

## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

### **EXECUTIVE 10 FEBRUARY 2009**

#### **RESULTS OF CONSULTATION ON ALPHIN BROOK CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

##### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider representations received in relation to the draft Alphin Brook Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) and proposed amendments to the document to be recommended for adoption.
- 1.2 A copy of the proposed document is available in the Member's room.

##### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 17 July 2008, Executive agreed the draft Alphin Brook Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for public consultation. The Council proposed the deletion of large areas from the conservation area that were not considered to meet the tests of special architectural or historic interest. A plan showing this proposal is at Appendix I.
- 2.2 Copies of the document were made available from the Civic Centre and on the Council Website. Every household within the area was sent a copy of the document and a comments form; and a period of six weeks was allowed for comments.
- 2.3 45 written responses were received, out of which 4 were neutral/in favour and 41 were against the proposed boundary amendments.
- 2.4 The main issues raised in the responses received were:
- Boundary amendments are a precursor to further housing development;
  - Boundary amendments are to make it easier for the proposed Park and Ride scheme;
  - Impact of boundary amendments on ecology and wildlife;
  - Proposals contrary to the Exeter Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study, 2007;
  - Original designation of 1991 should not be altered;
  - Hambeer Lane is an historic Ridgeway and should remain within the conservation area.
- 2.6 Following the consultation, officers recommend further alterations be made to the boundary, a plan showing the proposed amendments to the area is attached at Appendix III. In particular, it is no longer proposed to delete areas along the ridge and historic line of Hambeer Lane.

### **3.0 PLANNING MEMBER WORKING GROUP**

- 3.1 Planning Member Working Group (PMWG) considered a report on the results of the public consultation and proposed boundary amendments on 13 January 2009. The five affected Ward Members who are not on PMWG (including the Portfolio holder for Sustainable Development and Transport) and the Chair of Planning Committee attended and spoke on the matter. All opposed proceeding with the proposed changes that remove large areas from the conservation area. There was no consensus among the formal Members of PMWG, some supported the proposed amendments, others favoured leaving the conservation area boundary largely as it is.
- 3.2 The Head of Planning Services considers that the proposed boundary amendments remain appropriate; they have been formulated through the consistent application of the criteria agreed by Executive for boundary reviews. Some authorities have, in the past, used conservation areas as a constraint to development, however, Appeal Inspectors are now likely to more critically analyse whether areas do make any specific contribution to any special character.
- 3.3 If Executive should not accept the recommendation to adopt the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and amended boundary then it will need to make an alternative resolution. Executive may wish to consider an alternative resolution that the Conservation Area be adopted with only one boundary change, the inclusion of the small area of land alongside Cowick Lane (not opposed during the consultation). Executive also needs to make a resolution on the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan document. It could be adopted and published subject to the Head of Planning Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Sustainable Development and Transport, making the necessary amendments to reflect the finally agreed boundary.
- 3.4 The Council will write to everyone who made a representation informing them of the Executive decision when the finalised document is available.

