
DENTON CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor John Williams, Economy Portfolio

Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Members' approval of the **appended** finalised Denton Conservation Area character appraisal.

Information and Analysis

2. Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 emphasises the need for the local development plan to include firm conservation area policies, based on a clear definition of the special architectural or historic interest that warranted designation. PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment stresses the need for local planning authorities to make an assessment of the special interest, character and appearance of all Conservation Areas in their districts.
3. The Environment Scrutiny Review Action Plan adopted by the Cabinet highlighted the need for Conservation Area Character Appraisals to be undertaken.
4. Denton is the sixth in a programme of 16 Conservation Area character appraisals to be undertaken over the next few years. In addition, new Best Value Performance Indicators have been introduced which measure how many Conservation Area Character Appraisals have been carried out in the last five years.
5. Character Appraisals for Conservation Areas are seen as a tool to assist in the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. Through the character appraisals, areas (or buildings) of special landscape or historic/architectural character can be highlighted as possessing particular interest, and being worthy of preservation and enhancement. Features of special interest, such as historic walls, stiles, open spaces, trees or historic surfaces; ie, cobbles, Yorkshire flags or setts, can be particularly highlighted through the character appraisal, which can then be included in future Supplementary Planning Document. The appraisal provides a sound basis, defensible on appeal, for the development plan policies and future development control decisions.

Results of Consultation Process

6. Cabinet has authorised the Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration) to agree draft character appraisals for public consultation followed by final Cabinet approval of documents revised in the light of consultation.

7. Consultation on the Denton document was carried out for four weeks between the 26 November 2007 and 21 December 2007 included letter drops to all 19 residents within the Denton Conservation Area, a two-day exhibition in the Town Hall reception area on the 6 and 7 December and a press notice in the local press. Two comments forms were returned completed by residents, plus internal observations and recommendations within the scope of the appraisal suggested the following:-
 - (a) Further research into whether the mill machinery still exists within the farm outbuilding at Denton Hall farm.
 - (b) The addition of information highlighted in (a) above, and possible inclusion into the document of details of the pack horse bridge, located approximately 150 metres North of the Conservation Area boundary.
8. The information gained as a result of suggestion (a) has been included into the document. Suggestion (b), albeit relating to a structure outside the Conservation Area boundary has also been included as relating to the village mill race and mill.

Conclusion

9. The attached Denton Conservation Area Character Appraisal is the sixth in a series of appraisals concerning the 16 Conservation Areas in the Borough. The final document has been amended to take account of comments made during the consultation process and will provide a useful tool in assisting the conservation and enhancement of the Denton Conservation Area.

Legal Implications

10. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

11. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. Officers have considered the appraisal in the context of Policy E45 of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan and Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Council Policy Framework

12. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework.

Decision Deadline

13. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Recommendation

14. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the attached Denton Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

Reason

15. The recommendation is supported by the following reason: to provide a document to assist in the protection and management of the Denton Conservation Area.

Richard Alty
Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)

Background Papers

File of comments received

Martyn Kendall: Extension 2604
jc