

Report to	<b>Planning Committee</b>
Date	<b>14 March, 2013</b>
By	<b>Director of Planning</b>
Title of Report	<b>Petworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP)</b>
Purpose of Report	<b>To approve a draft of the Petworth CAAMP for public consultation purposes</b>

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**Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1) Approve the consultation draft of the Petworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan attached at Appendix 1.**
  - 2) Note proposed extensions to the Petworth Conservation Area as shown on the proposal map, attached at Appendix 2.**
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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The consultation draft of the Petworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been prepared in-house by the SDNPA historic buildings officer and is the first of these documents to be presented in full SDNPA format. It is intended to replace a previous appraisal of 1999, formally adopted by Chichester District Council in 2000. The text is attached to this Agenda Item as **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 The appraisal will satisfy the statutory obligation to periodically review conservation areas, placed on Local Planning Authorities by Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The document formulates recommendations for preservation and enhancement within a formal Management Plan.
- 1.3 These recommendations propose modest extensions to the boundary of the Conservation Area to include a small number of additional properties to the south of the town centre and also at the northern tip. The Analysis Map, attached as **Appendix 2** denotes the areas in question, outlined in red.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 As Local Planning Authority, SDNPA has responsibility for policy matters, including conservation area designation and review. A rolling programme of Conservation Area Appraisals is now underway, giving some priority to the larger settlements in its early stages.
- 2.2 The new document for Petworth identifies four distinct character areas. The most obvious of these relates to the very marked division between the historic town and the great house and its park. Within the town, the ecclesiastical core, the medieval planned town and the early suburban ribbons stretching to the north and east are also defined. The limited proposals for boundary extension are proposed and explained below.
- 2.3 Conservation Areas are a local designation. In previous guidance, Central Government has not sought to fetter the judgement of Local Planning Authorities to assess potential extensions to conservation areas from a local perspective, as they think fit. However, the National Planning Policy Framework contains the following paragraph, 127:

*“When considering the designation of conservation areas, Local Planning Authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural and historic interest, and that*

*the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.”*

The current proposals for extension have been considered against this test and are thought to comply with it.

- 2.4 The recommended extensions to the Conservation Area would include:
- Laundry Cottage on Horsham Road and 267(j, k, l and m) Leconfield Estate
  - The curtilage of Lund House, south of the Police Station
  - 350c/f, Leconfield Estate, in Cherry Orchard Lane
  - Unifying the curtilage of Augustus Brandt Antiques within the Conservation Area
  - Most of the southern end of Grove Street, as far as New Grove, including allotments to the east side of the road
- 2.5 Laundry Cottage had an original connection to the former school at the northern tip of Petworth. It is located alongside the town cemetery, behind an imposing stone boundary wall on Horsham Road. The estate cottages are a terrace of four vernacular revival cottages of the earlier Twentieth Century.
- 2.6 Lund House is a Victorian building, originally named Belle Vue House. Like the Police Station, immediately to the north, it was built within the original curtilage of the former House of Correction, demolished in the later Nineteenth Century. The conservation area boundary should probably reflect this fact, but does not at present.
- 2.7 The properties on Cherry Orchard Lane are a pair of semi-detached estate cottages of the earlier Twentieth Century in a vernacular revival style. They are of high design quality and the reasons for their exclusion from the conservation area, hitherto, are not obvious.
- 2.8 Small extensions are proposed at the junction of the A286 with Midhurst Road. The current boundary runs across the curtilage of Augustus Brandt Antiques, excluding the southern-most building on the site, which has some historic value. Despite a lack of defining boundary treatments, this site does form a gateway of sorts, marking the approach to the historic town core.
- 2.9 The only significant extension is proposed for Grove Road. While this road has an ‘edge of town’ character along most of its length, more diffuse than the historic ribbon along Grove Street, it adopts a ‘gateway’ role as it nears the historic town. The northern end of the lane, around New Grove, is marked by good trees and continuous walled boundary treatments and this strongly unifying character element is felt to justify a localised extension in this vicinity.

### **3. Other Considerations**

- 3.1 An extremely high proportion of the individual buildings within Petworth Conservation Area are listed. Within the historic core of the medieval town, many of the unlisted buildings are in commercial use. Therefore, permitted development rights enjoyed by the householders of unlisted dwellings do not pose as great a threat to the character of this conservation area as many others.
- 3.2 However, it could be considered that a limited and strictly focussed Article 4 Direction may be justified to cover a small number of dwellings of townscape merit, identified on the proposals map. Additional controls of this nature would warrant a careful and meaningful consultation exercise with householders.
- 3.3 The proposed extensions to the Conservation Area should not be seen as a measure that would necessarily block future development proposals. They would, however, offer greater control over aspects of development that may affect the special interest, character and appearance of the locations in question.
- 3.4 The consultation procedure involves the publication of notices, the direct notification of owners affected by a boundary change, and the consideration of any views received.

### **4. Resources**

4.1 It is proposed to undertake the consultation procedure in-house, within the existing resources of the Planning Directorate.

## **5. Conclusions**

5.1 The new Character Appraisal and Management Plan will update existing guidance written and adopted by Chichester District Council thirteen years ago.

5.2 The current document has a firm focus on the historic town centre and it is hoped that the new Appraisal will offer a slightly broader perspective, particularly concerning the complex history of the town and its relationship to the development of the house and park.

5.3 The small areas proposed as extensions do not differ very markedly from the adjacent character of the current conservation area. These possible extensions are considered to be of sufficient historic interest to justify conservation area designation.

5.4 The proposed extension into the northern end of Grove Road identifies an historic back lane which has long formed an interface between town and country. It has good boundary features and some trees of amenity value. It has high environmental and historic value.

5.5 Designation of a conservation area need not frustrate subsequent development, but would impose a quality threshold for design. Given the existence of sites with some development potential within the proposed boundary extension, this may be considered an additional benefit of designation.

## **6. Risk management**

6.1 Physical and environmental risks invoked by the recommendation are not significant.

6.2 Risk: were SDNPA to neglect the timely implementation of proposals arising from Conservation Area appraisal recommendations without good cause, a reputational risk to the National Park Authority could arise.

Mitigation: to ensure that the recommendations within CAAMPS are built into the work programmes for the SDNPA and its partner organisations through the South Downs National Park Management Plan and its action plans.

## **7. Human Rights, Equalities, Health and Safety**

7.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

## **8. External Consultees**

8.1 None.

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Appendices 1 – Petworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan  
2 – Draft Maps for the Petworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal.  
SDNPA Consultees Director of Planning, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer & Senior Solicitor.  
Background Documents Petworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal – CDC – 2000  
Petworth Historic Character Assessment Report – Sussex EUS – 2010  
NPPF - 2012  
Buildings of England – Sussex – Ian Nairn and Sir Nikolaus Pevsner – 1965