

Report of	Meeting	Date
Corporate Director Business (Introduced by the Executive Member for Business)	Executive Cabinet	1 October 2009

RIVINGTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To present the main findings of the Rivington Conservation Area Appraisal Management Proposals Document.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To endorse the Rivington Conservation Area Appraisal.
3. To adopt the Management Proposals as the basis for future improvement and control of development, subject to the availability of funding.
4. To support the introduction of a Direction under Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 to increase control over additions and alterations in the Conservation Area.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

5. The Rivington Conservation Area Appraisal identifies firstly the key characteristics that make the area special and secondly the key issues that give cause for concern. The Appraisal and associated Management Plan highlight the opportunities and challenges for the Rivington Conservation Area and recommend a number of objectives and associated projects/actions as a means to enhancing the appearance of the area.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

6. Section 71 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Council to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their Conservation Areas.
7. Members will recall that a Heritage and Conservation Strategy was endorsed at the 8th January 2009 executive Committee. It promotes a structured and coordinated approach to conserving and enhancing Chorley's historic environment. In accordance with this, Rivington Conservation Area review is the third of a programme of reviews of all nine conservation areas within Chorley.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

8. Do nothing – this would be contrary to statutory guidance and result in the continued decline of the quality of the conservation area. It would undermine two Corporate Strategy objectives; to develop the character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live, and to strengthen Chorley’s economic position within the Central Lancashire sub-region.
9. Article 4 Direction not approved – this would undermine the conservation area, as its character would continue to be eroded by inappropriate developments currently permitted under permitted development rights.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

10. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region	✓	Develop local solutions to climate change.	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances	✓	Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	✓
Involving people in their communities	✓	Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	✓

BACKGROUND

11. A detailed analysis of Rivington conservation area and the development of management proposals, including public consultation, were undertaken earlier this year. A full copy of the Rivington Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals is attached to this report.
12. From this evolved a number of ‘Management Proposals’ recommending further actions including:
 - a. Working with the Highways Authority to explore options for enhanced traffic calming;
 - b. Examine the opportunities for the introduction of an Article 4(2) Direction for the control of permitted development rights to further protect the buildings in the conservation area from harmful alterations;
 - c. Exploring the potential for grant aid to assist with repairs and appropriate improvements, including the reinstatement of original features for buildings within the Conservation Area;
 - d. Explore with the relevant agencies and landowners the options for the provision of alternative parking areas.
13. **Working with the Highways Authority to explore options for enhanced traffic calming.** A major concern for residents and visitors alike is the issue of excessive vehicle speed. Options for the creation of a 20m.p.h. zone within the village and the extension of the 30m.p.h. zone along Rivington Lane, Horrobin Lane and Sheep House Lane will be investigated.

14. **Examine the opportunities for the introduction of an Article 4(2) Direction for the control of permitted development rights to further protect the buildings in the conservation area from harmful alterations.** There is ample evidence within the conservation area and on the fringes of it where inappropriate alterations using unsympathetic materials have been undertaken. The most notable example is the replacement of timber window frames and doors with uPVC or aluminium. The introduction of an Article 4(2) Direction will give greater control of extensions and alterations to all unlisted dwellinghouses within the designated area (Listed buildings already enjoy added protection). Offering grant assistance as outlined in section 16 can also help to fund the additional costs associated with an Article 4 Direction.
15. **Exploring the potential for grant aid to assist with repairs and appropriate improvements, including the reinstatement of original features for buildings within the Conservation Area.** Programmes of regular, maintenance for buildings are the most cost-effective way of maintaining them in good order. Further advice is available for property owners in joint a publication produced by English Heritage, the Institute of Historic Building and Conservation and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings entitled 'A Stitch In Time'. Offering grant assistance can help owners to maintain their property to the enhanced standard that conservation area designation warrants. This not only enhances the appearance of the area, but also enhances property values. The potential for grant aid will be the subject of a separate report to the Executive Cabinet.
16. **Explore with the relevant agencies and landowners the options for the provision of alternative parking areas.** Concurrent with and equal to the concerns of residents and visitors for safety evident from the appraisal and public consultation is that for uncontrolled on-street parking, particularly at weekends and at holiday periods. At such times congestion and the ensuing traffic hazards are unacceptable. Alternative areas for parking provision will be discussed with the appropriate agencies and landowners, and will involve further public consultation.

CONSULTATION

17. The preparation of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals has been the subject of comprehensive consultations.
18. A copy of the consultation response report is included in the Appraisal and Management Proposals document.
19. All residents within the conservation area boundary, and those just outside it, were invited by letter to a public exhibition held in April 2009. This was followed by a period of six weeks consultation, including further exhibition displays in the Chorley Council offices. The consultation documents and response questionnaires were available at these exhibitions and also via the Council Website.
20. Most comments received were either in favour of the report, or where suggestions were made have been considered and wherever possible incorporated into the final version. Comments regarding other agencies or other departments within Chorley Council or Lancashire County Council have been directed to the appropriate individual or department.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

21. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Corporate Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	✓	No significant implications in this area	

COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE

22. The proposal would satisfy our legal requirements.

JANE MEEK
CORPORATE DIRECTOR (BUSINESS)

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Rivington Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals	July 2009	***	Copy attached, Council Website

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Ian Heywood	5533	20 August 2009	***