

Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday, 22nd August 2018

Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisals

Item number	10.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All
Council Commitments	10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval for an updated programme of review of the existing conservation area character appraisals and explains the rationale behind the proposed programme based on a prioritisation exercise.

The resulting eight priority conservation areas in descending order are: South Side, Marchmont and Meadows, Colinton, Merchiston and Greenhill, West End, Coltbridge and Wester Coates, Craigmillar Park and Morningside.

Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisals

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the proposed review programme for conservation area character appraisals.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning authorities to “formulate and publish, from time to time, proposals for the preservation and enhancement” of its conservation areas. Character appraisals define the key elements, essential features and special qualities that contribute to each area's architectural and historic interest, and reinforce the Council's policy objectives of promoting, protecting and enhancing the environment.
- 2.2 Character appraisals play an important role in development management decisions. In making planning decisions, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any affected conservation area. Appraisals provide a basis of understanding of that character and appearance to guide decision making. They can also assist owners and developers in formulating proposals.
- 2.3 The City of Edinburgh Council completed character appraisals for all of its conservation areas between 1998 and 2007. More recently designated conservation areas have had appraisals carried out as part of the designation process. Whilst no precise review period for appraisals is specified in national legislation or policy, Planning Advice Note PAN 71, Conservation Area Management, notes that, “It is necessary to establish a review cycle in order to give continuing support to conservation area management. The local community should be actively involved in the monitoring and review process”. PAN 71 also specifies that “the review of existing areas is required and provides an opportunity to assess the justification for designation, consider the validation of boundaries, identify opportunities for enhancement and set management priorities”.
- 2.4 On [3 October 2013](#), the Committee approved a new more interactive format for the conservation area character appraisals and a review of the existing character appraisals. The review was based on a ranking system to allow prioritisation of

conservation areas on the basis of their relative need for an updated appraisal. Each area was scored against three criteria:

- 2.4.1 the age of the current appraisal;
- 2.4.2 submitted planning applications; and
- 2.4.3 housing development pressure.

Scores were then combined to derive an overall ranking in order of priority.

- 2.5 This resulted in the following priority areas: Inverleith, Grange, Morningside, Portobello, Merchiston and Greenhill and Queensferry. The appraisals for Inverleith, Grange, Portobello and Queensferry have been completed in the new format. Appraisals for the Old and New Town Conservation Areas were made a priority to coincide with the review of the Management Plan for the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site. The appraisals for Morningside and Merchiston & Greenhill have been delayed due to this revised priority.

3. Main report

Review Process

- 3.1 This report seeks approval for an updated programme of review of the existing conservation area character appraisals and explains the rationale behind the proposed programme.
- 3.2 The same methodology, as used previously, to assess the relative need for an updated appraisal has been used to prioritise the conservation areas. This was based on the age of the character appraisal, with the earliest being given priority and the level of development based on the number of applications submitted for planning permission and the extent of recent housing development. Each area was scored against three criteria:
 - 3.2.1 the age of the current appraisal;
 - 3.2.2 submitted planning applications; and
 - 3.2.3 housing development pressure.
- 3.3 The resulting eight priority conservation areas in descending order are: South Side, Marchmont and Meadows, Colinton, Merchiston and Greenhill, West End, Coltbridge and Wester Coates, Craigmillar Park and Morningside.
- 3.4 Public engagement on proposals for conservation areas is a statutory requirement and essential to ensure that local interest and knowledge has been captured. Community groups and stakeholders will be involved to inform the content of each revised character appraisals. This will include local meetings, exhibitions, social media coverage and relevant online surveys.

Proposed Programme

- 3.5 It is estimated that the review process for each conservation area would take approximately six months, allowing for research, drafting, reviewing, public engagement processes and committee timetables. There would be some overlap in the preparation of the appraisals and the eight conservation areas identified at 3.3 would, therefore, form the review programme for the next three years.

Next Steps

- 3.6 The general process for each review will be:
- 3.6.1 prepare a draft appraisal in the new format, involving local community groups;
 - 3.6.2 arrange a programme of community engagement to seek feedback on both the form and content of the draft appraisal; and
 - 3.6.3 report results back to Planning Committee with recommended actions (e.g. if boundary changes or additional controls are required).

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 Completion of the updated programme of reviews.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 The work will be undertaken within existing staff resources and budgets. There are no immediate financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no identified risks associated with approval of the report as recommended. There is a risk to the built heritage of the conservation areas if the character appraisals are not reviewed.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 The aim of conservation area status is to preserve and enhance the quality of the area. This has the potential to improve quality of life and support sustainable communities. The review of the format of character appraisals provides an opportunity to make the documents more accessible than at present.

