

Report of the Strategic Director (Services)

MILDENHALL CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Synopsis:

This report considers representations received during the consultation on the Draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Mildenhall, proposes appropriate changes, and seeks adoption of the resulting document.

Commentary:

1. The Planning Committee meeting of 14 October 2009 agreed a public consultation draft of a Conservation Area Appraisal for Mildenhall.
2. The public consultation took place between 16 November 2009 and 8 January 2010. Statutory consultees and key community organisations were sent a copy of the draft documents. A press release was issued and the documents could be viewed on the Council's website, or obtained from the Planning Department if requested.
3. Mildenhall Town Council, Suffolk Preservation Society, Suffolk County Council Historic Buildings Officer and Kynamco responded to the consultation. Their comments have been summarised below and a suggested Council response is given for Members consideration. Full copies of the responses to the consultation can be obtained from the Forward Planning Section of the Planning Department if requested.

Mildenhall Town Council

- i. The document is well produced, contains a good selection of maps and photographs and is clearly the result of painstaking research.
- ii. The planning guidance on pages 31-33 should prove particularly useful.
- iii. Suggested word change: 'staithe' to 'quay' and 'vernacular' to local building materials'.
- iv. Page 8. The parish is made up as follows: Mildenhall High Town, West Row and Isleham Marina. Beck Row, Holywell Row and Kenny Hill are now under a different parish council. Please clarify population figures relating to these areas.

- v. Page 10. It does not mention that the parish church was once called St Andrews church or how Mildenhall acquired the title of High Town.
- vi. Page 11. The date of the breakup of Bunbury estate seems uncertain however on page 9 it is clearly stated as 1933.
- vii. Page 13. Is 'a pleasant small square' a suitable phrase for this description?
- viii. A key and explanatory note would be useful for the tables on pages 17, 20, 23 and 26.
- ix. Page 18. Suggest word change to 'though it may be said to cause a loss of'.
- x. Page 25. The wooden bridges have now been replaced by a single span metal structure. The recommendation relating to the water meadow makes good sense but the building of yet another bridge seems unlikely.
- xi. The boundary revision suggested on page 30 would probably get Mildenhall Parish Council support.

FHDC Response

- i. Noted and welcomed.*
- ii. Noted and welcomed.*
- iii. Noted but consider the use of words 'staithe' and 'vernacular' to be appropriate.*
- iv. Amend as appropriate.*
- v. Amend text to add information regarding the name of the church and the title of High Town.*
- vi. Amend the date on page 11 to 1933 to correspond with the date on page 9.*
- vii. Noted but consider the existing wording appropriate.*
- viii. Noted. Add key and explanatory notes to tables to clarify that they identify buildings making a positive contribution to the conservation area.*
- ix. Amend to 'though it may be said to cause much visual detriment and a loss of pedestrian safety in the shopping centre'.*
- x. The reference to the wooden footbridges will be updated to reflect the recent works that have been done to provide a new metal footbridge.*
- xi. Noted and welcomed.*

Suffolk Preservation Society

- i. The documents are sound and an accurate reflection of current English Heritage guidance.
- ii. The buildings identified as making a positive contribution on the townscape appraisal plan should be reflected in a simple statement in the 'Local Generic Guidance' section to reflect existing guidance in PPG15. The demolition of a positive building will rarely be acceptable, unless the tests identified in the PPG as relevant to listed buildings have been satisfied.
- iii. Identified key open spaces should be accompanied by a statement in the 'Local Generic Guidance' stating that development that serves to infill or adversely affect the openness of these spaces will not be supported. Similarly it should be stated that important trees as identified should be protected from felling or development that could adversely affect their well being or result in pressure for removal, reduction or crown lifting.
- iv. Page 5. No key or north point on map.

- v. Page 11. Incomplete date for break up of Manor estate.
- vi. Page 19. Suggest 'human scale' or 'intimate' would be better than 'personal scale'
- vii. Page 21. Repetition of significant in final paragraph.
- viii. Page 24. Inconsistent use of abbreviations C17/C17th-century/18th century.
- ix. Page 25. Please explain 'staunch'.
- x. Page 30. Suggest 'sites in need of enhancement' rather than 'intrusion or damage'.
- xi. Page 32. S.4 of the Planning Act does not relate to domestic PD rights. Article 4(2) direction of the GDPO could also relate to other potentially damaging alterations. Surely now is the time to consider this issue rather than postponing it?