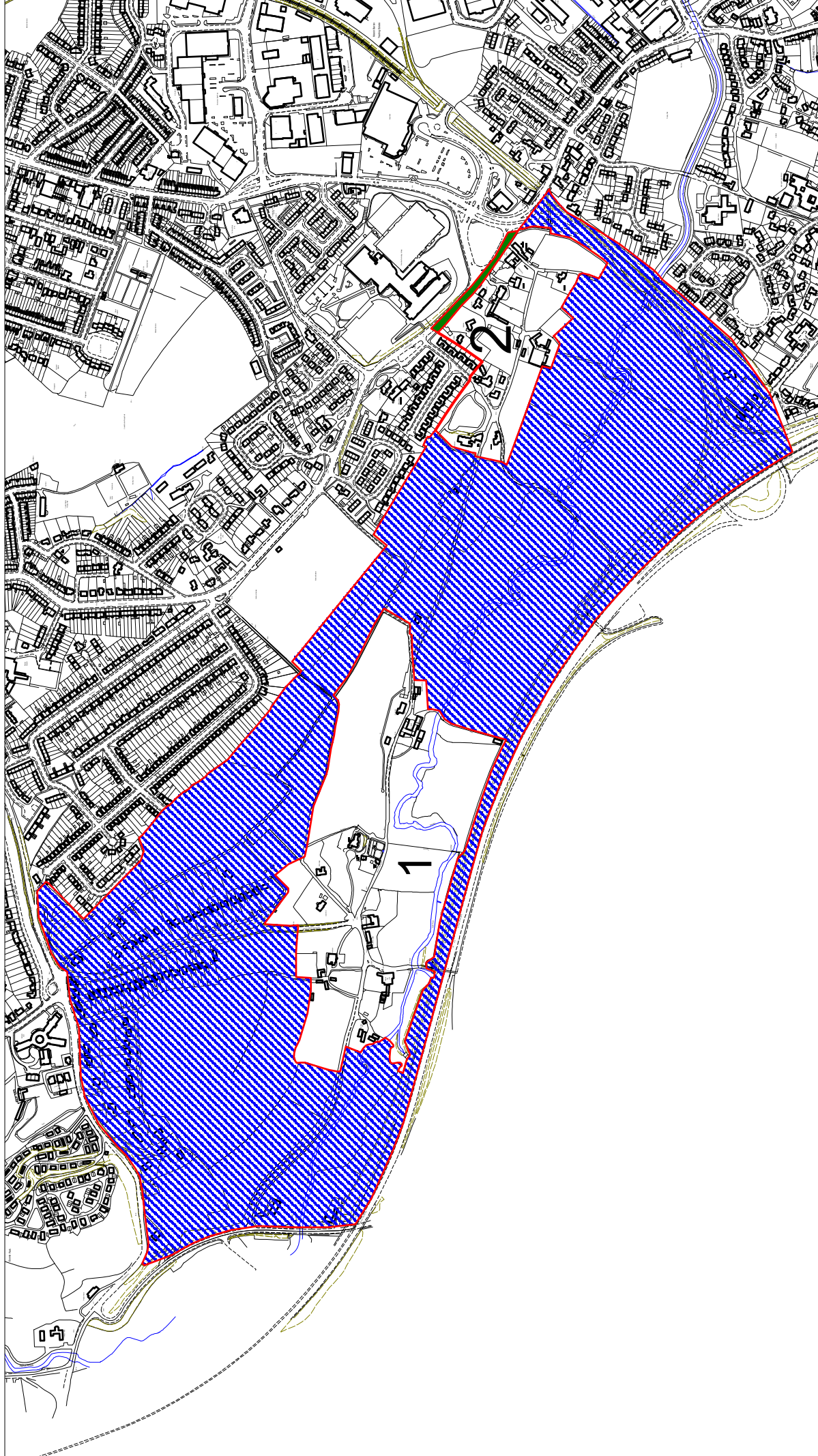
### **4.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 That the amended Alphin Brook Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be adopted and the boundary altered in accordance with the attached plan at Appendix III.

**RICHARD SHORT**  
**HEAD OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL**

### **ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

**Background papers used in compiling this report:**  
None



Scale



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18/03/2008

## Alphin Brook Conservation Area Appendix 1 Draft

 Proposed to be deleted

 Proposed to be included

1 Proposed Twisted Oak Conservation Area

2 Proposed Crabb Lane Conservation Area

## APPENDIX II

### SCHEDULE OF COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING PUBLIC CONSULTATION, ALPHIN BROOK CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PLAN

*Proposed response in italics – because similar issues are raised in many of the comments received, only new issues raised are dealt with in each subsequent response. A full response will be sent to each consultee.*

