

South Northamptonshire Council

Planning Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee

20 January 2016

Passenham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2016

Report of the Head of Development Management

This report is public

Purpose of report

For Members to consider the above Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Passenham and determine whether they wish to recommend it for adoption.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To adopt the revised boundary of the Passenham Conservation Area and the Passenham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Passenham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been produced as part of a rolling programme of works, which includes the review of all of the conservation areas within South Northamptonshire, undertaken by the Council's Heritage Team.
- 2.2 Parts of Passenham were originally designated as a conservation area in 1985. In 2015 the settlement was reassessed and it is now proposed to designate a new conservation area boundary for the area and to adopt a conservation area appraisal and management plan for Passenham. The appraisal looks to identify and analyse the distinctive character of that area derived from its unique topography, historic development and features such as buildings, streets, layout and form.
- 2.3 Informed by the above the Management Plan section seeks to outline opportunities to enhance the area and identify threats to its character and appearance. This determines a series of action points outlined to address these issues.
- 2.4 A clear and comprehensive appraisal of the character of a conservation area provides a sound basis for development management and for developing initiatives for improving the area. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a settlement will provide a robust

framework for the future management of that settlement against which applications can be considered.

- 2.5 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. Conservation area management proposals should be published as part of the process of area designation and review. Their aim is to provide guidance through policy statements to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to determine which parts of its areas are of special architectural and historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance and to designate those areas as conservation areas.
- 3.2 19 appraisals are detailed to be undertaken as part of the Heritage Teams' 2015/16 work programme. These have been carried out on a mixture of settlements including those currently experiencing significant pressure for development, those without a designated conservation area and those that have not had their conservation area reviewed for some considerable time.
- 3.3 Passenham falls into the latter of these categories not having been considered since 1985. It is also experiencing pressure from minerals extraction which has the potential to impact upon the settlement. In recognition of this a review of the area was undertaken in 2015.
- 3.4 Passenham has been a dynamic and evolving settlement for centuries, with archaeological evidence indicating activity as early as the Iron Age. The first written record of the settlement was in 921 when Edward the Elder set up camp at Passenham whilst the Roman walls were repaired at Towcester after he had repelled a previous Danish attack.
- 3.5 Passenham was an important medieval village, larger than today's settlement. It was the administrative and ecclesiastical centre of the parish which included the surrounding villages of Deanshanger, Stony Stratford and Puxley and parts of the royal hunting forest of Whittlewood. This indicates the prominence and wealth of the former lords of the manor.
- 3.6 Sir Roger Banastre, lord of the manor and Royal Comptroller in the 17th century, was highly influential in the development of the village. His legacy remains today in parts of the Manor House, dovecote, tithe barns and St Guthlac's Church, the latter exhibiting a fine and rich interior for such a small building. The village contracted during the field enclosure completed by Banastre and has since remained a small rural hamlet historically controlled by successive lords of the manor and with strong agricultural roots evident in the surrounding ridge and furrow.
- 3.7 The built form within the area is predominantly limestone with plain red clay tile roofing. Dwellings tend to be two storeys in height with dormer windows a prominent feature of the roof scape. Barns and outbuildings are also common due

to the agricultural nature of the settlement. These are usually single storey with some later converted for residential use. The Grade I listed tithe barns at the Manor House are a particularly distinctive feature of the area.

- 3.8 Strong boundary lines are a common feature across the conservation area for both the historic and modern properties. The attached wall around the Manor House is Grade II listed. This reflects the style of the house built of limestone with tile coping. Elsewhere the boundary line is delineated by trees and fences with the larger properties sitting further back within more spacious plots not always visible from the highway.
- 3.9 Trees play an important part in the character of the conservation area offering a sense of scale and contributing to the rural character of the settlement.
- 3.10 Due to the rural, isolated nature of Passenham open space plays an important part in the setting of the built form and understanding the historical development of the settlement. There are various landscape features, both man-made and natural that contribute to the character of the conservation area including the surrounding ridge and furrow and elements of water meadow.
- 3.11 In January 2015 public consultation was undertaken on a draft conservation area appraisal and management plan for Passenham. The documents proposed alterations to the boundary of the conservation area from that which was adopted in 1985. These included:
 - The removal of the fields to the north-west of the village as these were considered to not directly impact upon its character and have no visible archaeology remaining.
 - The removal of a section of field to the east of the conservation area due to lack of visible archaeology.
 - The removal of the field to the south-east as it does not directly impact upon views of the conservation area.
- 3.12 The draft conservation area appraisal and management plan were released for consultation in line with recognised best practice and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Copies of the document were made available on the Conservation and Heritage pages of the Council's website and at the Council Offices in Towcester. A representative of the Heritage Team also attended a parish meeting in February 2015 and details of the proposals were detailed in the media. A number of written responses were received in response to the consultation and these are attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.13 The responses that were received mainly objected to the proposals. Following a detailed analysis of them it was considered that a further round of public consultation should be undertaken proposing alternative amendments to the 1985 conservation area boundary.
- 3.14 These changes included:
 - The removal of the fields to the north-west of the village as these were considered to not directly impact upon its character and have no visible archaeology remaining.

