



Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 November 2025

Conservation Area Review Project - Summary

Report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, Councillor R Upton

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 1990 Act) imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate as Conservation Areas any *‘areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’*.
- 1.2 Conservation Area Appraisals identify the special qualities of a designated Conservation Area and set out how the Conservation Area can be improved, along with the local priorities for enhancements.
- 1.3 Once adopted, Conservation Area Appraisals are a material consideration when considering planning applications within the Conservation Area. The adoption of appraisals will allow for positive management and change within a designated area and its setting whilst safeguarding historic character and appearance.
- 1.4 The designation of Conservation Areas and the adoption of Conservation Area Appraisals should be continually reviewed. Section 69(2) states that *“It shall be 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.”*
- 1.5 A review of Conservation Areas across the Borough was last undertaken in the period 2008 to 2011. In 2022, funding was identified to appoint additional resource across a three-year period to review the complete set of appraisals. This led to the appointment of a fixed term contract position beginning in July of 2022 through to the beginning of July 2025.
- 1.6 33 Conservation Area Appraisals have successfully been reviewed, including 31 reviews of existing Conservation Areas, and the adoption of two new Conservation Areas.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet considers the information contained within this report and acknowledges the successful completion of this review project.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. Across the three years, the review of Conservation Areas successfully updated appraisals for the 31 Conservation Areas, as well as adopting two additional Conservation Areas.
- 3.2. This report is presented as an update for Cabinet at the conclusion of the review, which will effectively be complete at the point that the final two appraisals have been finalised.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. A copy of a table showing the timetable of review and identifying which appraisals were undertaken by the community and which were undertaken by officers is appended to this report (Appendix A).
- 4.2. It was always appreciated that reviewing appraisals across three years would be a challenging task. To that end, the two most recent appraisals for Conservation Areas in Kneeton (adopted 2018) and Cropwell Bishop (adopted 2021), which had been designated as new Conservation Areas since the last major review in 2008/11 could be treated as 'optional'.
- 4.3. In addition to completing reviews of all the existing Conservation Areas, including the two referenced above, which were not considered high priority, it was also possible to adopt two new Conservation Areas with accompanying appraisals. These were heavily reliant upon community involvement to ensure that delivering them did not prejudice the completion of the main task of reviewing existing appraisals and as such, the communities in these two areas should be particularly acknowledged for their input and work in bringing forward these two new areas for adoption as Conservation Areas.
- 4.4. Of the now 34 Conservation Areas within the Borough, 22 have had the review undertaken as an officer-led process, and 12 were reviewed on a community-led basis.
- 4.5. For some of the 22 officer-led reviews, there was local interest in volunteering to participate in a community-led review; however, too few volunteers came forward to make this a practical option. In many cases, only a single volunteer came forward, and it was considered unreasonable to expect a single resident to undertake the process unsupported. In these cases, the volunteers were given an opportunity to provide some input into the council-led process, sometimes this was on specific elements of an appraisal which suited their particular interest, often local history.

- 4.6. Across this process, the fixed term postholder organised public consultation events, including attending a public event for each appraisal review.
- 4.7. The community-led examples included officer input in advising on the process, and providing guidance and briefing, as well as support through the process, review of works in progress and editing of the completed review to ensure consistency of formatting and appearance.
- 4.8. In only one case did a community led review have to be taken in-house to ensure that it was completed owing to challenges the community experienced in producing a draft.
- 4.9. It should be noted that without the 12 communities who successfully completed a community-led review, it is unlikely that the review of all conservation areas could have been completed on schedule if all 34 reviews had to have been undertaken directly by Council officers, and as such, the success of the project has been in no small part due to the commitment and input of the 12 communities.
- 4.10. This review process has discharged the duty to review Conservation Areas “from time to time” under Section 69 of the 1990 Act and ensured that all of Rushcliffe’s appraisals are current and up to date, as well as affording opportunities for community ‘buy-in’ to the process as is described as a desirable community engagement measure within best practice.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

- 5.1. The report is presented to highlight the work undertaken over the past three years, to meet the Council’s legal obligation to keep Conservation Areas under review and as directed by Cabinet.
- 5.2. An alternative option is to not review Conservation Areas and their associated appraisals; however, Conservation Area Appraisals are material considerations when deciding planning applications. Out of date or absent Conservation Area Appraisals risks inappropriate development, and the loss of the Borough’s historic features and their setting.

6. Risk and Uncertainties

None, other than the risk identified in section 5 of not reviewing Conservation Areas.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report. Costs associated with additional staff resource were included in the approved budgets for 2022-25.

7.2. Legal Implications

Local planning authorities have a duty under Section 69 of the 1990 Act to determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

7.3. Equalities Implications

There are not considered to be any equalities implications arising from the recommendation.

7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are not considered to be any adverse implications arising from this report or its recommendation in terms of crime or disorder.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There would be no biodiversity net gain implications arising from the recommendation within this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	Adoption of revised Conservation Area Appraisals allows increased accuracy and relevance of the way in which the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas is identified, improving the way in which planning policy can be applied towards its preservation.
Quality of Life	The work undertaken as detailed in the report impacts on quality of life only to the extent that updated appraisals means that the protection of historic places within the borough is addressed on the basis of more up-to-date evidence base. Assuming people generally choose to live in places they like anything that promotes resistance to inappropriate change should support quality of life.
Efficient Services	There would be no implications, positive or negative, for efficiency of local services.
Sustainable Growth	Adoption of revised Conservation Area Appraisals allows increased accuracy and relevance of the way in which the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area is identified, which would better enable the Council to better ensure that future development is of high standard and sustainable.

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet considers the information contained within this report and acknowledges the successful completion of this review project.

For more information contact:	James Bate Planning Team Manager: Monitoring and Implementation 0115 9148483 jbate@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management
List of appendices:	Appendix A: Conservation Area Review Table and Timeline