
Subject: DRAFT ST MARGARET'S BAY CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Meeting and Date: Cabinet – 7 November 2022

Report of: Alison Cummings, Principal Heritage Officer

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nick Kenton, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Planning

Decision Type: Key Decision

Classification: Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To seek Cabinet approval for a 6-week public consultation on the draft St Margaret's Bay Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

1. Agrees that the draft St Margaret's Bay Conservation Area Character Appraisal, attached at Appendix 1, be published for public consultation for a period of 6 weeks.
 2. Agrees that the Head of Planning and Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Planning, be authorised to make any necessary editorial changes to the appraisal prior to consultation in order to assist with clarity, consistency, explanation and presentation.
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1. Summary

1.1 The Dover District Heritage Strategy acknowledges that most of the District's conservation areas do not have an approved character appraisal, and it recommends that a programme is put into place to address the deficit. A draft conservation area character appraisal for the St Margaret's Bay Conservation Area has been prepared, and Cabinet's agreement is now sought to carry out a formal public consultation on the draft document for a period of 6 weeks.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 There is a requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, for local planning authorities to review their conservation areas, 'from time to time' and to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. A fundamental part of this process is to produce a character appraisal, for each conservation area.

2.2 The Dover District Heritage Strategy highlighted the lack of conservation area character appraisals for the District's conservation areas, and recommended that a programme was set in place to review all of the Districts' conservation areas in line with the duty imposed by the legislation.

- 2.3 The appraisal has been carried out by a consultant with direction by Council officers and funding provided by a recently formed residents group, the St Margaret's Bay Conservation Association.
- 2.4 A conservation area appraisal should consider what features make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the conservation area, thereby identifying opportunities for beneficial change, or the need for further planning control. This information will be helpful to those considering investment in an area and can be used to guide and inform new development. Character appraisals also have a wider application as educational and informative documents for the local community.
- 2.5 The draft appraisal is appended to this report. For the benefit of this report the appraisal is provided as a word document, but for the public consultation it will be presented in PDF format and will include relevant maps and photographs. A hardcopy will be deposited at the St Margaret's-at-Cliffe library as the closest publicly accessible building to St Margaret's Bay.
- 2.6 The appraisal looks at:
- The origins and growth of the area;
 - Reviews the existing boundary of the conservation area;
 - Highlights both positive and negative aspects of its character, and
 - Makes recommendations for its future enhancement.
- 2.7 If the draft appraisal is agreed by Cabinet, public consultation would be undertaken for a period of 6 weeks. The results of the consultation process would then be reported back to Cabinet together with any proposed revisions in order that a final version can be adopted.

3. Identification of Options

- 3.1 That the draft St Margaret's Bay Conservation Area Character Appraisal is agreed for public consultation.
- 3.2 That the draft St Margaret's Bay Conservation Area Character Appraisal is not agreed.

4. Evaluation of Options

- 4.1 The St Margaret's Bay Conservation Area Character Appraisal will be used to identify opportunities for environmental improvements, inform new development and act as an evidence base for the evaluation of new proposals. It would also be used by Planning Inspectors in appeal situations. If the document is not subject to public consultation then little weight can be attributed to it in the planning process.
- 4.2 In view of the above it is recommended that the draft appraisal is agreed for public consultation.

5. Resource Implications

The resource implications are nil.

6. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

6.1 None.

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): 'Accountancy have been consulted and have no further comments. (MR)'

7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.

7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>'

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft St Margaret’s Bay Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Appendix 2 – Map of the conservation area boundary as current

9. Background Papers

The Dover Heritage Strategy (updated 2020)

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