

EXETER CITY COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
16 SEPTEMBER 2008****DRAFT MONT LE GRAND CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
AND MANAGEMENT PLAN****1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To agree a draft Mont le Grand Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for the purpose of public consultation.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Exeter has twenty conservation areas that have been designated because of their special architectural or historic interest. The Council has a duty to preserve and enhance the character of these areas. Seventeen conservation areas in Exeter currently have adopted appraisals.
- 2.2 The Government and English Heritage recommend the preparation of appraisals and management plans to identify what contributes to the character of Conservation Areas. The documents assist development control and facilitate a programme of environmental enhancements.
- 2.3 The appraisal document has been prepared on the basis of the existing designated conservation area. Proposed amendments to the boundary are listed below; the final document will incorporate adopted amendments.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Executive is asked to agree a draft document as a basis for consultation. There will be a period of about six weeks for public comment and due to the small scale of the proposed area and the lack of a suitable venue, all residents will receive a copy of the draft appraisal and it will be advertised in the local press. The consultation will enable the appraisal of the character of the area to be finalised and additional ideas for the enhancement of the area to be identified and formulated into the management plan. Residents have shown an interest in similar exercises conducted elsewhere.
- 3.2 The results of the consultation will be reported to Planning Member Working Group for comment and then to Executive for adoption.
- 3.3 The draft document in black and white is in the Members' room. The published document will include colour plans that will be easier to interpret.

4 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BOUNDARY

- 4.1 A set of criteria has been developed to ensure consistency in the evaluation of changes to the boundaries of Conservation Areas. These are attached at Appendix One.

- 4.2 Mont le Grand Conservation Area boundary was defined at the time of designation in May 1978.
- 4.3 The following amendments to the boundary of the Conservation Area are proposed, these are shown on the attached plan:
- **Area 1 – Occupational Health Building on Heavitree Road.** This imposing Victorian building, whilst currently in institutional use, has continuity with the other properties facing onto Heavitree Road and with the adjacent high wall, would make a positive contribution to the conservation area.
 - **Area 2 - East side of Polsloe Road.** Including Park Villas and Regents Terrace and most of the Victorian and Edwardian houses on North Avenue and South Avenue are recommended for conservation area status. The properties on Polsloe Road are included on the Local List and whilst some have been altered they nevertheless have a strong architectural character and integrity and are a robust townscape feature, located along a ridgeline, offering far reaching views across the City. Numbers 36 – 39 to the north of this group are also proposed for inclusion; they are currently included within Belmont Conservation Area. It would make sense from a management point of view to have the whole ridge in one conservation area. However, there is also the option of creating a discrete, separate conservation area out of this proposed area for inclusion. These options will be presented as part of the public consultation.
 - **Area 3 - Terraces to the east and north of Bicton Place Park.** These are considered appropriate for inclusion because they form an integral part of the development focused on the open space. Each terrace has a clearly defined character and despite alterations to many of the windows these groups of houses retain many unifying features.
 - **Area 4 - Livery Dole Almshouses.** It is considered appropriate that these Almshouses and St Clare Chapel are transferred to the Heavitree Conservation Area when this area next undergoes review because the Gordon Lamp at the junction of Fore Street Heavitree and Magdalen Road has historical connections with Heavitree.
 - **Area 5 – Baring Crescent to Barrack Road.** This triangle of land was considered for inclusion in the St Leonard’s Conservation Area when this was reviewed recently. It was deemed appropriate to transfer it because of the close relationship that the properties have with St Leonard’s and the transfer was approved and adopted by Executive in March 2008.

5 PLANNING MEMBER WORKING GROUP

- 5.1 On 8 July, Planning Member Working Group discussed the issues raised in the appraisal, particularly the proposed boundary alterations. The Group supported the draft document and proposed boundary amendments.

6 RECOMMENDED

- 6.1 Members are recommended to agree the proposed boundary amendments outlined in section 4 above and the draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for public consultation.

**RICHARD SHORT
HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES**

ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

**Local Government (Access to information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background Papers used in compiling the report:-
None**

**CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS
CRITERIA FOR PROPOSED BOUNDARY AMENDMENTS**

The starting point should be a presumption against altering boundaries unless there is a strong case based upon the appraisal.

1	Conservation Area boundaries should be drawn to include relevant building groups that have coherence and similarities in either materials, periods or styles and open spaces surrounding these that form an integral part of the building groups (with regard to the fact that CA's are primarily about buildings and their related land not open spaces).
2	Boundaries should still exist on the ground and make sense.
3	The setting of important features should be adequately protected.
4	Changes in attitude to architecture and history should be addressed.
5	The impact of any changes in legislation should be addressed.
6	There must be a compelling case for deleting areas that were previously designated.
7	Areas that lack character (holes) lying within the proposed Conservation Area may be included where there is a reasonable probability that a substantial part of the area will be redeveloped within 5-10 years and the designation can therefore influence the quality of development. (It is assumed that CA's will have a life of 5-10 years between reviews). Where a substantial redevelopment scheme has already been approved and is likely to proceed, the decision should rest on whether there is a clear case that the approved scheme will enhance the character of the area.
8	Holes characterised by substantial areas of relatively modern or mundane development where redevelopment is unlikely should be excluded.
9	Where existing areas of a Conservation Area are considered in the appraisal to have more in common with an adjoining Conservation Area, it should generally be removed from the area being appraised and appended to the adjoining area in order to be fully appraised when that area undergoes its next appraisal.
10	Existing Conservation Areas should only be amalgamated or subdivided if there is a clear case that the proposed amendment more accurately reflects the appraised character.