South Northamptonshire Council
Planning Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee
22 March 2017

Review of Upper Boddington

Report of Head of Development Management

This report is public

Purpose of report

For Members to consider the appraisal of Upper Boddington which considers whether Upper Boddington has special architectural or historic interest necessary to justify designation as a conservation area.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To agree that following the appraisal, work to designate Upper Boddington as a conservation area is not pursued as the village does not fulfil the criteria to justify designation.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Following the recent consultation of the Conservation Strategy for South Northamptonshire in 2016, it was identified that conservation areas designation formed a strong element within “preserving what is special” in the district. Conservation area appraisals and reviews have been highlighted as an important way of ensuring that this aspect of policy framework is up to date and robust.

2.2 In 2011 the Heritage Team commenced a review of the district’s then 54 conservation areas. By the end of August 2016, 61 areas of special architectural or historic interest had been designated as conservation areas with 53 of the 54 pre 2011 conservation areas having been reviewed and re-designated with an up to date boundary, appraisal and management plan.

2.3 In addition 8 new conservation areas have been adopted across the District including two significant designations which cover the lengths of the Grand Union and Oxford Canals as they pass through South Northamptonshire.

2.4 The start of 2016/2017 financial year also marked the start of a second phase of work which commenced an assessment of the qualities of the district’s 38 settlements not benefiting from a conservation area.
2.5 The assessment of an undesignated settlement needs to consider statutory legislation in the Planning Act 1990, which states that conservation areas need to be “areas of special architectural and historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.” The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states within its guidance, in paragraph 127, that “When considering the designation of conservation area, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.”

2.6 The criteria for identifying the propriety of the reviews, was subject to four main concerns

- Pressure for development through the Local Plan Part 2a,
- Settlements under challenge from development including HS2 and wind farm developments.

It is important to note that the review process does not automatically guarantee that conservation areas will be designation at any of those settlements.

2.7 An assessment is made following a set of criteria (see Appendix) based on guidance set out in the Historic England’s Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management as well as the Planning (Listed Building Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the guidance in the NPPF. The criteria aims to assess three key elements within a settlement which all contribute to an area’s character.

- Spatial Analysis- considers the relationship between buildings, plan form, scale and massing, as well as views and the impact of vegetation.
- Architectural Analysis- looks at the use of traditional materials, the design and style of properties, the contributions of the buildings and their impact on the character of the area.
- Historical Analysis- looks at the development of the area through Historic Environment Records such as maps, and historical and archaeological archives.

2.8 An assessment of Upper Boddington was undertaken in 2016 as part of this rolling programme of works. This was due to the pressure placed upon it with the upcoming development of HS2.

3.0 Summary of the Assessment of Upper Boddington

3.1 Following the completion of this assessment of Upper Boddington, based on the criteria set out (see Appendix), it is recommended that Upper Boddington, although an attractive rural village does not fulfil the criteria set out under legislation. Therefore, Upper Boddington is not considered to be an area suitable for conservation area designation. The reasons for this recommendation are outlined below:

- Upper Boddington is an attractive rural village; however there is a lack of cohesion within its built environment. The groups of development are individual in terms of their form and detailing which does not help to reinforce a cohesive character within the area.
• There are no linking boundary features to unify the individual clusters; instead it is filled by modern development which, at times, can dominate the streetscape.
• The buildings overall have a simple vernacular style with limited decoration. The buildings are not considered to provide outstanding examples of any particular or age. The properties overall are not considered to be of “special” architectural quality.
• Although Upper Boddington has medieval origins, with the exception of the Church, the majority of the built heritage was constructed between the eighteenth and twentieth century.
• Archaeology is present within the village, some of which is believed to be sections of the former settlement, however this offers little to its current character.
• Finally, Upper Boddington’s most defining feature is the impressive views over the countryside that surrounds it. There are also a number of short picturesque vistas within the village which. Whilst the merit of these views is appreciated, they are not enough to fulfil the necessary criteria of an area of “special architectural or historic interest.”

3.2 Therefore, although Upper Boddington has some historic interest and architectural qualities, these alone are not considered sufficient to warrant the designation of a conservation area.

4.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 The following alternative options have been identified:

Option 1: To agree the recommendations as set out in the report

Option 2: To amend the recommendations

Option 3: Not to agree the recommendations

5.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

5.1 Any expenditure in relation to the conservation area reviews for the villages will be from existing resources.

Comments checked by:
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Legal Implications

5.2 No additional Comments

Comments checked by:
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6.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

Danvers and Wardoun

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

To preserve what is special.
To protect quality of life.
To enhance performance

Lead Councillor

Councillor Roger Clarke
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment

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