



Cabinet
16th November 2011
12:30 p.m.

Item
15
Public

PROPOSED GREAT NESS CONSERVATION AREA

Responsible Officer Karen Rolfe, Historic Environment
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1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the results of the public consultation exercise relating to the proposed designation of the settlement of Great Ness as a Conservation Area. This report further seeks approval for the designation of the proposed Conservation Area. A map showing the proposed Conservation Area boundary is attached as Appendix 1.

2. Recommendations

- A. That Cabinet approve the designation of the area identified on Appendix 1 as The Great Ness Conservation Area.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The recommendations contained in this Report are compatible with the provisions of The Human Rights Act 1988.

Environmental Appraisal

Designation of the proposed area as a Conservation Area would give additional planning protection from unsympathetic development which might otherwise spoil the area's special character, including the safeguarding of important trees and open spaces.

Risk Management Appraisal

There are no associated risks.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The formal public consultation period ran from June 27, 2011 to September 23, 2011. A summary of the comments received is attached as Appendix 3.

4. Financial Implications

No direct financial implications except for the cost of advertising the completion of the designation process in the local newspaper and the London Gazette.

5. Background

Background on Conservation Areas

1. The concept of conserving the character of entire areas was first introduced in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. These provisions were consolidated into the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act, subsequently the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
2. Conservation Area legislation emphasises the importance of the character of an area as a key consideration when decisions are made in respect of development proposals. A Conservation Area is defined as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. There is an important difference between preservation, achieved by the listing of buildings, and conservation, through the designation of Conservation Areas. Preservation implies no change, but conservation is a more dynamic approach which allows change, but change that is controlled so as to retain the inherent quality of a place.
3. The Council has a duty to review from time to time areas of special historic or architectural interest for designation. At the present time there are 120 Conservation Areas designated within the County, the most recent being The Pant Glas and Brogyntyn Park Conservation Area north of Oswestry which was designated in July 2010.

Background on Current Proposal

4. Great Ness is a small, compact settlement located north-west of Shrewsbury. The nucleus of the hamlet is the Grade I listed St. Andrew's Church, the oldest building in the settlement, with some sections dating from the early 13th Century. The settlement consists of a range of building types including several large brick 18th-19th Century houses, smaller traditional cottages, barn conversions, ancillary buildings and historical features such as the restored Parish Pound and the Village Pump, as well as a number of modern bungalows. The grassed triangle and finger post at the junction of several laneways is an important local feature of the settlement. Dressed red sandstone is the predominant local material, evident in both the buildings in the settlement as well as the walling around the principal houses, the Church and along the hamlet lanes. The surrounding area is rural in nature with uninterrupted views out of the village to undulating fields primarily in agricultural use.
5. The notion of designating Great Ness as a Conservation Area was raised by residents of the settlement. On August 7 2009 a letter was written to Shropshire Council requesting designation of the hamlet, accompanied by supporting signatures of all residents. On October 6, 2009, the Great Ness

and Little Ness Parish Council resolved to support the proposal provided a full consultation of residents and land owners of the settlement was carried out.

6. A Working Group of Great Ness residents, with the assistance of the Historic Environment Team, produced an audit of the special architectural, historic and landscape fabric and character of Great Ness, which was submitted to the Council as background information in support of the proposed designation. A provisional boundary for the proposed Conservation Area was then prepared based on these findings.
7. On June 15, 2011, Cabinet considered a report prepared by the Historic Environment Team on the proposed designation of Great Ness as a Conservation Area. At this meeting, Cabinet resolved to approve, for the purpose of public consultation, the area identified on Appendix 1 to this report for consideration as a Conservation Area.

