

# Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

11 April 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

**Yes**

## Boughton Monchelsea and Linton Conservation Areas

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Deanne Cunningham, Team Leader (Heritage, Landscape and Design)
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton; Coxheath and Hunton

### **This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. To approve a Conservation Area Management Plan for the three conservation areas in Boughton Monchelsea
2. That the Head of Planning and Development be given delegated authority to make the decision to effect proposed boundary alterations to Linton Conservation Area following consultation with affected bodies and landowners

### **This report relates to the following corporate priorities:**

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – by providing advice on the management of conservation areas to ensure that their historic and aesthetic qualities are preserved and by extending the areas of conservation areas to provide wider protection

### **Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	11/04/2017

# **Boughton Monchelsea and Linton Conservation Areas**

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To consider and approve a Management Plan for the three conservation areas in Boughton Monchelsea.
  - 1.2 To consider a report on the proposed boundary alterations to Linton Conservation Area and agree its recommendations. To authorise consultations with affected landowners/ interested bodies in areas affected by the proposed changes with a view to formal designation of the amended boundary.
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## **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council engaged consultants to produce two separate pieces of work:
    - A Management Plan for three Conservation Areas in Boughton Monchelsea
    - A detailed examination of the areas identified in the approved Management Plan for Linton Conservation Area for inclusion in an expanded boundary, with recommendations where changes would be justified.
  - 2.2 The three Conservation Areas within Boughton Monchelsea are The Green, The Quarries and Cock Street. Conservation Area Appraisals were approved for these in 2008/ 2009.
  - 2.3 The Conservation Area in Linton has an appraisal approved in 2008 and a Conservation Area Management Plan approved in 2010. The Management Plan identified various areas to be further investigated for the possibility of inclusion within the Conservation Area.
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## **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 If neither of the recommendations made under the preferred option were accepted, the existing status quo in relation to these conservation areas would remain.
- 3.2 In the case of the Boughton Monchelsea Conservation Areas they would still have the benefit of the approved Conservation Area Appraisals. However, the Management Plan, if approved, would set out a framework for conserving, enhancing and managing development in the conservation areas to ensure that they retain their special qualities that justified their designation. As such it would help fulfil the Council's duty under Section 71

of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Failure to approve the Management Plan would mean that this duty was not observed. The Management Plan would provide a stronger base for development management decisions in resisting inappropriate developments.

- 3.3 In the case of Linton, failure to agree the extensions proposed would mean that areas essential to the character of the conservation area because of their connection and interaction with it would remain for the most part with a lesser degree of protection than the core of the village which already enjoys conservation area protection.
  - 3.4 For these reasons it is recommended that the preferred option set out below should be the only option.
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#### **4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### Boughton Monchelsea Conservation Area Management Plan

- 4.1 The Management Plan produced by the Council's consultants covers all three conservation areas in Boughton Monchelsea (appendix I). It identifies key issues adversely affecting the special character of the conservation areas and identifies key opportunities for enhancement. Guidelines are suggested for dealing with development proposals and a framework for design standards for both new buildings and the alteration or extension of existing buildings is set out. These would prove most useful in assessing planning proposals within the conservation areas.
- 4.2 The Management Plan identifies as one of the key issues adversely affecting special character as the cumulative impact of minor alterations to non-listed residential buildings which currently fall outside planning control. It proposes that this should be addressed by the making of an Article 4 Direction to bring such alterations within planning control. If this action were to be pursued it would require additional resources and therefore this area of work is not included as part of the recommendation of this report.
- 4.3 The Management Plan also examines various areas to see whether they would be worthy of inclusion within the conservation areas, subject to further study. Some of these were intimated in the Conservation Area Appraisals and others have been suggested by the Parish Council. Brief details of the areas looked at are set out below.
- 4.4 The Green Conservation Area  
A number of possible boundary alterations were suggested for investigation in the Conservation Area Appraisal (appendix III):-
  - i) Cart Lodge Oast – this property forms part of a larger building at the South West corner of the conservation area. Currently the conservation area boundary cuts through this building and it is recommended that this anomalous situation be addressed by

adjusting the boundary of the conservation area to include the whole building. At the same time it is proposed that the boundary eastwards from here be adjusted to follow the centre line of the road rather than the front boundaries of properties on its northern side.

