

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS FOR KINGTON AND PEMBRIDGE

Report By: Conservation Manager

1 Wards Affected

Kington Town and Pembridge and Lyonshall with Titley.

2 Purpose

To recommend draft conservation area appraisals for Kington and Pembridge to the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) for initial consultation with relevant parties. .

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 Minor costs for printing and publicity to be met from existing budgets.

4 Background

- 4.1 Planning Committee, 21st April 2006, recommended a programme for the preparation of character appraisals and management proposals for 16 conservation areas. Four appraisals remain to be completed and two of these are presented in this report.
- 4.2 These latest appraisals cover Kington and Pembridge Conservation Areas. The major part of these documents comprises a factual assessment of the special architectural and historic character and appearance of each conservation area, together with their setting. The form and content of the appraisals follows guidance recommended by English Heritage and endorsed by the Government.
- 4.3 Only areas that have special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which the Council wishes to preserve or enhance should be designated as conservation areas. Criteria forming the basis for determining such are set out in UDP policy HBA5. The two appraisals presented in this report have reviewed the areas within and surrounding the current boundaries to consider whether parts might be either excluded or included through boundary changes.
- 4.4 The implications of designation are that the Council is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of the conservation area when determining planning applications. Applications have to be advertised and the Council must take account of material comments received. Conservation area consent for the demolition of buildings is required and additional planning controls apply which would normally be permitted in other areas. These primarily relate to the size of freestanding buildings that require planning permission, the size of extensions the type of external cladding, insertion of dormer windows and satellite dishes. Proposed

work on all trees require prior notice to the Council to enable them to consider the desirability of serving a tree preservation order.

4.5 Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) will be asked to confirm the appraisal documents including issues. It is intended that consultation upon the draft appraisals and issues will be undertaken although formal comments will be sought at a later stage when management proposals have been developed. The final document for adoption will be prepared for Council approval having regard to all material comments being taken into account.

4.6 The issues identified for these two conservation areas at this stage fall into three categories:

- Features such as non-listed buildings that significantly contribute to the area because of their local architectural or historic interest.
- Features which detract from the special interest of the area such as
 - i. Historic buildings in poor condition building.
 - ii. Inappropriate alterations to historic buildings such as modern windows.
 - iii. Modern buildings that do not relate to the character of the area.
 - iv. Open gaps where street enclosure is desirable.
 - v. Untidy land.
 - vi. Street clutter and signage.
- Changes to the conservation area boundaries
 - i. To include areas that are considered to contribute to the special historic or architectural character of the area
 - ii. Exclusion of significant areas relating to buildings, features and landscape that are considered to detract from the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
 - iii. Rationalisation of boundaries so that they relate to defined edges of property curtilages, fields boundaries roads and lanes or other notable features.

4.7. The full detailed text for each conservation area is included in Appendices to this report and the principal features are summarised below. A selection of diagrammatic plans will be displayed at the committee meeting.

Kington Conservation Area

4.8 Kington Conservation Area was designated in 1969. Its special architectural and historic significance is based upon its historic development and the town dates back to the 12th century although the planned borough around the beginning of the 13th century in the area where the current town is. The medieval period is largely responsible for its oldest buildings but during the 18th century many earlier timber-framed structures were refronted, encased or replaced by Classically-inspired Georgian buildings. Today the essential character of the conservation area is that of a small, historic market town. Unique features of Kington conservation area are the town centre boundary

walls that delineate lanes, which are an important element of the medieval town plan.

4.9 Eight character areas have been defined within and adjoining the conservation area. These include the Town Centre, River Meadows and Church Hill and Crooked Well.

4.10 Kington has an extensive list of positive areas and features that contribute to its historic and architectural character. These include:

- Its many listed buildings to which a further 16 unlisted buildings of local interest might be added, e.g. The Old Armoury, Headbrook. A further 7 buildings currently outside the Conservation Area also contribute to its setting, e.g. Turnpike cottage, Headbrook.
- Areas of open space ranging from St Mary's churchyard to the Place de Marine.
- Landscape features, in particular tree cover, some of which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders.
- A number of important views and vistas.
- Particular public realm features of which the sandstone rubble walls are especially notable.