Name	Comments
1. 1 Little John's Cross	Land should not succumb to pressure to be developed. Why are Alphinbrook motors and car breakers included in smaller area? All old lamp columns should be protected not just the garlanded ones. <i>The land is already designated as part of the Alphington/Whitestone Valley Park and includes a site of Nature Conservation Importance, which together are covered by policies L1 and LS1 – 4 within the Local Plan. There remains a presumption against inappropriate development within such designated areas. Agreed with comment about lamp columns and wording will be amended to reflect this.</i>
2. 5 Little John's Cross Hill	Welcomes the proposed boundary changes and suggests that the previous boundary was drawn too widely. Proposed amended areas focus on the valuable elements. Would like suggestions for replacement of the bollards at Ide Bridge to prevent vehicles using this route.  <i>Agreed. Consideration of the bollards will be given through the Council's programme of environmental enhancement after adoption of the appraisal and any proposals will be subject to consultation.</i>
3. No address (received by email)	What is the proposed zoning of the land proposed to be deleted from the CA? Request information about the proposed Newbury Farm Park and Ride. <i>There is no change to the land designations, it is already designated as part of the Valley Park and includes a site of Nature Conservation Importance, which together are covered by policies L1 and LS1 – 4 within the Local Plan. The Park and Ride is being proposed by Devon County Council and falls outside the scope of this appraisal. DCC contact details sent.</i>
4. Ashfield, Dunsford Road	Welcomes the proposed boundary amendments and suggests that the previous boundary was drawn too widely. The designation is imposing an unnecessary restriction on development. <i>Agreed although the purpose of de-designation is not to allow further development of the land that is already designated as part of the Alphington/Whitestone Valley Park and includes a site of Nature Conservation Importance, which together are covered by policies L1 and LS1 – 4 within the Local Plan. These policies continue to apply.</i>
5.	Believes appraisal is a fore-runner to allowing the area to be

<p>Bindle Lodge, Perridge Close</p>	<p>developed to the detriment of the wildlife. Mention the ECC Exeter Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study, 2007 and concludes the findings of this have been ignored. States that the appraisal would demolish the conservation area and is a result of the Council's greed to get more taxes.</p> <p><i>CA designation does not preclude development. The land is already designated as part of the Alphington/Whitestone Valley Park and includes a site of Nature Conservation Importance, which together are covered by policies L1 and LS1 – 4 within the Local Plan. There remains a presumption against inappropriate development within such designated areas. The Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study found that Zones 30 and 31 (that cover the existing conservation area) are sensitive landscape areas and have limited capacity for housing and employment. The fact of being in a conservation area was noted, along with other reasons for this high sensitivity and the removal of conservation area designation would not change the way in which the Council viewed any future development and there remains a presumption against inappropriate development within sensitive areas. Appraisal follows the format completed and adopted in 17 other areas so far and is part of the wider programme of appraisals. Whether or not a site is developed for commercial purposes has no bearing on Council Tax income.</i></p>
<p>6. Ide View, Perridge Close</p>	<p>Concerned about proposed lifting of conservation area designation, and considers that the underlying reason may be to allow further development in the area. Does not want the park and ride. Refers to the Exeter Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study, 2007 as having been ignored. Considers that the appraisal ignores this work. Objects to lack of sensitivity in document to residents [of Perridge Close]. Corrects spelling of Alphinbrook to Alphin Brook.</p> <p><i>See previous responses. The Park and Ride is being proposed by Devon County Council and falls outside the scope of this appraisal. The appraisal is an objective study of an area in the same format as 17 previous appraisals within Exeter and is not written to cause offence to any groups or individuals. Spelling correction noted.</i></p>
<p>7. Marigolds, Perridge Close</p>	<p>Natural beauty of area acknowledged by local residents and by the appraisal document. Park and Ride scheme will despoil this quality and would open floodgates for further development. Area is part of Green Circle Walk, enjoyed by many.</p> <p><i>See previous responses. The Green Circle Walk will not be affected by the proposed alterations to the conservation area.</i></p>
<p>8. Meadowbank, Perridge Close</p>	<p>Objects to lack of sensitivity in document to residents [of Perridge Close]. Corrects spelling of Alphinbrook to Alphin Brook. States that de-designation is to make it easier for future development to take place and the reason for the proposal is a greed for more council tax. Quotes English Heritage website on conservation areas and surmises that conservation area status is proposed to be lifted to allow the Park and Ride facility. Refers to the Exeter Landscape and Capacity Study, 2007. Concludes that the appraisal takes no account of English Heritage views or the findings</p>