- ii) The Albion Public House – it is concluded that this building, which is of later 19<sup>th</sup> Century date, should not be included.
- iii) Church Street – although this contains some altered early 19<sup>th</sup> Century cottages it is considered that it has no consistent character and includes a number of buildings which do not make any positive contribution to character. For these reasons it is not considered to reach the standard required for conservation area designation.

#### 4.5 The Quarries Conservation Area

A number of boundary changes were suggested in the Conservation Area Appraisal with others suggested by the Parish Council (appendix IV):-

- i) Land East of Beresford Cottage – a new house built on this plot is dissected by the current conservation area boundary. The Management Plan suggests that this should be re-aligned to either follow the boundary line between the new house and Beresford Cottage or to include the whole plot of the new house.
- ii) Land West of Harts House – the ponds on this land are part of the historic core and it is suggested that the conservation area be extended to encompass them and Wood Cottage.
- iii) Forge Bungalows – these altered 19<sup>th</sup> Century single storey buildings could be considered for inclusion.
- iv) An eastward extension along The Quarries is not recommended for inclusion as there is no coherence to the development, much of which is mid/late 20<sup>th</sup> Century ribbon development.
- v) Rock House – this substantial early Victorian house with its impressive ragstone boundary wall to the road is suggested for inclusion.
- vi) Boughton Quarry Camp – this Iron Age settlement is already protected to a greater degree by its Scheduling as an Ancient Monument and it is inappropriate to protect open land/ woodland by way of conservation area designation.

#### 4.6 Cock Street Conservation Area

No extensions or amendments to the boundary are suggested.

- 4.7 The Management Plan has been soundly prepared in accordance with best practice advice and it is therefore considered that it should be approved.

#### Linton Conservation Area Boundary Study

- 4.8 The Linton Conservation Area Appraisal was approved in 2008 and the various changes be made to the conservation area boundary subject to further study and survey.

- 4.9 The consultants' report examines in a high level of detail the areas suggested for examination in the Management Plan (appendix V). The findings for each of these are summarised below.
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- 4.10 The major possible addition concerns Linton Park. This contains the Grade I listed country house and numerous other listed buildings and structures. The park itself is included on the national Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and is thus a designated heritage asset; however, this status does not confer any statutory protection. The report analyses the history of the development of the park in detail and concludes that the mansion and designed landscape are most significant as a whole, but that numerous features/ buildings within it (not all listed) have intrinsic merit. It further concludes that the house and park are important contributors to the significance of Linton, which is essentially an estate village, particularly because of the visual linkages between them. For this reason it is suggested that the park should be included within the conservation area, although other estate buildings outside the park, along Heath Road, should be excluded.
- 4.11 An attractive and visually prominent group of buildings on the Eastern side of Loddington Lane comprising Loddington House, Loddington Cottage, The Stables and Loddington Oast are considered but not felt to have a strong enough architectural or historic connection with Linton Park or village to merit inclusion.
- 4.12 Wheelers Lane runs West from the bottom of Linton Hill. Although 1-4 Redwall Cottages are late examples of estate cottages and The White House of 1938-40 is an interesting house designed by an architect of note (some of whose buildings are listed), overall development along the lane is found to be architecturally and historically unremarkable and therefore not suitable for inclusion within the conservation area.
- 4.13 Vicarage Field lies to the West side of Linton Hill where it contributes to the character of the conservation area by providing open views to the West. The present boundary is arbitrary, running through the middle of the field so that only the Eastern half falls within the conservation area. There is no visual marker of the conservation area boundary. It is therefore recommended that the boundary be shifted westwards to incorporate the entire field and relate to property boundaries on the ground.
- 4.14 The Old Forge, Linton Hill. This is an altered early 19<sup>th</sup> Century building but still recognisable as the forge building. It is the first building in the historic core of the village when approaching from the North and has historic significance. For these reasons it is suggested for inclusion.
- 4.15 Various other minor boundary changes are suggested to the West of Linton Hill which would relate better to identifiable property boundaries and enclosures (appendix VI).
- 4.16 The consultant's report is considered to be thorough and well researched and it has reached its conclusions for sound reasons. It is therefore recommended that authorisation is given for a consultation exercise with all relevant landowners/ interested bodies in areas affected by the proposed changes and that delegated authority be given to the Head of

