

Report for Resolution

Report to Executive

27 January 2010

Report of Strategic Director - Regeneration and Development

Subject Conservation Area Appraisal for Sewell

Item

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Purpose

To consider the Conservation Area Appraisal for Sewell, which explains why the area has special architectural and historic character and how this character should be managed and enhanced. (The Conservation Area Appraisal is attached at appendix 1 and is also available to view in member rooms and at Planning Reception, second floor City Hall.)

Recommendations

To approve:-

- (1) the conservation area appraisal and management and enhancement plans for Sewell Conservation Area following public consultation as Planning Policy Guidance.
- (2) the addition of buildings listed in appendix 2 to the Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest.

Financial Consequences

The appraisals set out aspirations for enhancement of the areas over the next five years. They will inform decisions on prioritising capital and revenue expenditure. Any capital projects that are developed as a result of these appraisals would be the subject of separate authorisation and monitoring through the capital programme processes.

Strategic Objective/Service Plan Priority

The report helps to achieve the strategic objectives to ensure the City has a clean and healthy environment. The completion of the appraisal contributes towards fulfilling the objectives of the 2009/10 Service Plan for Planning Services.

Executive Member: Councillor Morrey - Sustainable City Development

Ward: Sewell

Contact Officers

Chris Bennett, Conservation and Design Officer
Ben Webster, Design Quality Manager

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Background Documents

None.

Background

Conservation Areas

1. A Conservation Area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Section 69(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) Act 1990).
2. There are 17 Conservation Areas in Norwich. Existing appraisals for St Matthews, Thorpe Hamlet and Thorpe Ridge were adopted by Executive on 21 March 2007, the City Centre Appraisal was adopted on 19 September 2007, and appraisals for Eaton, Old Lakenham, Trowse Millgate and Thorpe St Andrew were adopted on 19 March 2008. Mile Cross was adopted on 10 June 2009. This report concerns the appraisal for the Sewell Conservation Area located to the north of the City. The appraisal is appended to the report as appendix 1.
3. Sewell was originally designated a conservation area on 2 January 1979 under the different name of Ash Grove. The boundary was extended and the name changed on 5 May 1992, but the area was subsequently reduced in size on 18 September 2003 following the de-designation of Ash Grove and an area to the north of Sewell Park College. The Council was persuaded by the views of the Norwich Society that Ash Grove had been so degraded by the installation of uPVC windows and various other disfiguring alterations to the buildings and curtilage walls etc that it was considered to no longer contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The area north of the college retained some interesting Victorian buildings, but these were considered to be too detached from the core of the conservation area. Part of the playing fields in this area have also now been developed with further educational buildings.

Conservation Area Appraisals

4. Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1991 places a duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. This is the purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisals.
5. English Heritage Guidance on Conservation Area management advises that “Once the appraisal process has been completed, proposals for the future management of the area will need to be developed. These should take the form of a mid- to long- term strategy for preserving and enhancing the conservation area, addressing the issues and recommendations for action arising from the appraisal and identifying any further or detailed work needed for their implementation.” The last section of the Sewell Conservation Area Appraisal contains proposals for the management and enhancement of the conservation area. The Urban Design and Conservation team intend to develop these proposals with the support of the other relevant sections of the

City Council and private businesses and individuals.

Local List

6. The City Council has had a list of buildings of local interest in Conservation Areas since 1988, which, whilst not officially 'Listable', are nevertheless considered to be buildings of local architectural and historic interest that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Areas. The buildings on the local list within the Sewell conservation area have been reviewed through the appraisal and it is recommended to add the buildings listed in appendix 2. The effect of placing a building on the local list is to raise awareness of its quality so that when applications are submitted to demolish or substantially change a locally listed building they are considered in light of the positive contribution these buildings make to the character of the conservation area. Placing a building on the local list does not alter the permitted development rights or approvals processes that apply.

Consultation

7. Before the draft appraisal was prepared for consultation an informal 'walkabout' of each area was arranged with ward members and local organisations to gain an appreciation of issues. Public consultation on the draft appraisals took place over a four-week period from 28 August 2009 to 25 September 2009. During this time the document was available to view as a headline item on the City Council's website and at Planning reception. A public exhibition took place in Christ Church Hall on 5 and 6 September 2009. A letter was sent to all residents within the proposed area for extension and to all owners and occupiers of buildings proposed for local listing. The following organisations and people were sent copies of the document and invited to comment:

Cllr Brociek-Coulton
Cllr Banham
Cllr Sands
Cllr Toms
English Heritage
Norfolk County Council
Norwich Society
Victorian Society

8. A list of all consultation feedback received for the conservation area appraisal for Sewell is attached at appendix 3. The response column those changes to the documents that are proposed following the public consultation.