	<p>of the study.</p> <p><i>See previous responses. The appraisal is an objective study of an area in the same format as 17 previous appraisals within Exeter and is not written to cause offence to any groups or individuals. Spelling correction noted.</i></p> <p><i>Appraisal is part of the wider programme of conservation area appraisals. Whether or not a site is developed for commercial purposes has no bearing on Council Tax income. English Heritage policies and guidance, as well as other published guidance sources are followed in the production of this and all other conservation area appraisals.</i></p>
9. Goshawk, Perridge Close	<p>Concerned about the proposed de-designation of the open land to the north of Doctors Walk. States that conservation area designation also takes into account wildlife, geological, landscape and historical features. The area is of great beauty, which would be destroyed by housing development. Refers to findings of Exeter Landscape and Capacity Study, 2007 that notes the need to protect conservation areas. Infill housing would be detrimental to Exeter.</p> <p><i>See previous responses. Areas to remain designated as conservation area have been reconsidered following the public consultation and the ridge line and historic route is no longer proposed to be deleted from the CA. Conservation area designation is primarily about protection of urban areas and the spaces and landscape closely associated with them rather than the protection of open countryside, which is the case at Alphin Brook. The original conservation area boundary was drawn more widely than is recommended by national policy and guidance produced subsequently and therefore through the Council's ongoing appraisal programme it is appropriate to reconsider the efficacy of previous boundaries. There is no suggestion that de-designation will mean an increase in development.</i></p>
10. Ashling, Perridge Close	<p>Quotes from the Planning Committee minutes of 17 June 1991 on the original conservation area designation and concludes that many of the original reasons for designation have been excluded in the draft appraisal. States that there will be a lack of control over the preservation of important features such as walls, trees and some unlisted buildings. Asks what has changed since 1991. Suggests that the proposals represent a reversal of the Council's policy.</p> <p><i>See previous responses. Conservation area designation, unless accompanied by an Article (4) Direction offers no protection over the removal of certain features. Trees can be separately protected by a Tree Preservation Order if appropriate. The proposals do not represent a reversal of Council policy.</i></p>

<p>11. Dunsford Hill House, Dunsford Road</p>	<p>Reiterates any comments from neighbours on Perridge Close and Dunsford Hill. Disagrees with comment that this property has no overall architectural design or character. <i>See previous responses. Reference to the properties in this area as having no overall architectural design or character is a general point about the overall character and appearance of this part of the conservation area and should not be taken to mean that there are no individual buildings of character.</i></p>
<p>12. Solheni, Dunsford Road</p>	<p>Countryside within the conservation area is of high landscape quality and views of this are important when entering Exeter. A30 should have been screened properly when constructed and then noise intrusion would have been less relevant. Horse related activities not detrimental to conservation area. Questions coincidence of park and ride proposals. Green Circle Walk falls within the existing conservation area and would be affected if de-designation led to an increase in development and traffic. <i>Agreed that the landscape and views are important, however conservation area designation is primarily about protection of urban areas and the spaces and landscape closely associated with them rather than the protection of open countryside, which is the case at Alphin Brook. Reference to horse related activities is removed from final draft. The Green Circle Walk will not be affected by the proposed alterations to the conservation area. The removal of conservation area designation would not change the way in which the Council viewed any future development and there remains a presumption against inappropriate development within sensitive areas.</i></p>
<p>13. No address (received by email)</p>	<p>Agrees with the de-designation of fields to the west of Ide House and most of Little John's Cross but disagrees with de-designation of land north and south of Balls Farm Road. Alphin Brook is integral to the landscape setting of the older buildings. Hambeer Lane is an historic feature. No mention made of Clarke's Pond, a natural pool feature within the Alphin Brook in the field to the east of Crabb Lane. Amenity of area could be spoiled by inappropriate development. The garden of The Briars should be included in the amended area as it integral to the house and has specimen trees. <i>See previous responses. The field containing Clark's Pond is proposed for removal from the CA. Proposed amended boundary retains Hambeer Lane within the CA. The boundary has also been amended to include The Briars.</i></p>
<p>14. Little Johns Lodge, Dunsford Road</p>	<p>Does not consider that sufficient justification has been given for the proposed changes to the conservation area designation. Assumes that the reason is to pave the way for future development. <i>See previous responses. Conservation Area designation does not preclude development. The land is already designated as part of the Alphington/Whitestone Valley Park and includes a site of Nature Conservation Importance, which together are covered by policies L1 and LS1 – 4 within the Local Plan. There remains a presumption against inappropriate development within such designated areas.</i></p>