FHDC Response

- i. Noted and welcomed.*
- ii. Amend as suggested*
- iii. Amend as suggested*
- iv. Noted. Add key and north point on map. Buildings outlined in red are listed buildings and red line indicates conservation area boundary.*
- v. Amend the date on page 11 to 1933 to correspond with the date on page 9.*
- vi. Replace 'personal scale' with 'intimate, human scale'*
- vii. Noted. Amend to 'the amount of traffic in the Market Place becomes significant at peak times when it can discomfort pedestrians who might otherwise be encouraged to extend their walk to the river footpath'.*
- viii. Amend as appropriate to make text consistent.*
- ix. 'Staunches' are explained on page 24 as 'types of lock crossed by barges while the water flowed through the open gate'. No further explanation required on page 25.*
- x. The sub-title of 'Intrusion or damage' is used in other adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and in the interests of consistency it should remain unaltered. This wording is also used by English Heritage in their document 'Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals' (Feb 2006).*
- xi. Noted. Change to 'should the Council serve a direction under Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended), the removal or alteration of windows...'. It is proposed to advance the implementation of Article 4 directions once the programme to complete Conservation Area Appraisals for all the Districts Conservation Areas is completed.*

Mark Barnard (Historic Buildings Officer)

- i. Alterations are proposed to the conservation area boundary but are not shown on the plans.
- ii. Shrublands House is not late C19 but more like late C18 or early C19.
- iii. The reference to conservation consent in the 'Alterations' section of the 'Local Generic Guidance' is misleading as CAC only applies in very limited circumstances. Suggest 'when considering change, the LPA has a statutory duty to have special regard....'

FHDC Response

- i. Show agreed boundary changes in the adopted appraisal.*
- ii. Agreed – amend as appropriate.*
- iii. Noted – amend as appropriate.*

Cllr. Nigel Roman

- i. The caption to the photograph on page 6 should read 'The Mildenhall town sign'.

FHDC Response

- i. Noted – amend as appropriate.*

William Evans obo. Kynamco

- i. The former railway station and goods shed site does not relate well to the existing Conservation Area and does not contain buildings or features of sufficient quality to merit inclusion.

FHDC Response

- ii. Noted – A boundary change to include the station buildings is not considered appropriate as they are somewhat removed from the town, however the Old Railway Station and Goods Shed are worthy of inclusion on the list of buildings of local interest.*

Boundary Revisions

- 4. The draft conservation area proposed a number of boundary revisions to include the buildings and walls with historic character to the north of Queensway, the western end of Queensway including the cemetery and the buildings on the south bank of the River Lark around the junction of Mill Street, Station Road and Worlington Road. It is proposed to remove 1 and 1A King Street, and 2, 2A, 4 and 4A Kingsway from the Conservation Area. In addition it is also proposed to include 49 Queensway and the late C19th / early C20th terrace nos. 2–22 Wamil Way (See map - Appendix A).

Finance/Budget/Resource Implications

- 5. There are likely to be on-going revenue, and possibly capital funding implications from the ongoing management of the Conservation Area. The Appraisals were carried out utilising Planning Delivery Grant funds gained from central Government.
- 6. Any boundary change has to be advertised in the London Gazette and local press, which will incur a fee.

Environmental Impact and Sustainability

- 7. The adoption of Conservation Area Appraisals will assist the preservation and environmental enhancement of the Conservation Area.

Policy Compliance/Power

8. There is a statutory requirement for the Council to preserve and enhance its conservation areas.

Performance Management Implications

9. This work is carried out and monitored under Best Value Performance Indicator BVPI 219 a-c, and falls within the Forward Planning Service Plan objectives.

Legal Implications

10. There are no direct implications. Issues may arise from the implementation of Management Plans.

Human Rights Act and Diversity Implications

11. There are no direct implications.

Crosscutting Implications

12. The appraisal process may contribute in some instances, particularly in relation to environmental enhancements and improvements to the Public Realm. Appraisals also contribute towards planning control and other economic and community development agendas.

Risk Assessment

13. Failure to progress appraisals may result in criticism of poor performance in audit and CPA inspections and impede the Councils development control functions in the Conservation Area.

Council Priorities

14. The conservation appraisal process forms part of the LDF programme. Community engagement and communication. Economic Regeneration, Street scene and environment and Transport.

Recommendation:

15. **It is recommended that Members approve the amendments to the Draft Mildenhall Conservation Area Appraisal suggested above and adopt the resulting document as planning guidance for development control purposes.**

Documents Attached

Appendix A – Mildenhall Conservation Area Proposed Boundary Changes

Nigel McCurdy
Strategic Director (Services)
31st March 2010

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The draft Conservation Area Appraisals for Mildenhall is available on the Council's website at www.forest-heath.gov.uk / Planning / Forward Planning / Conservation Areas in Forest Heath. A printed version of the Draft Appraisal and the full text of comments received can be provided on request.

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