



Report to Cabinet

Subject **Bestwood Village Conservation Area Appraisal 2004-5**

Date **12 May 2005**

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The Bestwood Village Conservation Area Appraisal has been undertaken since September 2003. After an extensive process of surveys, consultation and preparation of the detailed Appraisal study report in draft form, this document is now at the stage where it is ready for final approval and adoption by the Council.

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 71 (2), there is a requirement for proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas to be submitted by the local planning authority for consideration.

Also, approval for the following revisions (extensions) to the Bestwood Village Conservation Area (first designated 1992) is sought, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 70 (8):-

- Eastern and western extensions to the Conservation Area at Bestwood Country Park, so that this now follows defined features throughout (0.8 ha);
- Northern extension to incorporate entire Hawthorne School grounds (0.3 ha).

Full details are provided in the “Executive Summary” and “Project Plan & Consultations” documents, attached. The full Conservation Area Document would be made available together with a visual interpretation display at the Cabinet Meeting.

Recommendations:

Approval is sought by the Cabinet of:-

1. Items for determination in paragraph 6.2 of Executive Summary document (attached).
2. Project Plan & Consultations document, Conservation Area Appraisal process, September 2003 – April 2005 (attached).

Bestwood Village Conservation Area **Appraisal – Executive Summary** **(April 2005)**

ITEM FOR DECISION – Presented to Cabinet, Thursday, 12 May 2005

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Bestwood Village was declared a Conservation Area on 1st June 1992, under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 71 of the Act places a duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas once designated. Accordingly, a draft Bestwood Conservation Area Study document was prepared during 1994, but never formally adopted by the Council.
- 1.2 Central government Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 15 (Planning & the Historic Environment, September 1994) states that “it is important that designation is not seen as an end in itself: policies will almost always need to be developed which clearly identify what it is about the character and appearance of the area which should be preserved or enhanced, and set out the means by which that objective is to be pursued” (paragraph 4.9).
- 1.3 In compliance with PPG15, this comprehensive study of current issues has been prepared as a pilot scheme for other Conservation Area appraisals. Survey work for this project included the analysis of prevailing architectural styles and building materials, trees and boundaries; opportunities for environmental improvement/ enhancement and the impact of Permitted Development Rights (General Permitted Development Order).
- 1.4 More recent guidance from English Heritage has considerably expanded upon the advice contained in PPG15. The English Heritage publications, Conservation Area Practice (October 1995) and Conservation Area Appraisals (March 1997, publication reference XH20048) identify three key stages in the preparation of an appraisal:-
 - ◆ Defining character;
 - ◆ Assessing architectural or historic interest;
 - ◆ Publication of study, with proposals for preservation or enhancement of the Conservation Area.

IMPLICATIONS OF CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

- 2.1 Designation of a Conservation Area should not be seen as a tool to restrict development. It does, however, provide additional controls over demolition of buildings and the design of new development. It is advisable to consult the Council for advice prior to undertaking any works that could affect a building, site or tree, or their setting.

DEFINING CHARACTER

- 3.1 PPG15 states that it is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas. The definition of an area's special interest should derive from an assessment of the elements that contribute to (and detract from) it. Conservation areas vary greatly, but certain aspects will almost always form the basis for a coherent assessment: the topography - for example, thoroughfares and property boundaries - and its historical development; the archaeological significance and potential; the prevalent building materials; the character and hierarchy of spaces; the quality and relationship of buildings in the area and also of trees and other green features.
- 3.2 In the case of Bestwood Village, the initial, wider character definition has been undertaken through a **social, historical and physical assessment**; ordered in a broadly hierarchical fashion:-
- ◆ The initial element of the assessment is the identification of locational and population characteristics (including changes over the last 20 years), looking at Bestwood in its sub-regional context;
 - ◆ Key environmental conditions are then identified;
 - ◆ A local economic profile identifies the prevailing and former land uses within the Conservation Area;
 - ◆ A systematic, chronological historical assessment of the growth of the village has been undertaken, using historical (in particular Ordnance Survey) map data;
 - ◆ Finally, a landscape appraisal, based upon the County Council's 1997 Countryside Appraisal of key landscape types clearly identifies tangible physical characteristics of Bestwood Village within its local context.
- 3.3 Within the broader character assessment, key **natural features and the setting of the historic village** enable a comprehensive character definition of Bestwood Village:-
- ◆ Several areas of open space are situated within the Conservation Area, ranging from formal sports facilities such as the Bowling Green, to more informal or incidental areas of open space, such as Bestwood Country Park (former Bestwood Colliery pit-head);
 - ◆ In parts of the Conservation Area, important trees and hedgerows greatly influence the character of Bestwood Village, for example around St Marks Church;
 - ◆ The wider Conservation Area setting is assessed through views into, within and out of the Conservation Area.