<p>15. Little Briars, Crabb Lane</p>	<p>The draft appraisal has been written to support preordained recommendations rather than being an impartial assessment of the existing conservation area. Notes that the judgement regarding suitability for conservation area designation had previously been made in 1991 and that this appraisal ignores many of the findings of this designation. Argues that many of the features seen as negative were already in place at the time of initial designation. Noise intrusion is a consequence of building the A30 and would be made significantly worse if Park and Ride facility were built. States that the Country Park environment is vital in the overall appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p><i>See previous responses. The appraisal is an objective study of an area in the same format as 17 previous appraisals within Exeter and no views were formed prior to the appraisal taking place.</i></p>
<p>16. 14 Little Johns Cross</p>	<p>Boundary should remain as it is. Proposed alterations will make it easier for developers to obtain planning permission for buildings not in keeping with the area.</p> <p><i>See previous responses</i></p>
<p>17. Oakridge, Little Johns Cross Hill</p>	<p>Past developments cannot justify reduction of protection of conservation area. Quarrylands (top of Hambeer Lane) should be retained within the conservation area. The conservation area is continually under threat from development and some approvals do not take into account the special character of the area. The original designation was made years ago and should be respected.</p> <p><i>See previous responses. Quarrylands and Hambeer Lane are now proposed to be retained within the Conservation Area.</i></p>
<p>18. Little Johns Cross, Dunsford Road</p>	<p>Hambeer Lane is recognised in the appraisal as being an important historic feature but is then excluded. Designation should remain around groups of buildings otherwise their relevance within the landscape is removed. Disagrees with reference to horse related activity as eroding the character of the area. States that the area is a well used and highly regarded open area and refers to the Green Circle Walk. Asks whether the areas to be excluded may be built on without impunity as this would erode historic context of remaining conservation areas. Questions the timing of the appraisal in light of the Park and Ride proposals.</p> <p><i>See previous responses</i></p>
<p>19. Rock Cottage, Balls farm Road</p>	<p>Once the land is de-designated housing/retail development becomes possible, resulting in loss of "green lung" for Exeter. Area has high amenity value which would be lost through development. Suggest small areas that could be deleted but proposes that most of the area should remain designated and makes specific mention of Hambeer Lane. Council should encourage more tree planting, possibly by grant? Park and Ride would be a useful development to reduce congestion.</p> <p><i>See previous responses.</i></p>