4.11 The Conservation area also contains areas that detract from its character and these are identified. In addition it possesses a number of important buildings and features that are at risk or vulnerable because of their condition.

4.12 Some boundary changes are suggested:

Proposed Inclusions

- Broken Bank including Mill House.
- Area on the north-east side of Montfort Road containing Mountford House, and 7, 8 and 9 The Wych, Church Road,
- Crooked Well area.
- Victoria Road (north side).
- Area on the south side of the conservation area containing Townsend Cottage, Headbrook, nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 Kingswood Road.

Possible Exclusions

Neutral or intrusive areas that do not contribute to, or, detract from, the character of the conservation area;

- Oak Plock and School Close: residential developments.
- Crabtree Road: sheltered housing development, supermarket and car park.
- Areas of open landscape in River Meadows, including the Recreation Ground, the football ground and the touring caravan park (NB recreational open spaces protected from development, Herefordshire UDP, Policy RST4).

Pembridge Conservation Area

- 4.13 Pembridge Conservation Area was designated in 1974. Its special architectural and historic significance stems from its origins as a small post-medieval market town. Although the economic role of the market had declined by the end of the 17th Century, the contemporary village retains many of its earlier medieval features. In the northwestern part of the conservation area, the 19th Century landscape park at Byletts adds a further dimension. A small area on the River Arrow floodplain is also included. The general character of Pembridge Conservation Area is that of a small post-medieval market town. Timber structures of post-medieval date, including the Market Hall, and brick buildings of Georgian and Victorian architectural styles contribute to the character of the conservation area. During the late 20th/early 21st Century, new residential developments have been undertaken on cul-de-sacs on the fringes of the settlement and on infill and backland sites within the settlement. However the plan-form of the medieval borough, including the market place and the burgage plots, earthworks on the site of the castle, and a large number of timber-framed hall houses, dating from at least the 15th Century, have been preserved.
- 4.14 The four particular parts of the village that make a significant contribution to the conservation area are highlighted in the appraisal. In addition 19 unlisted buildings of local interest have been highlighted as making a positive contribution to its character in addition to existing Listed Buildings. Some 7 specific features, including items of street furniture, are highlighted as important. Of particular note are the raised footpaths together with the traditional materials, such as cobbles and granite kerbstones, used in a number of locations.
- 4.15 Detractors in the form of late 20th/early 21st century new residential developments have been undertaken on cul-de-sacs on the fringes of the settlement and on infill and backland sites within the settlement.
- 4.16 Boundary changes that are suggested are:

Proposed Inclusions

- In the north-western part of the conservation area: a small part of Byletts 19th Century landscape park.

Proposed Exclusions

Neutral or intrusive areas that detract from the character of the conservation area and changes to align the conservation area with recognisable features such as field boundaries, roads, lanes or public footpaths have been identified. Four areas that might be excluded from the present Conservation Area are suggested and include:

- An area of landscape west of Manly Lane to the south-west (agricultural use).
- 20th century residential development at Bearwood Lane, Court Meadow, Manley Crescent, and an area of landscape south of the settlement boundary (agricultural use).
- Areas of 20th century residential development at East Street and Parson's Walk, and areas of landscape south-east and east of the settlement boundary (agricultural use).

- The residential site at Troutbeck north of the public footpath.

4.17 The following issues were noted as having a harmful impact on the historic character and appearance of the conservation area

- Traffic: The A44 major road passes through the centre of the village and hence large and heavy goods traffic that must travel along this route is major issue for the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area's character and its historic fabric.
- Signage: At several locations, clusters of traffic signs detract from the character of the conservation area
- Development pressures: Development within the settlement, particularly on infill and backland sites, could erode the historic plan-form of the medieval settlement leading to a significant loss of character.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT The Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) be requested to approve these appraisals and the issues raised in association with them for consultation with interested parties.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Report to Planning Committee dated 21st April 2006 entitled 'Programme for the Review of Conservation Areas'
- Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals – English heritage et al.