Public Consultation

8. A formal public consultation exercise to solicit the views of residents, owners and relevant external agencies on the matter of the proposed designation was initiated on June 27, 2011. A letter outlining the proposal was mailed on this date to all properties within the proposed Conservation Area boundary as well as those immediately outside of it. A copy of this letter is attached as Appendix 2. The letter requested that any views or comments on the matter of the proposed designation be submitted to the Council by September 23, 2011, providing a 12 week consultation period in line with Council policy.
9. During the public consultation period the Council received a total of eighteen letters and e-mails from residents, property owners and external agencies. A summary of the responses is attached as Appendix 3. Of these eighteen comments, only one letter of objection to the proposal was received, thirteen of the letters were in full support of the proposal, while of the remaining letters, three expressed no objection to the proposal and one was a query.
10. The results of the public consultation exercise have shown that there is strong local support for the proposed designation. The relevant local authority, The Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council, had previously indicated by way of a formal resolution that it supported the designation. The two external agencies providing responses, Natural England and English Heritage, also raised no objections to the proposal.
11. The owner of agricultural land directly east of the settlement has confirmed that she is in complete agreement with the proposal provided that this land is not included within the Conservation Area boundary. It is the intention that the proposed boundary would not include these lands.
12. The one letter of objection to the proposal was submitted from a local farmer who resides outside of the proposed Conservation Area boundary. The letter expresses concern over the possible implications of Conservation Area status and suggests that the area is well maintained by the local residents without formal designation.

6. Conclusions

13. Great Ness is a settlement of significant historical and architectural character. While the settlement has a number of individually listed structures, these are brought together and their significance enhanced by the quality of the local environment overall. The settlement possesses a discernible sense of local distinctiveness and as such it is a suitable candidate for designation as a Conservation Area which is supported by the majority of local residents.
14. Conservation Area status would acknowledge the special significance of Great Ness and would assist in protecting the area's distinct character while permitting appropriate new development which maintains or enhances the area's special character. It also provides for greater opportunity to engage with the local community in managing the historic environment that they value.
15. Should the Council recommend the proposed area for designation, the designation would be valid from the resolution of the Council meeting approving it. Following any approval, a Notice of Designation would be drafted and advertised as statutorily required, and the designation would be confirmed with all residents falling within the Conservation Area by way of a letter and copy of the designation document, along with guidance notes on what Conservation Area status means.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

See Appendices below.

