

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 17 January 2013

**9**

**Title:** Conservation Area Appraisal, Manuden

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr S Barker

**Key decision:** No

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### Summary

1. This report has been prepared and discussed with Manuden Parish Council who support its general content. The draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Manuden was made available on the council's website and as printed copies. A public exhibition on 22 November 2012 was attended by an officer and specialists from Essex County Council who presented the findings and answered questions. This report summarises and comments on the representations made at the exhibition and subsequent to it in the consultation period which lasted from 5 November until 16 December 2012.
2. Manuden Parish Council welcomed the Conservation Area Appraisal in principle and considered it a worthwhile document which is likely to strengthen the control of development. This comment is valuable and is one shared by officers. The experience of the Conservation Area Appraisals so far undertaken indicates that the process is both important and popular with the local communities.

### Recommendations

3. That the Conservation Area Appraisal be approved and used to assist in the process of determining planning applications and for implementing Management proposals.
4. That the Manuden Conservation Area boundary be formally amended.

### Financial Implications

5. The recommendation would require the advertising of the boundary changes which would cost in the region of £500 - 600. This can be met from existing budgets for Conservation.

### Background Papers

6. The notes of the public exhibition held on 22 November 2012 and all representations received.

### Impact

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Communication/Consultation	Full consultation undertaken.
Community Safety	Not affected
Equalities	Not affected
Finance	Advertising costs can be met from existing

	budgets. The document will be disseminated through the website.
Health and Safety	Not affected.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Not affected.
Sustainability	The report focuses on environmental issues seeking to preserve the environment of the respective communities, including their buildings and open spaces.
Ward-specific impacts	Stort Valley - various proposals as amended and as contained in report.
Workforce/Workplace	Existing staff resources.

### Situation

8. The Manuden Conservation Area was originally designated in 1977. The Council has a duty within section 69 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Act 1990 to consider the designation of Conservation Areas and to undertake periodic reviews. As part of this work the Council has undertaken a number of Conservation Area Appraisals of existing Conservation Areas.
9. This report sets out the key issues within the attached Conservation Area Appraisal and records the results of the consultation exercise and the changes proposed.
10. The principal issues and recommendations set out in the document are:  
**Changes to the existing Conservation Area boundary.** Alterations to the Conservation Area boundary are proposed.

### Inclusions

(a) To include the former Methodist Chapel and the listed thatched cottages at the northern end of The Street.

(c) To include the entire field of pasture opposite Manuden House. This area provides excellent views out to the countryside, blending the village centre with the surrounding landscape and reinforcing the rural feel of the village.

(d) The Conservation Area boundary that ends at Manuden Hall boundary should be extended southwards, to include the Downs. The proposed area would include the medieval strip lynchets, a highly significant archaeological landscape, running from Downs Cottages down towards the River Stort. The lynchets are relatively rare for Uttlesford and Essex as a whole, and are exceptionally well preserved examples of their type.

### Exclusions

(a) To exclude No.4 Butt Lane and Apple Tree Cottage and to bring the Conservation Area boundary in line with the property boundaries as the two sites comprise modern properties of little architectural or historical note.

Note: As a result of the consultation, respondents, including Manuden Parish Council, have responded to the above alterations to the Conservation Area. A number of other points were raised by respondents relating to issues raised in the Appraisal report. These representations are included in the table below with appropriate officer comment.

## General notes:

**Planning Controls and Good Practice in Respect of Other Buildings that Make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.** A number of such unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area have been identified. The Council will seek to ensure that these are retained.

Proposed Article 4 Directions. There are other distinctive features that are integral to some of the unlisted buildings identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal for Manuden that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including selected chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing. In some situations protection already exists through existing planning controls but in other cases protection could only be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via an Article 4 Direction. Should the Council consider such a course of action appropriate there would be a process of notifying the affected owners separately at a later date. This would be associated with further detailed consideration and possible refinement of the general proposals set out earlier in this Appraisal.

**Planning Controls and Good Practice in Respect of Other Distinctive Features that Make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.** The appraisal identified lengths of walling and railings that make an important contribution to the street scene of the conservation area. In addition to these, other walls, fences and hedges are also visually important, forming boundaries to gardens and fields. Hedges play a vital role in softening boundaries and reinforcing the rural nature of the village. Boundary treatments, in particular brick walls, should therefore be protected by the Article 4 Direction.