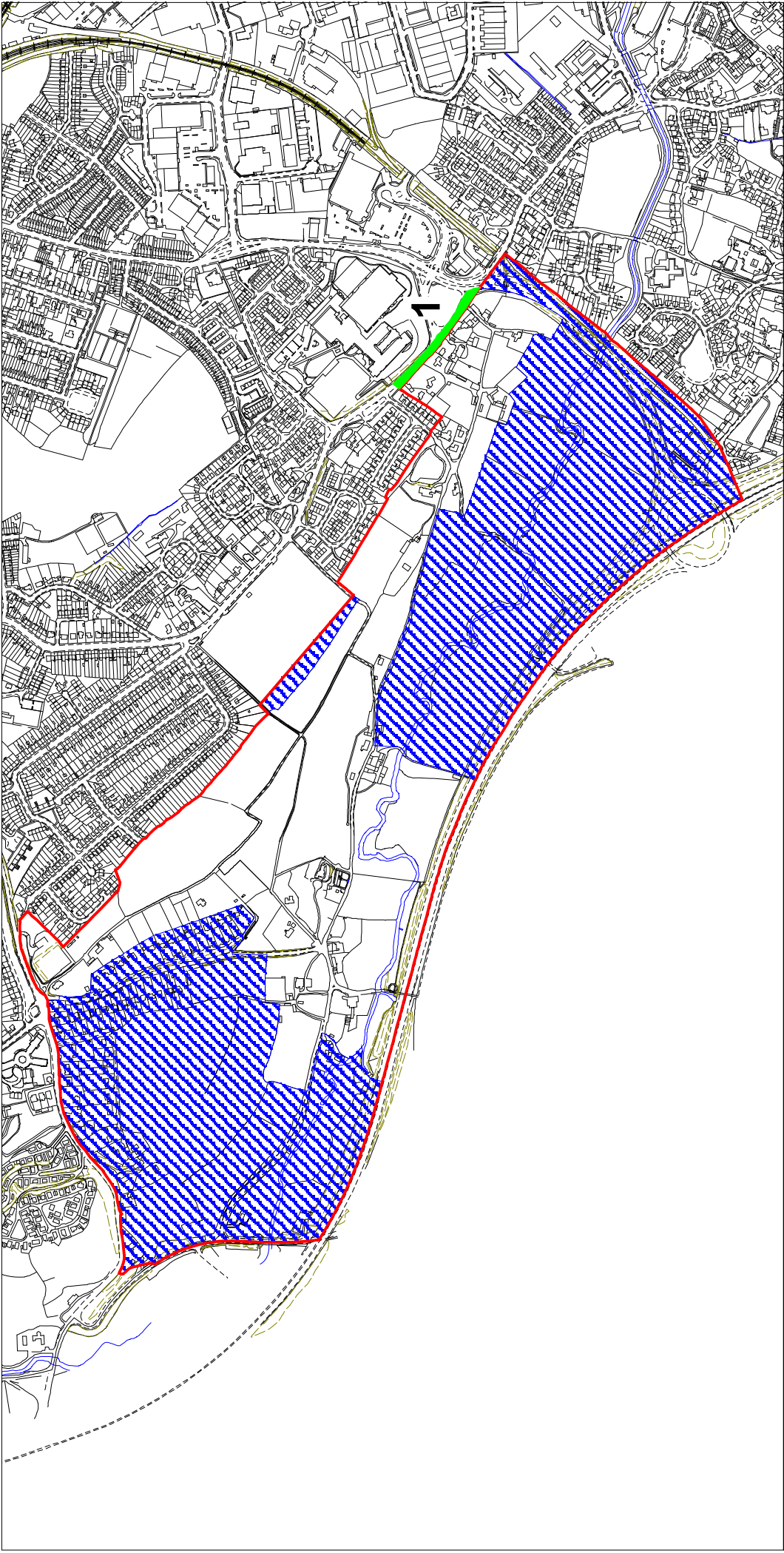



20. Courtyard Cottage, Balls Farm Road	There should be no encroachment on the green area as it is an area of great beauty and a welcoming sight on entering Exeter. The trees serve as a barrier to noise and CO <sub>2</sub> emissions. <i>See previous responses. Natural beauty of area acknowledged by local residents and by the appraisal document.</i>
21. Beechwood, Perridge Close	Exeter Landscape and Capacity Study 2007 recommends the need to protect sensitive landscape areas. Appraisal points out importance of keeping conservation area. Views from the A30 are particularly important. Green corridor is important for wildlife. <i>See previous responses. Views and trees are considered important and there are no recommendations or proposals that will affect these. The importance of the green corridor is recognised through other designations on the land; it is part of the Alphington/Whitestone Valley Park and includes a site of Nature Conservation Importance, which together are covered by policies L1 and LS1 – 4 within the Local Plan. There remains a presumption against inappropriate development within such designated areas.</i>
22. The Crosse House, Balls Farm Road	Proposed boundary alterations would have a detrimental impact on the historic area. The open meadows to the south and Hambeer Lane, an ancient ridge route to the north, set natural boundaries. Views across and into the conservation area from the A30 are important. Interesting mix of buildings should be preserved and area should be retained as a green belt for Exeter. Park and Ride should not be allowed. Area is a showcase of Devon architecture and many of the dates mentioned in the report are conservative. <i>See previous responses. Dates of buildings will be checked and any amendments found to be necessary will be included in the final draft, however dates are of existing buildings and not previous buildings on the same site.</i>
23. Address given but not for publication	Boundary amendments would not more fully reflect the historic area and would dilute and downgrade this green belt area and make way for further development. Report does not refer to the Alphin Brook that gives the area its name. Would not support Article 4 Direction. <i>See previous responses. Article 4 Direction is not being proposed at this time.</i>
24. 39 Cowick Hill	Exeter needs its green spaces to support wildlife. Council should be looking to protect these environments. <i>See previous responses.</i>
