

**Development Control Committee – 24th February 2015**

**Report of the Strategic Director (Environment, Economy and Housing)**

**Phased review of Conservation Area Character Appraisals across the Borough**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To inform Development Control Committee of a phased review of Conservation Area Character Appraisals across the Borough in accordance with the programme set out in Table 1 of this report.

**Background**

2. Since 1967 Local Planning Authorities have been able to protect areas which are valued for their special architectural or historic interest through the designation of Conservation Areas.
3. Conservation Areas are defined in law as '*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*' and Local Planning Authorities have the statutory duty to identify and designate such areas.
4. Conservation Area Appraisals should be undertaken before an area is designated to gain an understanding of the character. Where a Conservation Area has been designated for some time an appraisal may not have been undertaken and a review provides the opportunity to re-assess the designated area and to evaluate and record its special interest.
5. It is vital that the Borough's Conservation Areas are preserved and protected given that they are important as a catalyst for future regeneration. They provide economic and social benefits and they are important to the character, identity and local distinctiveness to the Dudley Borough.

6. Within Dudley Borough there are 22 Conservation Areas, 8 of which have Conservation Area Character Appraisals; most of which have not been reviewed for over 25 years and there is therefore a need to undertake a review prioritising in order of need.
7. In line with best practice provided by English Heritage a methodology has been devised for the implementation of a phased programme of Conservation Area Character Appraisals across the Borough.
8. A scoring system has been devised based on an assessment of the date of last survey; whether an Article 4 Direction (removing specified permitted development rights) is in place; whether Area is on the At Risk Register: the local plan coverage, and whether or not the Area is under pressure at present. Those Conservation Areas with the highest score have been prioritised for appraisal first. It is proposed to introduce a 5 phase rolling programme with the most urgent ones being surveyed over the next 12 months, with the other less urgent reviews completed within the remainder of the a 5 phase rolling programme. The scoring process has culminated in the proposed Review Programme as set out in Table 1 below:

**TABLE 1 –Conservation Area Character Appraisal Review Programme**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Conservation Area Character Appraisals to be reviewed or prepared</b>
Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Saints, Sedgley</li> <li>• Stourbridge Town Centre</li> <li>• Wollaston</li> <li>• Wordsley Church, Wordsley</li> </ul>
Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bumble Hole, Netherton</li> <li>• Oak Street, Coseley</li> <li>• Parkhead Locks, Dudley</li> <li>• The Coppice, Coseley</li> <li>• The Village, Kingswinford</li> </ul>
Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church Road, Oldwinford</li> <li>• Lutley Lane, Halesowen</li> <li>• Mushroom Green, Dudley</li> <li>• The Leasowes, Halesowen</li> <li>• Love Lane, Oldswinford</li> </ul>
Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stourbridge Branch Canal (Amblecote)</li> <li>• Stourbridge Branch Canal (Canal Street)</li> <li>• Delph 'Nine' Locks, Brierley Hill</li> <li>• Stourbridge 16 Locks, Wordsley</li> </ul>
Phase 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wordsley Hospital, Wordsley</li> <li>• Dudley Town Centre</li> <li>• Castle Hill, Dudley</li> <li>• Brierley Hill High Street</li> </ul>

9. If once completed the appraisal demonstrates the the Conservation Area boundary should be amended, this will be subject to statutory consultation and approval by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration in consultation with Development Control Committee.

### **Finance**

10. The production of the Conservation Area Character Appraisals will be funded from existing budgets and resources dedicated to the production of Development Plan Documents and other statutory planning documents.

### **Law**

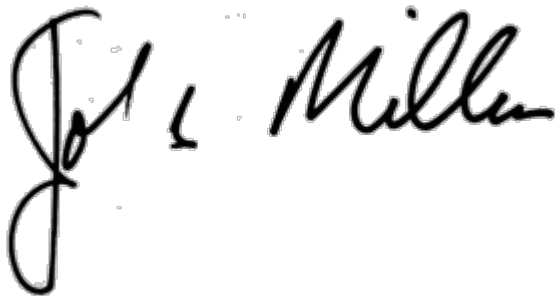
11. The undertaking of Conservation Area Reviews and the formulation of proposals for the enhancement of conservation areas, including public consultation, is a statutory duty for local authorities as is their designation. This is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
12. In addition, Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 allows the Council to do anything that it considers is likely to promote or improve the economy or environment in the Borough.

### **Equality Impact**

13. The Conservation Area Character Appraisals form part of the evidence base for the Dudley Local Plan. The Local Plan is the plan for the future development of Dudley Borough. Aiming to meet the needs of all communities within the Borough, the Local Plan will guide new sustainable development to appropriate locations, providing regeneration and growth, while protecting Dudley's natural and built heritage. This includes meeting the needs of disabled persons as well as children and young people by seeking to provide sufficient facilities for them, as well as having a positive effect for future generations.

### **Recommendation**

14. That Development Control Committee notes the phased review of Conservation Area Character Appraisals across the Borough in accordance with the programme set out in Table 1 of this report.



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### **List of Background Papers**

*Department for Communities and Local Government 'National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)' (March 2012) – In particular Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) and paragraph 169 (Historic environment).*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

*English Heritage 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' 2011.*