

Appendix 1 - Conservation Areas Management Plan Review: Proposed Actions for Formal Engagement 3rd February-17th March 2023

Proposed general actions for consultation:

General Actions	How we will do this	Time frame	Resources required	Comments – how this addresses consultation responses
1 Improve access to information	1A Provide better information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conservation areas • Article 4 Directions • Planning process and decision making • How to contact council on planning related conservation matters • How fees are set • Pre-application • How enforcement process works on website and in downloadable format 	0-9 months	Officer time in conservation and planning teams to draft pages and web team support to amend website.	A common theme in responses was that residents were not aware of the conservation areas and did not know how to find out more. Information is available already so could be updated and expanded and then made easier to find on the website. (Council Delivery Plan Working for our Community and serving our residents Theme 1 – Outstanding Customer Experience action 1)
	1B Promote where to find information on website through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media platforms • WBC newsletter to all households. • Local notice boards and FB groups 	0-6 months and BAU	Officer time in conservation and planning teams along with Communications team support.	We worked successfully with teams across the council to promote the informal engagement and would build on these relationships going forwards. (Council delivery Plan Theme 1 Pioneer new ways of working action 1)
	1C education events with schools and young people and other community groups	6-9 months and then BAU	Officer time from conservation team	This would be resourced from planning teams building on the two schools meetings we did in 2022. Aim to do additional meetings as resources allow.

General Actions	How we will do this	Time frame	Resources required	Comments – how this addresses consultation responses
2 Provide planning guidance for residents and businesses in conservation areas	2A Householder guidance to cover minor development and provide clarity regarding what needs planning permission and then what is likely to be acceptable; to include renewable energy installations such as solar panels and EV charging points	6-18 months	Officer time in conservation teams and planning DM team. This will save us time later as both officers and residents/applicants will be better informed	In the consultation this came out as being a really important way in which residents felt the Council could help them- it will also help the planning team to be more efficient and effective. (Council delivery Plan Theme 1 Outstanding Customer Service action 1)
	2B Provide guidance for businesses on how to make minor changes to their properties in a way which enhances the character of the conservation area.	12-24 Months	Officer time and graphic design cost to refresh existing guidance	Several of the conservation areas have ground floor retail/F&B uses and other A class uses and many units would benefit from a more sympathetic approach to signage and shopfront design (supports Delivery Plan Theme 3 in terms of enhancing the attractiveness of Watford as a place for businesses and in terms enhancing the outdoor public spaces.
3 General Enhancements	3A Review our approach to public realm management in conservation areas to ensure an appropriate and consistent approach.	12-36 months	Officer time and link in with WBC Transport & Infrastructure team and HCC	Advocate principles set out in Historic England Streets for all document as we develop proposals for public realm works in conservation areas. (Council Delivery Plan Theme 3 distinctive and successful neighbourhood Action 4)

	3B Work with team delivering tree planting across the Borough to find suitable locations within the conservation areas for street trees.	6-12 months and ongoing as per Council annual programme	Make use of existing project in the delivery plan to enhance the conservation areas.	Following a discussion with the Associate Director for Environment, this can be accommodated into the annual tree planting provision but we would have to agree where trees are to be planted (Council Delivery Plan Greener Brighter Future Theme 2 Biodiversity action 2)
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Area Specific Enhancements for consultation:

St Mary's:

Action	How we will do that	Time Frame	Resources required	Comments
Enhance the quality of the churchyard	Support a cross council group to deliver enhancements to this part of the conservation area including those which are more specifically related to the condition and maintenance of the heritage assets.	To fit in with the project plan for this project	Officer time to support the project team	This is a specified project in the delivery plan and involves the most sensitive heritage assets in the town (Delivery Plan Theme 3 Distinctive and Successful Places Action 4).

Grove Mill:

Action	How we will do that	Time Frame	Resources required	Comments
Review with partners whether there is a way of reducing traffic speeds on Grove Mill Lane and report back	Explore the possible options with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and other relevant parties and report back.	6-18 months	Staff time to engage with HCC and others and then if there are viable options we can review how these may be funded.	Initial contact made with HCC.

Support canal and river trust to seek repair of railings on canal bridge by Canal Cottage	Approach both Canal and River Trust (CRT) and HCC as this is a road bridge as well and explore options for repair and report back on options	6-18 months	Staff time to engage with CRT to explore options and then review how any viable options may be funded.	
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Civic Core:

Action	How we will do that	Time Frame	Resources required	Comments
Little Cassiobury continue to support HCC and other partners to find a way of restoring Little Cassiobury which is now placed at the highest risk level by Historic England on their register	Continue dialogue with HCC and Historic England and other partners to find a way forwards	ongoing	Staff time	Part of the Council's Buildings at Risk work but the property is the most significant building in the conservation area and is in very poor condition. We are waiting for up to date reports from Historic England following a site visit in autumn 2022

The Square:

Action	How we will do that	Time Frame	Resources required	Comments
Ensure that the boundary wall of the cemetery and Victoria Passage is properly maintained	Work with AD for Environment to ensure the boundary wall onto Victoria Passage is repaired and maintained			Discussion with colleagues

Watford Heath

Action	How we will do that	Time Frame	Resources required	Comments
Conservation area specified "no wait" markings	Agree this with HCC and explore options and timeframes with WBC Transport and Infrastructure and parking teams.			This location more than most would benefit from this as the standard yellow lines are intrusive to the character of the area.