

Conservation Area Appraisal Process

Task and Finish Group recommendations and actions, updated October 2023 and February 2024

Task & finish group recommendations	Actions update at October 2023	Actions update at February 2024
<p>1. Clear template as to how the document should be set out. This should include what needs to be included.</p> <p>The order in which the different elements of the document should be ordered and details of national standards regarding accessibility guidelines which need to be complied with from any consultation stage and beyond.</p> <p>Also, how to label maps, tables, and photos.</p>	<p>Two templates have been produced in Microsoft Office compatible platforms, one in word and one in Publisher.</p> <p>Further guidance on accessibility was provided to all Parish and Town Councils in an email dated 06 July 2023.</p> <p>Further guidance on advice how to label maps, tables and photos will be provided to ensure they are Web Content Accessible Guidelines compliant.</p>	<p>The completed guidance note for Parish/Town Councils includes a link to on-line guidance for labelling maps, tables and photos ensuring they are Web Content Accessible Guidelines compliant (see section 8).</p>
<p>2. The template should not lock the ability to readily alter, update or simply adjust the template in draft form (the Council should consider going through a proper and open procurement exercise for the template itself).</p>	<p>Two templates have been produced in Microsoft Office compatible platforms, one in Word and one in Publisher.</p> <p>The documents have been created already so no procurement exercise was necessary.</p>	<p>The template will be continually refined in light of experience and feedback.</p>

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<p>3. It should be made clear to a Parish or Town Council that what is required of the Conservation Area Appraisal. It is a meaty, serious planning document and not a tourist brochure.</p> <p>Everything had to be evidenced based – not subjective opinion.</p>	<p>A Guidance Note is being drafted for use by Parish and Town Councils.</p> <p>This will supplement the Historic England best practice guidance ‘Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management’.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note has been completed including a cross-reference to the Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management.</p> <p>The note explains the appraisal is a technical, evidence-based document that must be capable of withstanding scrutiny at appeal (paragraph 3.1)</p>
<p>4. Clear flow chart outlining tasks which need to be undertaken and the order in which they should be tackled.</p>	<p>A Guidance Note is being drafted for use by Parish and Town Councils.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note has been drafted including a process at Appendix 1 to the note.</p>
<p>5. A designated Officer to liaise with Parishes and Town Councils</p> <p>The Council needs to consider what resources it makes available to support Conservation Area Appraisals.</p>	<p>A named Officer will be designated when the Parish or Town Council informs the Council that they plan to start work on a conservation area appraisal. If there is a need to change the designated Officer, the Parish or Town Council will be informed at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>The Council can provide strategic help and advice to the Parish or Town Council as they work on the conservation area</p>	<p>The Guidance Note (section 4) confirms that a named officer will be assigned from HDC Planning Policy and Economic Development team.</p> <p>The Guidance Note also identifies the technical nature of the document and the need for it to withstand scrutiny at appeal (section 3).</p>

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	<p>appraisal, in a very similar way the Council does for Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>Advice on process and content will come from a Member of the Planning Policy team, benchmarking draft appraisals against the Historic England guidance and against previous good examples such as Odiham and North Warnborough.</p> <p>It is important that the Parish or Town Council consider that this is a technical planning document which needs to be evidence based and would need to be used at planning appeals. It is therefore important the Parish or Town Council appoint the appropriate technical consultant to ensure they provide an appropriate document in the first place, which can then be reviewed at key stages by the District Council.</p>	
<p>6. Parish and Town Councils should be directed to exemplar conservation area appraisals from neighbouring parishes.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Odiham and North Warnborough Conversation Area Appraisal is currently the Council's exemplar as this was the most recent one to be adopted.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note refers to the relevant examples (section 7)</p>

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	As more appraisals are adopted, the District Council will advise accordingly.	
<p>7. If the Council is suggesting that Parish and Town Councils should use consultants, a shopping list of options should be offered (procurement rules mean that there should be choices and the Council should not promote favoured consultants over others).</p> <p>Parishes should not feel pressurised to use a consultant.</p>	<p>Conservation Area Appraisals (CAA) are technical documents, which are likely to require expert skills to draft them. It is therefore important the Parish or Town Council appoints the appropriate technical consultant (unless the Town or Parish Council has a qualified expert in-house).</p> <p>The District Council does not recommend specific consultants, nor can it provide a 'shopping list'.</p> <p>Parish and Town Councils could talk to other parishes that have commissioned CAAs for more guidance on this point.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note clarifies this issue at section 3.</p>
<p>8. The Council should maintain regular contact with the Parish or Town Councils during the process, to ensure that the Parish or Town Council does not go off track or on completely the wrong tack.</p> <p>Good clear and structured communication will reduce the potential for unnecessary abortive costs.</p>	<p>Agreed. A Guidance Note is being drafted for use by Parish and Town Councils, which identifies when key conversations between the Councils should take place.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note sets out the process which includes several touch points with HDC (section 5 and Appendix 1).</p>

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<p>9. Hart Officers should look to have only 'one bite of the cherry' in terms of a thorough review of the document. Suggestion that this is prior to the public consultation.</p>	<p>A Guidance Note will be drafted for use by Parish and Town Councils, which identifies when the District Council will need to review the appraisal.</p> <p>There are several key touch points through the process when the District Council will need to review the evolving draft, but particularly prior to the public consultation and to review changes made in light of the consultation.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note has been produced addressing this point – section 6 and Appendix 1.</p>
<p>10. The District Council to advise Parish and Town Councils on how to carry out the public consultation and how to analyse the feedback.</p>	<p>A Guidance Note will be drafted for use by Parish and Town Councils, which includes public consultation and how to analyse the feedback.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note has been produced addressing these points at section 6.</p>
<p>11. All suitable conservation area appraisals to be adopted, not just noted. Noting such documents simply undermines their statutory status and downgrades the valuable input of the community</p>	<p>Agreed. The Odiham and North Warnborough Conversation Area Appraisal was adopted by Cabinet in November 2022.</p>	<p>This is confirmed in the Guidance Note at paragraph 4.3 and in Appendix 1.</p>

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<p>12. Parish and Town Councils should be warned that guidelines for these documents are prone to change and that they must be able to react to that</p>	<p>A Guidance Notice will be drafted for use by Parish Councils, which highlights all guidance that must be followed.</p> <p>This point related to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, which is a national requirement, not a local requirement.</p> <p>The District Council's guidance note can be updated when any guidelines change.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note addresses accessibility (section 8) including a reference that guidelines can change.</p> <p>The note will be updated as and when necessary.</p>
<p>13. Parish and Town Councils would like an indication at the beginning of the process as to how long it is expected to last.</p>	<p>A Guidance Notice will be drafted for use by Parish or Town Councils, which included a clear flow chart outlining tasks which need to be undertaken.</p> <p>While it can provide some indication how long they are likely to take and the order in which they should be tackled, it will be very much dependant on how the process is resourced by the Parish or Town Council, and their consultant.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note addresses this point at section 5 and Appendix 1.</p>

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14. Parish and Town Councils would like clarity in terms of likely costs.	<p>The District Council is unable to provide any information on this.</p> <p>Parish and Town Councils could talk to other parishes that have already commissioned consultant to draft their CAAs for more guidance on this point.</p>	<p>The Guidance Note confirms at paragraph 3.3 that the District Council cannot indicate likely costs.</p>