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL APPRAISAL

- 4.1 Initially, the only features within Bestwood Village offered statutory protection are the Colliery Winding Engine House (Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade II* Listed structure) and the War Memorial, Park Road (Grade II Listed structure). However, the County Council's Sites and Monuments Record identifies the historic colliery village as having archaeological significance.
- 4.2 Bestwood Village contains several "**Non-Listed Buildings of Interest**", with all of the original 1870s colliery housing (Park Road, St Albans Road and The Square) being identified in Gedling's Local Interest Buildings list. A comprehensive assessment of key architectural features and details of all buildings of interest identified through photographic surveys of the village has been undertaken, divided between residential properties (the majority of buildings) and non-residential (numerically few, but often key landmarks in village street-scapes).
- 4.3 Further detailed survey work identified traditional and prevalent building materials (predominantly locally produced dark-red brick and Welsh slate), together with important local architectural details.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS – POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 Through the assessment and survey work undertaken to determine character and specific features of architectural and historical interest, this information may be used to identify solutions to problems facing the Conservation Area. These potential solutions are defined under the following headings:-
- ◆ Boundary Assessment;
 - ◆ Improvement Opportunities;
 - ◆ Neutral Features;
 - ◆ The Future.
- 5.2 In terms of reassessing the 1992 Conservation Area boundary, options are considered in the Appraisal for strengthening this and making the boundary defensible and identifiable on the ground. Through the **boundary assessment**, several locations are identified where the boundary is currently neither logical, or defensible:-
- ◆ Bestwood Country Park;
 - ◆ Hawthorne School;
 - ◆ Eden Lodge Nursing Home, Park Road.
- 5.3 Based on the assessment, recommendations are made for minor changes to the 1992 Conservation Area Boundary, primarily in the interest of clarity and to reflect changes within Bestwood Village over the past 13 years.
- 5.4 Many **improvement opportunities** or negative features within Bestwood Conservation Area have been identified, both through specific officer survey work and the public consultation process for the Conservation Area Appraisal undertaken during February – April 2005. These opportunities relate both to the progressive loss of historical features in residential

properties, such as traditional sash windows, and also more general anti-social behaviour such as graffiti, outlined as follows:-

- ◆ Vandalism, litter and other anti-social behaviour, with particular reference to the cemetery and Bestwood Country Park;
- ◆ Impact of traffic, particularly along Moor Road (principal north-south traffic artery through Bestwood Village);
- ◆ Impact of minor householder development upon residential properties including reference to previous attempts to tackle this progressive, incremental loss to the historic fabric of the village, in particular the Article 4(2) Direction (1995-98);
- ◆ Assessment of the impact of the “wire-scape” within the village.

5.5 Similarly, certain “**neutral features**” (that is, features that contribute in neither a positive or negative way to the character of the Conservation Area) within the village may offer opportunities for Conservation Area enhancement. Since 1992, many schemes have already been implemented that will enhance the historic village and its setting. Notable changes over the past decade include the westward extension of Bestwood Country Park to incorporate the derelict site of the former Pit-Head Baths adjacent to the Bestwood Hotel (1995) and Park Road pavement resurfacing (2004).

5.6 Furthermore, suggested improvements identified as at 2004-5 are considered, both for public and private land, notably proposals for the Colliery Winding Engine House and Miners Welfare.

5.7 Finally, consideration is given to recent and imminent changes likely to impact upon the Conservation Area. In particular, **the future** of Bestwood Village and its Conservation Area are likely to be affected by the proposed Park Road housing allocation (175 dwellings) in the emerging First Replacement Local Plan, anticipated for adoption in June 2005 and issues identified through the 2004 public consultation exercise.

Policies and Implementation

5.8 In support of the **proposed solutions** considered by the appraisal, 12 Policies are identified, with appropriate implementation mechanisms. These are summarised as follows:-

POLICY 1: Amendments to Conservation Area boundary

POLICY 2: Improvements to Cemetery (Moor Road)

POLICY 3: Priorities for householder improvements, possible targeting of Historic Building Grant funding, if available

POLICY 4: Repainting of 1995 Pedestrian Barrier, The Mount/ School Walk

POLICY 5: Improvements and repairs to the Clock Tower and War Memorial boundary railings

POLICY 6: Improvements and repairs to Cemetery Railings

POLICY 7: Principle of housing development, land to the east of St Albans Road

POLICY 8: Completion of review process for TPOs

POLICY 9: Enhancement of the setting of the Miners' Welfare and surrounding areas

POLICY 10: Improvements to Post Office frontage or development to the rear of 21-56 Park Road

POLICY 11: Requirements for the Development Brief for the Local Plan Park Road housing allocation

POLICY 12: Improvements to the Bestwood Hotel and its curtilage

- 5.9 Each policy contains a brief description of possible implementation mechanisms. These mechanisms include Conservation Area funding (allocated under section 57 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which may be allocated to help with repair and enhancement, and should be considered as part of the policy for an area (see Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 15, Planning and the Historic Environment, September 1994). Other possibilities include the setting up of stakeholder partnerships as appropriate.

MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED BY CABINET

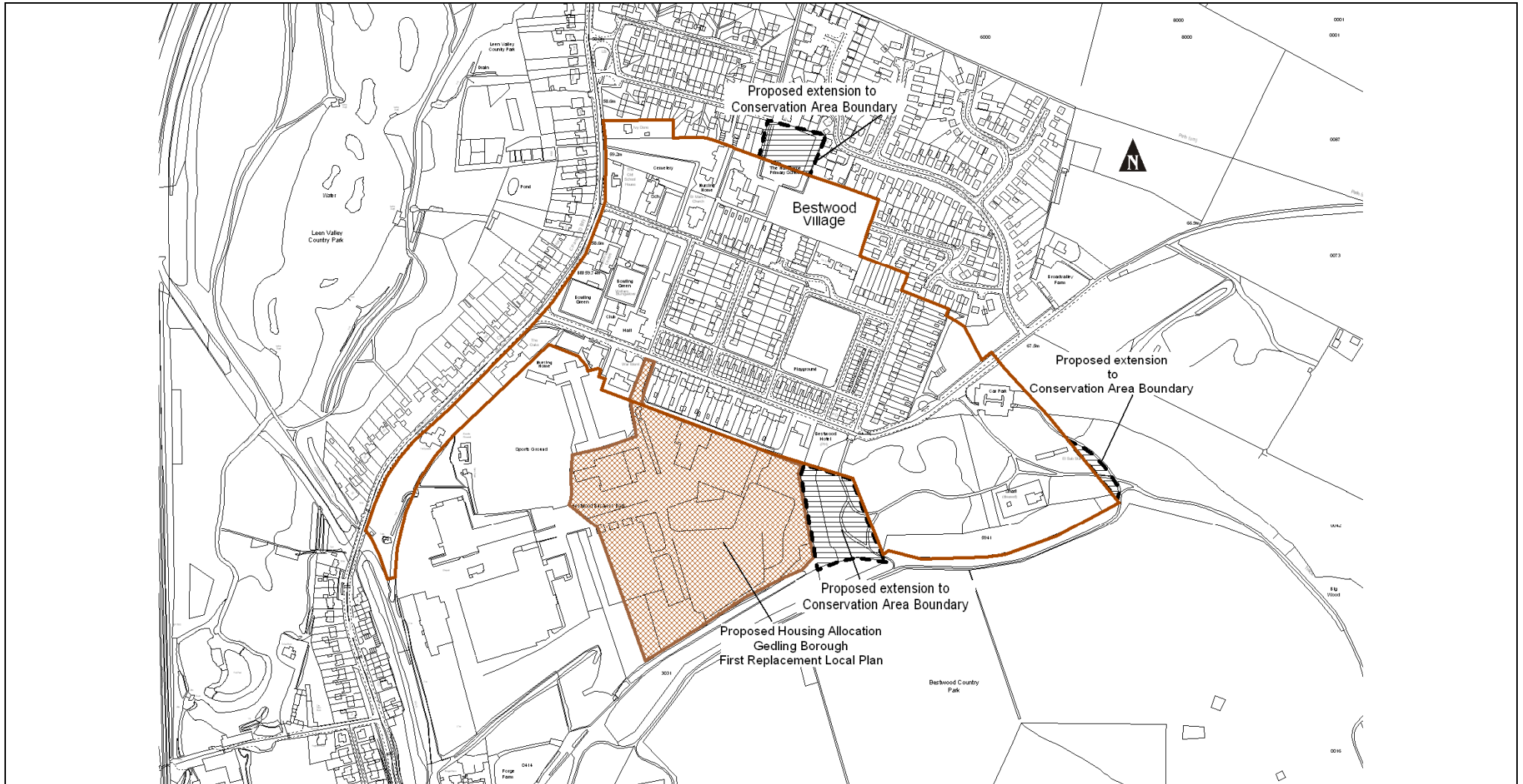
- 6.1 The accompanying paper presented to the Cabinet, titled "Bestwood Conservation Area Appraisal – Project Plan & Consultations, September 2003 – April 2005" summarises the timetable and process for the preparation of the Conservation Area Appraisal study document. There was an extensive public consultation exercise undertaken during 2004, which has thrown up several interesting comments, many of which have been incorporated into the final appraisal document.

6.2 Items for determination by Cabinet:-

APPROVAL OF CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL DOCUMENT (FULL DOCUMENT AVAILABLE AT CABINET COMMITTEE WITH ILLUSTRATIVE DISPLAY) WITH 12 IMPROVEMENT POLICIES (LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 5.8 ABOVE) IN ACCORDANCE WITH PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS & CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990 SECTION 71 (2)

APPROVAL OF REVISION (EXTENSION) TO CONSERVATION AREA (POLICY 1), AS FOLLOWS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS & CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990 SECTION 70 (8):-

- ◆ Eastern and western extensions to the Conservation Area at Bestwood Country Park, so that this now follows defined features throughout (0.8 ha);
- ◆ Northern extension to incorporate entire Hawthorne School grounds (0.3 ha).



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PROPOSED BOUNDARY REVISIONS

Not to scale

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