

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING,  
INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Decision Made: 8 December 2023

**Marden Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan**

**Issue for Decision**

To seek approval of the Marden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan documents for public consultation purposes. The proposed Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (known as CAAMP) recognises and summarises the significance and character of Marden and provides a framework system to ensure that this character is protected or enhanced.

**Decision Made**

That

1. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Marden Conservation Area, attached at appendix 1 to the report, be approved for public consultation; and
  
2. Delegated powers be given to the Head of Development Management to undertake the necessary statutory requirements to undertake public consultation for the Marden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

**Reasons for Decision**

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local authorities to review their conservation areas from time to time to consider whether they should be amended, are still worthy of being designated and the possibility of revising their boundaries and to identify changes and pressures which may affect the original reasons for their designation. In order that informed decisions can be made on planning applications it is important to identify the special character of conservation areas which are proposed for preservation and enhancement. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan allows for an informed decision to be made by recognising the character of the Conservation Area and providing a framework of actions.

The Management Plan would set out a framework for conserving, enhancing, and managing development in the Marden Conservation Area to ensure that it retains its special qualities as required by the Conservation Area designation under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A new Plan would fulfil the Council's duty to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

The Marden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan would provide a

stronger base for development management decisions in resisting inappropriate developments. The proposed extension to the Marden Conservation Area was considered as part of the regular review of the conservation area boundary which was undertaken with the conservation area appraisal. Marden was first designated in September 1977 and the boundary had not been reviewed since that time. The records relating to the designation are no longer available. The Appraisal states that the conservation area boundary is still relevant in the most part as it draws a clear line around the appropriate area which is compact and contained.

The first part of the document, the appraisal, identifies the key elements which combine to produce the special historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area and considers how they interact and impact upon one another and explains how the area has developed into their current form. It seeks to identify pressures and developments which threaten the special character of the Conservation Area, and sites and features which detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The clear understanding of the Area's qualities provided in the appraisal offers information to guide future policies and improvements as well as providing a framework against which decisions on individual planning proposals may be assessed. This is further elaborated upon, in the second part of the document: the management plan.

Marden Conservation Area consists of three different character areas, High Street, Church Green and Pattenden Lane. The High Street is the historic core of the village with a range of buildings of different building types including Wealden Hall Houses, Victorian terraces and detached buildings. The Church Green is centred around the Church of St Michael and All Angels which is an important local landmark and community facility. Pattenden Lane comprises a mix of detached and terraced properties of traditional vernacular materials including brick built and weatherboarded properties dating from the between the 18th-20th century and sited on irregular plots. The variety of architectural styles, materials and built form contribute to the special character of the conservation area.

The Appraisal states that the conservation area boundary is still relevant in the most part as it draws a clear line around the appropriate area which is compact and contained. Parish councillors have requested consideration is given to extend the boundary of the conservation area to include a group of Victorian terraces opposite Jewel Grove. Careful consideration has been given to this request, but due to the position of the Victorian buildings, the separation distance between the boundary of the conservation area and the buildings, and the modern development in-between it is considered they are not suitable for inclusion in the Conservation Area. However, they will be afforded protection on the local list. This would help ensure they are afforded protection and will ensure they are a material consideration in the planning process.

Resulting from the findings of the appraisal, the management plan contains proposals to preserve or enhance Marden Conservation Area. The document includes the policy background to the management plan, principles for development control, and, where appropriate, suggested boundary alterations. It also contains information on review and good practice procedures.

The Marden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) has been written in accordance with guidelines set down by Historic England and the National Planning Policy Framework (2023). The consultation will include the

following bodies and individuals:

- a) Historic England
- b) Kent County Council Heritage Unit
- c) Ward Members
- d) Marden Parish Council
- e) Any other relevant organizations with an interest in Marden

In addition, copies will be placed on the Borough Council's website and in the local library. A formal notice will be published in the London Gazette and a local newspaper (KM), as per the Planning Act 1990 requirements under section 70(8) and there will also be a press release. This should ensure that the combined appraisal and management plan documents are brought to the attention of the local public.

The matter was considered by the Planning Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee on 7 December 2023, with support expressed for the report recommendations.

### **Alternatives considered and why rejected**

That the recommendations are not approved.

This option was rejected, as support was expressed for the Marden Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan attached at appendix 1 to the report, with the relevant Ward Members consulted. If not approved there is a risk that Maidstone Borough Council are failing to comply with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990.

### **Background Papers**

None.

I have read and approved the above decision for the reasons (including possible alternative options rejected) as set out above.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor Paul Cooper, Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure  
and Economic Development

Full details of both the report for the decision taken above and any consideration by the relevant Policy Advisory Committee can be found at the following area of the [website](#)

Call-In: Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call-in form signed by any three Members to the Proper Officer by: **5pm on Monday 18 December 2023.**