There are no predicted negative impacts on equalities.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Conservation of the built environment minimises the use of natural resources and helps to reduce carbon emissions. The proposals in this report will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh because the conservation and management of the historic environment contributes directly to sustainability in a number of ways. These include the energy and materials invested in a building, the scope for adaptation and reuse, and the unique quality of historic environments which provide a sense of identity and continuity.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Significant public engagement will be an essential part of the review of each area. Community groups and stakeholders will be involved to inform the content of each revised character appraisals. This will include local meetings, exhibitions, social media coverage and relevant online surveys.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Report to Planning Committee of 3 October 2013 - Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.
- 10.2 Planning Advice Note (PAN) 71 – Conservation Area Management

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11. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Review of Conservation Area Character – Assessment Matrix.

APPENDIX 1: REVIEW OF CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISALS

Conservation Area	Date CACA Approved	Date CACA Approved Priority Order. Older the CACA – higher the priority	Development Pressure. No. of Applications with consent May 2015 – May 2018	Development Pressure Priority Order. More applications – greater the priority.	Housing Pressure. Sites consented for development in the conservation area as at April 18	Housing Pressure Priority Order. More sites – greater the priority.	Priority Order Total	Final Ranking
BALERNO	30th Jan 2001	4	35	19	1	11	34	13
BARNTON AVENUE	29th Nov 2001	4	25	23	2	10	37	16
BLACKET	4th Oct 2001	4	85	9	2	10	23	6
COLINTON	22nd July 1999	2	134	5	8	4	11	2
COLTBRIDGE AND WESTER COATES	3rd Nov 2005	8	105	7	6	6	21	5
COSTORPHINE	4th Oct 2001	4	46	15	3	9	28	9
CRAIGLOCKHART HILLS	27th Mar 2001	4	58	12	2	10	26	8
CRAIGMILLAR PARK	27th Nov 2003	6	88	8	5	7	21	5
CRAMOND	4th Oct 2001	4	36	18	0	12	34	13
CURRIE	26th Sep 2000	3	6	29	1	11	43	21
DALMENY	21st Nov 2000	3	11	28	1	11	42	20
DEAN	5th Feb 2004	7	31	20	5	7	34	13
DUDDINGSTON	13th June 2002	5	14	27	0	12	44	22
EDINBURGH EIGHT COLONIES	15th Mar 2013	11	57	13	1	11	35	14
GILMERTON	24th July 2000	3	14	27	3	9	38	17
GRANGE	Appraisal reviewed							
HERMISTON	26th Sep 2000	3	5	30	1	11	44	22
INVERLEITH	Appraisal reviewed							
JUNIPER GREEN	9th Aug 2001	4	45	16	4	8	28	9
KIRKLISTON	26th Sep 2000	3	20	25	4	8	36	15
LEITH								
MARCHMONT & MEADOWS	18th May 2006	9	273	1	15	1	11	2
MERCHISTON & GREENHILL	3rd Apr 2003	6	220	3	7	5	14	3
MORNINGSIDE	4th Oct 2001	4	125	6	1	11	21	5
MORTON MAINS	27th Mar 2001	4	0	31	0	12	47	24
NEW TOWN	Appraisal reviewed							
NEWHAVEN	11th May 2000	3	44	17	3	9	29	10
OLD TOWN	Appraisal reviewed							
PLEWLANDS	12th Feb 2010	10	78	10	1	11	31	11
PORTOBELLO	Appraisal reviewed							
RESTALRIG	Recent appraisal							
QUEENSFERRY	Appraisal reviewed							
RATHO	21st Nov 2000	3	18	26	2	10	39	18
SHANDON	18th Apr 2002	5	21	24	1	11	40	19
SOUTH SIDE	8th Aug 2002	5	251	2	9	3	8	1
SWANSTON	5th June 2001	4	6	29	0	12	45	23
THISTLE FOUNDATION	15th June 2006	9	0	31	1	11	51	25
TRINITY	4th Oct 2001	4	64	11	3	9	24	7
VICTORIA PARK	16th Mar 1998	1	27	22	2	10	33	12
WAVERLEY PARK	28th Nov 2002	5	30	21	3	9	35	14
WEST END	9th Mar 2006	9	174	4	11	2	15	4
WEST MURRAYFIELD	5th Feb 2004	7	47	14	2	10	31	11