**Planning Control and Good Practice, Important Open Spaces, Trees and Groups of Trees.** *Important open land, open spaces and gaps.* Manuden Conservation Area is fortunate to have defined areas of open space within its boundaries and directly adjacent, and is surrounded by views of open countryside. This creates a tranquil, rural feel and contributes to the overall setting and quality of the conservation area. Any development of these important open spaces would be entirely inappropriate. These spaces as identified comprise: Within the Conservation Area: Pasture opposite Manuden House, open space behind Cleeve Hall, land behind Cleeve Hall and the churchyard, which is used as an extension to the graveyard, the churchyard, the village green. To the south of the church the former village pond is also of importance, as is the car-park attached to the Yew Tree Inn and the verges alongside Carters Hill.

*Particularly important trees and hedgerows.* Many trees in Manuden are protected by tree preservation orders and the general position of these is shown on the Area maps. Other trees also contribute to the quality of the street scenes. In particular, mature trees in the open field opposite Manuden House are important, as are those in the graveyard and the open space behind the graveyard. All trees in the conservation area are protected, and owners have to notify the council if they wish to undertake works to them. Good practice guidance for owners includes making regular inspections of trees to check for dieback and potential danger from falling branches. The Council's Landscape Officer will offer advice in appropriate circumstances.

**Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements.** The Appraisal identifies a number of detracting elements together with a proposed course of action. It is recognised that such improvements will frequently only be achieved with the co-operation of owners and other bodies as appropriate.

The comments received at the public exhibition and during the consultation period are set out in the table arranged in the subject order above. Those responses which noted minor inaccuracies in the text of the Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, such as the misspelling of building names, are not included here.

All maps are included in Appendix 1 to this report.

Issue	Representations made	Officer comment
Changes to the Conservation Area	<p><b>A Manuden resident</b> suggests that 4 Butt Lane should be removed outside the boundary line as it is only 30-40 years old.</p> <p><b>Manuden residents</b> note that they are very much in favour of the extension to the Conservation Area and fully agree with the character analysis of Area 4... to see The Downs included in the new Conservation Area. They feel it very important to maintain the strip lynchets &amp; earthworks in this area and think that the extension to the current Conservation Area will maintain the historically important aspects in the village and ensure that the appearance of it remains beautiful and is not altered detrimentally.</p>	<p>Officers agree and consider the building to not be of sufficient interest for inclusion in the Conservation Area. A revision is now proposed to re-draw the boundary to exclude this property and the adjacent property of Apple Tree Cottage (a modern garage converted to residential use).</p> <p>The proposal made in the Appraisal is that Conservation Area boundary that ends at Manuden Hall boundary should be extended southwards, to include the Downs. The proposed area would include the medieval strip lynchets, a highly significant archaeological landscape, running from Downs Cottages down towards the River Stort.</p>
Management proposals	<p><b>The Manuden Local History Recorder</b> notes that the wall running from the Orangery up Butt Lane as far as No. 18 is a very long and expensively-built wall of Flemish bond. I recommend that this should be protected.</p>	<p>The wall should be considered as a possible candidate for protection by possible Article 4 Direction subject to further consideration and notification.</p>

## 11 Conclusion

The public consultation raised a number of useful points which have been incorporated into the Conservation Area Appraisal. The document should be amended to incorporate the above comments and the documents use should commence immediately to assist in the

determination of planning applications and for implementing the management proposals as set out.

Formal changes to the Conservation Area Boundary will need to be advertised prior to them coming into force. It is necessary to inform the Secretary of State and English Heritage and place an advert in the London Gazette and local newspapers. The owners of affected properties will also be notified of the changes.

## Risk Analysis

11.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Revisions to the Conservation Area	1 There is some risk that revisions will be approved which cannot be justified by the guidelines provided by English Heritage.	2 If revisions to the Conservation Area are approved which the council cannot justify through good practice guidelines, the report and its recommendations will be unsound. Planning officers and applicants will then be without any up to date guidance and applications will be determined against out of date resources.	The report has been carefully produced and amended where any inaccuracies were noted. Consultation has been carried out with the Parish Council and Manuden residents and advice sought from specialist officers and experts to support the findings.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.