25. Woodlands, Balls Farm Road	Boundary should not be amended, area enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Clarks Pond is an important feature and banks of brook should not be turned into concrete. Important that the green belt is protected by conservation regulations. <i>See previous responses.</i>

26. Alphin Cottage Balls Farm Road	Area designated in 1991, why change it now? Areas deleted would be in danger of development. Area well used by walkers and cyclists. Objects to terminology of "featureless" field. <i>See previous responses. Will reconsider terminology where appropriate.</i>
27. Goshawk, Perridge Close	Objects to boundary amendments but particularly proposed deletion of area between Doctors Walk and Perridge Close. Conservation Areas are based on wildlife and geographical features, not just architectural ones. Land is a wildlife corridor and should be preserved. Exeter Landscape Sensitivity Study refers to protecting conservation areas. <i>See previous responses.</i>
28. Fairhaven, Little Johns Cross Hill	Objects to the amendments to the boundary. Hambeer Lane should be retained. Deletions will result in planning permission being granted in these areas. Only reason to delete area on the valley floor is to make way for the Park and Ride which will ruin the area. Gravestone to Alphin Brook Valley is lost (may be in field to east) and should be found and reinstated by the bridge. <i>See previous responses. The Gravestone was to mark the loss of the Alphin Brook Valley when the A30 was constructed.</i>
29. Holmbush, Ide	Amendments do not take into account the use of the area for wildlife and recreation and area is part of Green Circle Walk, enjoyed by many. Hambeer Lane, Roly Poly Hill and the Alphin Brook should remain within the conservation area. Document is negative and does not reflect opinions of residents. Negative elements have been overplayed. <i>See previous responses.</i>
30. By email, no address given	No compelling reason to amend the boundaries as area remains unchanged since original designation made. Fly tipping not a problem in the area anymore. <i>See previous responses.</i>
31. Flat 2, The Villa, Cowick Lane	Amendments unnecessary. Removing designation will allow development of car parks and housing estates. <i>See previous responses.</i>
32. By email, no address given	Document is well informed and sensitive however there are no compelling reasons for deleting areas that were designated in 1991 and nothing has changed in these areas since this time. <i>See previous responses.</i>
33. Eaton Garth, Cowick Lane	Appraisal fails to make any case for the proposed boundary amendments. Removing the conservation area designation will result in development of one of the few remaining rural areas within the city. <i>See previous responses.</i>

