

REGULATION AND PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Regulation and Planning Policy Committee of South Norfolk District Council held on Monday 7 November 2022 at 10.30am.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: F Ellis (Chairman), B Duffin, J Halls, S Nuri-Nixon, J Savage and V Thomson

Apologies for Absence: Councillors: P Hardy, W Kemp and T Spruce

Substitute Member: Councillors: R Savage (for T Spruce)

Cabinet Member Present: Councillors: G Minshull and L Neal

Officers in Attendance: The Senior Heritage and Design Officer (C Bennett) and the Democratic Services Officer (J Hammond)

108 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr P Hardy, Cllr W Kemp and Cllr T Spruce, with Cllr R Savage substituting.

109 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

110 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Regulation and Planning Policy Committee held on Friday 23 September 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

111 ADOPTION OF CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS AND BOUNDARY AMENDMENTS FOR BERGH APTON, DITCHINGHAM AND KIMBERLEY CONSERVATION AREAS

The Senior Heritage and Design Officer introduced the report, which presented the amended conservation area boundaries for the Kimberley Conservation Area as well as the conservation area appraisals and

management guidelines for the Bergh Apton, Ditchingham and Kimberley Conservation Areas.

Members were informed that the Council currently had 52 conservation areas. The current programme of conservation area appraisals being undertaken was the first comprehensive review of the conservation areas since their original designations in 1994. It was highlighted that since the original designations, developments had led to a change in the character and appearance of the conservation areas and there had been a change of opinion with regard to what heritage might be considered worthy of preservation.

In response to a question concerning how often the re-appraisals should be carried out, the Senior Heritage and Design Officer explained that guidance from Heritage England stated it was best practice to review the area appraisals every five years, however, the large number of conservation areas within the District and the extensive work involved meant that this was not always possible. He added that the Council's rolling programme of reviewing conservation areas had given priority to those areas where the character and appearance was considered to be at greatest threat from change. As the Council had only two to three small area appraisals to be carried out in the current programme, it was expected that the next programme of appraisals could begin in the next year, dependant of resource within the Team.

The Senior Heritage and Design Officer advised the Committee of the process carried out to review the conservation area appraisals. He explained that in the winter of 2021 officers undertook a walkabout with the Parish Councils to assess the existing boundaries. A one-month consultation then ran from 1 to 31 July 2022. The main changes proposed and altered following the consultation were:

Bergh Apton

No boundary changes had been proposed for Bergh Apton. However, some minor factual corrections were made following the consultation.

One member noted that the boundary at Bergh Apton intersected Bussey Bridge Farm and the Committee was advised that some of the buildings within Bussey Bridge Farm were outside of the Conservation Area, as they had been assessed to be modern farmhouses or newbuild properties.

Ditchingham

The Senior Heritage and Design Officer explained that no boundary changes had been proposed for Ditchingham. The conservation area management guidelines were updated to advise that uPVC windows could be installed, as long they matched the style of the existing windows.

With regard to parking; changes had been made to include the potential for plot parking, subject to sections of the hedgerow being retained. The Parish Council had requested that the guidelines be more specific on how modern needs should be handled and enforcement managed. The Senior Heritage and Design Officer explained that in order for the appraisal to be future proof, changes needed to be considered on a case by case basis.

Kimberley

The Committee were advised of the minor boundary changes proposed. The Senior Heritage and Design Officer explained that the boundaries had been amended in order to avoid intersecting existing gardens. He added that this would provide clarity to residents and officers, especially in terms of tree preservation.

One member highlighted that some development boundaries in the District intersected gardens and queried how the development boundaries could be amended. The Senior Heritage and Design Officer advised the Committee that the Parish Council would need to contact Highways to request a review of the development boundary. He added that the District Council would only intervene or request a change if the current development boundary significantly impacted on the conservation area.

After further discussion, the Committee thanked the Senior Heritage and Design Officer for his interesting and informative report and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To recommend that Cabinet recommends to Council that it:

1. Approve and adopts the proposed changes to the boundary of the Kimberley Conservation Area.
2. Approve and adopts the conservation area appraisals and conservation management guidelines for the conservation areas of Bergh Apton, Ditchingham and Kimberley Conservation Areas.

(The meeting concluded at 11.05 am)

Chairman