- The removal of the field to the south-east as it does not directly impact upon views of the conservation area.
- The expansion of the area to include Ham Meadow a field to the south west with archaeology of reported interest.

- 3.15 The draft conservation area appraisal and management plan were released for consultation in line with recognised best practice and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Copies of the document were made available on the Conservation and Heritage pages of the Council's website and at the Council Offices in Towcester. A number of written responses both objecting to and supporting the proposed amendments were received and these are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 3.16 The responses that were received both objected to and offered support for the proposals. Following a detailed analysis of them it was considered that some minor amendments to the documents be made and a final conservation area boundary be drawn and proposed for adoption at Committee.
- 3.17 The boundary now proposed does not include the field known as Ham Meadow to the south of the settlement as it is considered that whilst of importance to the setting of Passenham and the conservation area it does not have a character and appearance that would justify its inclusion within the boundary of the conservation area.
- 3.18 Similarly it is proposed to remove land to the south east of the village which again whilst of importance to its setting does not retain a special character that would justify its designation as a conservation area.
- 3.19 Archeology is reported in both of these areas but whilst of interest this does not manifest itself above ground in a form that adds to the understanding of the area or contributes to its special character.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 A Conservation Strategy for South Northamptonshire has been prepared and subjected to public consultation. Conservation area appraisals are an important way of ensuring that this aspect of policy framework is up-to-date and robust and of the greatest value in the consideration of development proposals within conservation areas.
- 4.2 Up-to-date conservation area appraisals will also help inform the consideration of planning applications in the areas covered from the point at which they are adopted and also the implementation of the emerging West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Local Plan.
- 4.3 It is for these reasons that it is recommended that the conservation area boundary for Passenham be redrawn and that the Passenham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be adopted.

5.0 Consultation

1st draft, public consultation 20 January 2015 – 03 March 2015

2nd draft, public consultation 05 June 2015 – 03 July 2015

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified:

Option 1: To agree the recommendations as set out in the report

Option 2: To amend the recommendations in accordance with the adopted committee protocol adopted 23 September 2015.

Option 3: Not to agree the recommendations in accordance with the committee protocols adopted 23 September 2015.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 The conservation area reviews for the villages are being undertaken from within existing resources.

Comments checked by:

Paul Sutton: Head of Finance and Procurement

Tel 0300 003 0106, Email Paul.sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 Once adopted the Passenham conservation area will become a constraint in the planning process and the adopted Passenham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan part of the evidence base for the forthcoming Local Plan and represent a material consideration in the planning process. The revisions to the conservation area boundaries may also affect residents of the district, business and other parties restricting, or otherwise, works that can be undertaken to land and property as permitted development.

The removal of the areas determined not to retain a character worthy of protection under a conservation area designation is in accordance with the guidance in the NPPF at paragraph 127 which makes clear that if an area does not justify the designation it should not be included so that the concept of conservation is not devalued.

Comments checked by:

Christopher Mace, Solicitor, 01327 322125,

christopher.mace@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

Old Stratford

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

To preserve what is special.
To protect quality of life.
To enhance performance

Lead Councillor

Cllr Rebecca Breese
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Responses of public consultation Passenham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
Appendix 2	Passenham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
Appendix 3	Passenham Conservation Area map illustrating boundary changes
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Alan Munn – Planning Policy and Conservation Officer
Contact Information	01327 322249 Alan.munn@southnorthants.gov.uk