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Mal Price

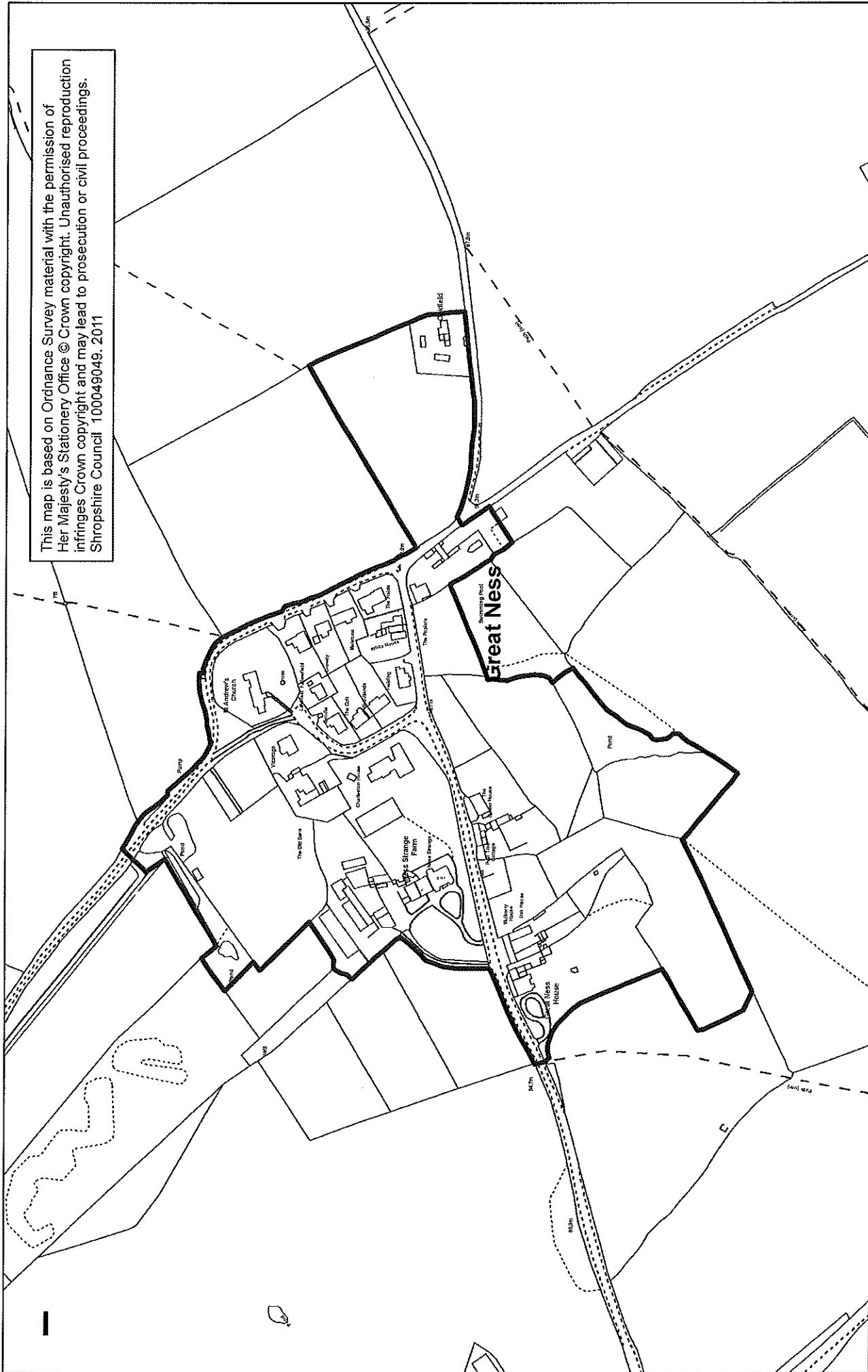
Local Member

Councillor David Roberts

Appendices

- 1 – Map indicating proposed Conservation Area boundary
- 2 – Public consultation letter
- 3 – Summary of public comments received

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Proposed Great Ness Conservation Area Boundary Scale: 1:4,000



Historic Environment Team
Development Services
The Shirehall, Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND



English Heritage

June 27, 2011

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Proposal to Designate Great Ness as a Conservation Area - Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

I am writing to inform you that the Council is carrying out a public consultation exercise related to a proposal to designate the settlement of Great Ness as a Conservation Area.

A request for Great Ness to be considered for Conservation Area status was submitted by local residents to Shropshire Council in 2009, supported by a resolution of The Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council at a meeting held on October 6, 2009. Since that time, an initial appraisal of the area has been prepared by a working group of Great Ness residents. This appraisal identifies areas of architectural, historic and landscape interest to support the request for Conservation Area status.

Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to consider whether parts of their area should be designated as Conservation Areas as well as reviewing existing designations from time to time.

As part of the public consultation exercise, I am writing to you to seek your views on the proposal to designate the area indicated on the accompanying plan as a Conservation Area.

Included with this letter and proposed boundary map is information outlining the principles of Conservation Area designation and what it would mean to you as a resident.

I welcome any views you might have on this proposal, and in particular any comments you may have on the proposed boundary of the Conservation Area, as the boundary shown is a provisional boundary for consultation purposes. Your comments will be reported back to a future meeting of Shropshire Council, where the Council will consider designating the proposed Conservation Area either in its proposed configuration or in an amended form following the views put forward during this public consultation period.

All properties within and adjoining the proposed Conservation Area are being consulted along with local Council members and relevant external agencies. **Your views and comments should be returned to the following address no later than September 23, 2011:**

Karen Rolfe,
Conservation Assistant
Historic Environment Team
Shropshire Council
Shirehall, Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY2 6ND

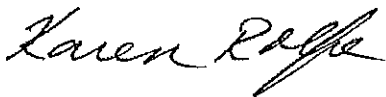
Alternatively, you may email your comments to karen.rolfe@shropshire.gov.uk.

If you are not the property owner, would you please pass this letter and accompanying information on to the appropriate person.

It is our intention to hold an information session in the area on a future date within the consultation period where you can meet with relevant Council officers, learn more about the proposal and raise any issues you may have. We will write to you to advise when this drop-in session is arranged.

Thank you for your assistance and I look forward to receiving your views on this proposal. If you wish to discuss any of the above please contact me on 01743 252506.