34. Ide Parish Council	Existing conservation area is a well used amenity and there should be no change to its status or size. <i>See previous responses.</i>
35. Steeperton, Little Johns Cross Hill	Sees no reason for amendments to the boundary. Does not want to see the area turned into another estate with buildings on the skyline. Mentions the headstone at Ide Bridge that was erected at the time the A30 was constructed. <i>See previous responses.</i>
36. Hillside, Little John's Cross Hill	Does not see any reason for amendments to boundary. Considers changes will lead to relaxation of planning control and therefore the building of unsightly residential estates. Area provides green spaces enjoyed by many local people. <i>See previous responses.</i>
37. Kilimari, Perridge Close	The boundary amendments do not more fully reflect the historic area. They could lead to development that would seriously impinge on the area. Does not want to see any further suburbanisation of landscape. Trees along Hambeer Lane could be threatened. Exeter is enhanced by the pleasant areas in and around its boundaries. <i>See previous responses.</i>
38. 57 Ide Lane	Does not agree with proposed boundary amendments. Deletion of open areas will lead the way for development of houses or the Park and Ride which would spoil the countryside enjoyed by many. Oaklands Riding Stables contributes to the Riding for the Disabled project and this may be under threat if the area is developed. Considers conservation area appraisal programme as an abuse of Council power in order to obtain a Park and Ride site by the back door. <i>See previous responses.</i>
39. Barton House,	No necessity for the boundary to be amended. Historic aspects of the area are accurately covered. Concerns that motives for deletions include making it easier to approve the Park and Ride site. Area should remain conservation area in perpetuity to protect the open space that is enjoyed by many. <i>See previous responses.</i>
40. Underwood Cottage, Balls Farm Road	Conservation Area should remain as it is to deter development and stop park and Ride proposals. If there are changes to be made, then the whole area should be declassified as then development opportunities would be available to all. Balls Farm Road is used as a rat run and this would be made worse if more development is permitted. Balls Farm Road should be closed at Twisted Oak to prevent through traffic. <i>See previous responses. Suggestion to close Balls Farm Road will be forwarded to the highway authority.</i>

<p>41. Ide House</p>	<p>Valley Park designation was to facilitate casual recreation and the appreciation of the countryside. Proposed boundary amendments would reduce the potential for meeting this objective. Assumes proposals are to permit further development of the land and the construction of the Park and Ride facility. Comments on efficacy and shortfalls of proposed new conservation areas. Concludes that existing boundaries of the Valley Park should be retained. <i>See previous responses. The appraisal considers the existing conservation area and not the Valley Park, which is unaffected by these proposals.</i></p>
<p>42. Flat 3, The Villa, Cowick Lane</p>	<p>Boundary should be left as it is as changes could lead to further development. There is not enough emphasis in the document on the lanes and footpaths and the impact these have on the area. <i>See previous responses. Wording of document will be reconsidered in terms of emphasis.</i></p>
<p>43. Lower Acre, Little Johns Cross Hill</p>	<p>Reduction in size of Conservation Area waters down its effectiveness and development is likely to occur in de-designated areas that will put pressure on the new, smaller areas. Fields form part of the historic landscape and must be protected. Proposal is a negative approach to protection of the area and would lead to pressure to develop the area. <i>See previous responses.</i></p>
<p>44. 11 Little John's Cross Hill</p>	<p>Considers that proposed amendments do not fulfil the Council's criteria for boundary amendments and that the 1991 appraisal preserved the rural/arcadian area on the fringe of the city. List of strengths in the document is convincing but the weaknesses are less so. <i>See previous responses.</i></p>
<p>45. Holmbush Cottage</p>	<p>Boundary amendments are acceptable but go too far. Map submitted showing preferred amendments. Alphinbrook Valley should remain a conservation area. Clarks Pond should be retained within the conservation area. Does not disagree with Park and Ride proposals but a 10m area east of Crabb Lane should be retained. Development could be allowed along the ridgeline and upper fields, but valley floor should be protected. <i>See previous responses.</i></p>





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24/12/2008

### Alphin Brook Conservation Area      Appendix 3 New

 To be deleted

 1 To be included

Planning Services & Building Control, Exeter City Council, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 1NN

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