

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director Partnerships, Planning & Policy (Introduced by the Executive Member for Partnerships & Planning)	Executive Cabinet	09.12.2010

ABBEY VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To present the main findings of the Abbey Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Document.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To endorse the Abbey Village 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

4. The Abbey Village 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 Abbey Village 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)

5. 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.
6. 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, Abbey Village Conservation Area review is the fourth of a programme of reviews of all nine conservation areas within Chorley.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

7. 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 the Sustainable Community Strategy.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Strengthen Chorley's economic position in the Central Lancashire sub-region	✓	Improve environmental sustainability and combat climate change.	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances	✓	Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a great place to live	✓
Supporting people to get involved in improving their communities	✓	Ensure Chorley Council is a consistently top performing organization	✓

BACKGROUND

9. A detailed analysis of Abbey Village conservation area and the development of management proposals, including public consultation, were undertaken earlier this year. A full copy of the Abbey Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals is attached to this report.
10. From this evolved a number of 'Management Proposals' recommending further actions including:
- a. 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;
 - b. Working with the Highways Authority to explore options for enhanced traffic calming and a more sympathetic approach to highway design;
 - c. Explore funding opportunities 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.
 - e. Develop a guide for residents on the sensitive location of satellite dishes in conservation areas.
 - f. Extend the boundary of the Conservation Area and identify other buildings that make a positive contribution to its setting.
11. **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 would give greater control of extensions and alterations to all unlisted dwellinghouses within the designated area (Listed buildings already enjoy added protection).

12. **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 and the presence of a large number of heavy goods vehicles(HGVs). The Council will work with colleagues from the Highway Authority to look for ways of reducing the impact of speeding traffic and HGVs which are at the same time complimentary to the Conservation Area setting.
13. **Exploring the potential for funding 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 a joint 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'. Advice on where to find sources of funding will be published on the Council's web site.
14. **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.
15. **Develop a guide for residents on the sympathetic location of satellite dishes.** Whilst it is accepted that satellite dishes are a fact of modern living there are more sensitive ways of locating them so as not to cause visual blight in a conservation area. A guidance document for residents will be developed to help achieve this objective and will be made available via the Council's web site.
16. **Extend the boundary of the conservation area and identify other buildings that make a positive contribution to its setting.** A principal concern of the residents of Abbey Village was to include areas currently outside the boundary that have a physical and historical link to the village and which play an equal role in defining its character. Furthermore where there are buildings that are too far removed to be included within the conservation area, they will be identified as making a positive contribution to the setting and thus accorded protection from development pressures.

17. **CONSULTATION**

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 March 2010. 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 DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION

22. There is a requirement as confirmed within this report to undertake reviews of Conservation Areas within the Borough. Where such a review results in proposed enhancements to those areas, it is proper to adopt these improvements.

LESLEY- ANN FENTON
DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING AND POLICY

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Ian Heywood	5533	November 2010	***

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Abbey Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals	October 2010	***	Copy attached, Council Website