the meeting at 3.15pm.

R W COOK

CHAIRMAN