Planning and Development to make the final decision on designation of the amended boundary following the consultation.

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## **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 Both reports have been the subject of consultation with the relevant parish councils. Responses have been fed back to the consultants and the reports amended where appropriate.
- 5.2 Both Parish Councils are supportive of the reports.
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## **6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 6.1 In the case of the Boughton Monchelsea Management Plan no further action will be necessary if it is approved beyond making it available on the Council's website.
- 6.2 The recommended Management Plan actions to extend the boundaries of The Green and The Quarries Conservation areas will be subject to staff resources. There is no budget allocation for this work to be outsourced. The work will be profiled within the service plan for Heritage, Landscape and Design (HLD) for September 2017/18, enabling it to become a key priority for delivery of objectives.
- 6.3 If the recommendations for extending the Linton Conservation Area are agreed, the next stage will be to carry out an extensive public consultation exercise within those areas proposed for inclusion together with other interested bodies such as Historic England.
- 6.4 Responses to these consultations would be reported back to the Head of Planning and Development with a recommendation to designate or not. If the recommendation is agreed then the designation would have to be advertised in the local press and the London Gazette. There would be no need to seek approval from any higher body.
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## **7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The provision of conservation area management plans and any resulting proposed boundary changes contribute to the delivery of the Council's priority of keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development

<b>Risk Management</b>	There are no specific impacts or issues	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
<b>Financial</b>	<p>There will be minor costs of approximately £1,500 to £2,000 in relation to the proposed adoption of a revised Conservation Area boundary in Linton but these can be absorbed within 2017/18 budgets.</p> <p>Whilst there is no budget for the work to extend Boughton Monchelsea Conservation Area boundaries it can be profiled within the Service Plan for Heritage, Landscape and Design in 2017/18.</p>	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development and & Mark Green, Section 151 Officer
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>The completion of the recommendations of these studies is dependent upon the appointment of a replacement full time Principal Conservation Officer following the Planning Transformation Review.</p> <p>Options for community involvement will be explored to help progress the proposed extension of Boughton Monchelsea Conservation Area boundaries.</p>	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
<b>Legal</b>	There are no specific impacts or issues	Estelle Culligan, Interim Head of Legal Parentership
<b>Equality Impact Needs Assessment</b>	There are no specific impacts or issues	Anna Collier, Policy & Information Manager
<b>Environmental/Sustainable Development</b>	The recommendations of this report help fulfil the Council's duty under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation areas) Act 1990	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
<b>Community Safety</b>	There are no specific impacts or	Rob Jarman,

	issues	Head of Planning & Development
<b>Human Rights Act</b>	There are no specific impacts or issues	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
<b>Procurement</b>	All relevant regulation and procedure rules were met in appointing a consultant heritage specialist to undertake this work	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development & Mark Green, Section 151 Officer
<b>Asset Management</b>	There are no specific impacts or issues	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development

## 8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Boughton Monchelsea Conservation Areas Management Plan Report- Cock Street, The Green and The Quarries,
- Appendix II: Boughton Monchelsea Conservation Area Photographs
- Appendix III: Boughton Monchelsea The Green- Proposed Boundary Alteration Plan
- Appendix IV: Boughton Monchelsea The Quarries- Proposed Boundary Alterations Plan
- Appendix V: Linton Conservation Area – Proposed Boundary Alterations Report
- Appendix VI: Linton Conservation Area- Proposed Boundary Alterations Plan

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## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None