Yours sincerely,



Karen Rolfe
Conservation Assistant

APPENDIX 3

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Name	Address	Support / Object	Comments	Date on Letter
Marjorie Bloor	Fallowfield, Great Ness, SY4 2LD	Support	There are many houses of historic interest, a pound and a village pump, rarely seen and an example of a very ancient settlement. Therefore with such outstanding features the area must be preserved.	02/09/2011
Philip and Sheena Marshall	The Old Vicarage, Great Ness, SY4 2LE	Support	We strongly feel that Great Ness should be granted this status, as it is a settlement of significant historic and architectural character. The finger post on the triangle needs to be conserved as it is very much part of the cherished scene of our village.	10/08/2011
Mrs A M Flint	The Dower House, Great Ness, SY4 2LE	Support	Very much in support of the proposal, believes it is an area that should be conserved for future generations.	12/08/2011
Dr Andrew and Kim Macleod	Great Ness House, Great Ness, SY4 2LE	Support	Fully support the scheme.	13/08/2011
J Malcolm Warner	West Lodge, Adcoote, SY4 2JX	Object	Farms in the area and fully opposes this proposal. Believes that the residents of the settlement do not totally understand the implications of conservation area status and believes local residents should be able to preserve the area satisfactorily without the designation.	13/07/2011
Mrs Beryl Percival-Barker	Woodlands, Great Ness, SY4 2LE	Support	This area does simply not have the means of good drainage to accommodate any more housing. Great Ness used to be a very peaceful place, sadly we now have to put up with numerous horse boxes, tractors and farm machinery which is another reason not to build any more housing here as it would mean more traffic.	09/07/2011
Christine M Lewis	Oak House, Great Ness, SY4 2LE	Support	Fully support scheme.	08/07/2011
MH & D Hignfield	Mulberry House, Great Ness, SY4 2LE	Support	Fully support scheme.	05/07/2011
Rodney Smart	The Cott, Great Ness, SY4 2LE	Support	Would like to record the fact that he has been privileged to reside at The Cott for the past 48 years. Both architecturally and historically Great Ness has outstanding charm and character. Drainage is sometimes poor at certain times of the year, Shropshire Council should make sure that together with Conservation area status - no further agricultural or domestic property projects should be considered.	30/06/2011
Debbie Rigby	Peartree Cottage, Great Ness, SY4 2LE	Support	Fully support scheme.	02/07/2011
Jim and Pat Townsend	Candia, Great Ness	Support	Fully support scheme, would like to clarify that the area of the Pound is included within the conservation area boundary.	20/07/2011
Natural England	Crewes, Cheshire, CW1 6GJ	No objection	From the information provided within this application, it does not appear to fall within the scope of the consultations that Natural England would routinely comment on. However they would expect the LPA to assess and consider the possible impacts resulting from this proposal on the following when determining this application: protected species, local wildlife sites and biodiversity enhancements.	27/07/2011
English Heritage (Mike Taylor)	West Midlands Region	No objection	English Heritage advised it does not generally comment on conservation area designations by local authorities as a matter of routine.	13/09/2011

Name	Address	Support / Object	Comments	Date on Letter
Dawn Offen	The White House, Great Ness	Support	Great Ness has not yet been ruined as many other villages in Shropshire have and it deserves to be recognised as the special area it is before its character and landscape are lost. Great Ness is a very special place and hopefully it will be given conservation status to help it remain so.	14/09/2011
Phillip and Brenda Brooks	Lindfield, Great Ness	Support	We are both in favour of the village being recognised as a conservation area and support the proposal completely. We would like to see restrictions on HGV access through the village together with a speed limit of 40mph or less.	17/09/2011
Rita Freeman	Fallowfield, Great Ness, SY4 2LD	Support	I support this proposal very strongly, there are several listed buildings and later development has mostly been on the main road and has blended into the environment. It always seems to have been a compact hamlet in lovely countryside and is an area enjoyed by residents and visitors.	16/09/2011
J M Corfield	The Laurels, Tistock, Whitchurch, SY13 3NS	One query, followed by letter of no objection	In complete agreement with proposal provided the boundary of the conservation area goes down the middle of the road opposite The Fields, Meistone, Crowdy and Fallowfield (easterly edge of village) and her agricultural land opposite is not included within the boundary.	19/09/2011