



Coventry City Council

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# COMMITTEE REPORT

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## **Report to**

Planning Committee

10/05/2018

## **Report of**

Head of Planning and Regulation

## **Title**

Adoption of supplementary Conservation Management Plan to the existing adopted Lady Herbert's Gardens and the Burges Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (December 2014).

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### **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To outline the content of additional documentation which complements and updates the existing Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges Conservation management Plan.
- 1.2 The attached document is intended to be a formal addendum to the initial Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan approved by Planning Committee in 2014, with specific focus on the Burgess area that sits within it.

### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Planning Committee is recommended to adopt the supplementary Conservation Management Plan as an addendum to the existing Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plan allowing for its use as material consideration as part of the planning process.

### **3.0 Information/Background**

- 3.1 Conservation Areas are defined by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an '*area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance*'. Conservation Area designation means that planning permission is required for the demolition of most structures, notice has to be given to fell trees, the extent of permitted development rights is reduced and a high standard is required for all development schemes. Local planning authorities also have a duty to periodically review the extent of the

designated area and expand (or reduce) the Conservation Area boundary as is appropriate.

- 3.2 In December 2014 Planning Committee approved the Lady Herbert's Garden and Burges Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. Significantly, this appraisal and management plan extended the Lady Herbert's Garden Conservation Area to include properties in the Burges, Hales Street and Palmer Lane.
- 3.3 The Conservation Area was originally designated on the 8th August 1969 and the boundary was amended to include the now demolished Coventry Theatre in 1977. In 2014 the extension of the Conservation boundary incorporated the Grade 1 listed Old Grammar School and fourteen locally listed buildings along the Burges, many of which are of medieval origin and relevant to this Addendum. It is proposed that the new regeneration plans, centred on the Burgess, form an Addendum to the existing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and read alongside it.
- 3.4 In November 2015 the stage 1 application was considered by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Board. The Stage 1 application was successful in securing £172,000 of Heritage Lottery funding (Development Grant) to progress the detail of a stage 2 application. Coventry City Council contributed match funding of £20,000 to provide a total development stage budget of £192,000. During February 2016 to June 2017 a professional Team was appointed to develop the scheme detail and design, determine costs, secure match funding and produce all the required supporting documents for a Stage 2 application to be submitted to the HLF.
- 3.5 Corstorphine & Wright Architects were appointed in the development grant stage to prepare a Conservation Management Plan (see Appendix 1) in support of The Burges Conservation Area Townscape Heritage Initiative (see Appendix 2 which show the regeneration boundary and propose regeneration plan). The regeneration plans will further develop earlier documents prepared by Coventry City Council:
  - Lady Herbert's Garden and The Burges: Conservation Area Appraisal, and
  - Lady Herbert's Garden and The Burges: Conservation Area Management Plan

The scope of the new plan includes the properties centred around the Burges, Cross Cheaping, Palmer Lane, and Hales Street, The complete list of properties is as follows:

- Burges (West side): No. 3, No. 5-9, No.'s 11, 13, & 17.
- Burges (East side): No.'s 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, & 29.

- Cross Cheaping (East side): No's 29, 30, & 31.
- Hales Street (South side): No.'s 1, 1a, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13.
- Hales Street (North side): No.'s 4, 6, 8, & 10.

- 3.6 The Addendum is split into two parts. The first part sets out a description of the site and its heritage assets, based on documentary and physical evidence investigated to date. The second part outlines conservation 'policies' to be implemented to ensure the heritage significance of the site and buildings will be retained in future use or development. The policy steer within the Addendum fully reflects formally adopted Planning Policy covered by the Council's new Local Plan and City Centre Area Action Plan (both adopted December 2017).
- 3.7 The Addendum focuses particularly on the locally listed properties to the eastern side of the street (18-30 Burges & 29-31 Cross Cheaping, Hales Street). Archaeological assessments have indicated the area around Palmer Lane was an important route and crossing point from Coventry's earliest times, and archaeological evidence from as far back as the ninth-century has been found in the area. Initial investigations have indicated that the building fabric located in this area is considered to be of high architectural and historical significance. The surviving building fabric contains material evidence from Coventry's earliest phase of development, from the burgage plot forms developed around the River Sherbourne which are still extant, to the later medieval development of timber-framed building ranges still visible to the rear of the properties.
- 3.8 The investigations have also been used to inform the proposed improvement works to the façades along Burges, Cross Cheaping, and Hales Street.
- 3.9 The longer term aim is to utilise the continuous development of the HLF programme and the townscape heritage initiative to bring forward a fully updated appraisal and management plan which will supersede the existing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan prepared by the Council for the Lady Herbert's Garden and Burges Conservation Area in 2014.
- 3.10 The already adopted appraisal and management plans, along with this Addendum defines why the area is of special interest, what is threatening the preservation of that interest and then identifies actions and opportunities for the positive future management of the area. Together, the documents provide a platform from which to support the active management and enhancement of the Conservation Area through the Development Management process.
- 3.11 The adoption of this Addendum as part of the wider Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will also provide an important element of securing further HLF funding as part of the Stage 2 application.

## **4.0 Legal Considerations**

- 4.1 The adoption of the Addendum will support the continued relevance and delivery of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. The Plan and Appraisal as a whole has been developed in accordance with the relevant national Legislation, most notably the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, The Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

Once approved the Addendum will support the wider Conservation Area appraisal and Management Plan as a material consideration when determining relevant planning applications. This reflects the direct referencing to such documents in Policy HE1 of the adopted Local Plan (2016).

## **5.0 Publicity**

- 5.1 A range of stakeholder engagement took place to support the development of the existing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. To support this Addendum and the proposals for the Burgess area in particular a specific consultation event was held on the 11th and 12th May 2017 at the Old Grammar School located within the Conservation Area. This event provided the following outputs:

- 99 people attended the consultation event over the two day
- 38 people commented in detail with very positive feedback
- On Friday 12th May 2017 67 people attended, 21 people made comments on the design of which only one was negative.
- On Saturday 13th May 2017 32 people attended, 17 people commented on the Burges design plans with only one negative comment. 2 comments related to the Grammar School building.
- A summary of the Comments are contained within Appendix 3 of this report.

## **6.0 Financial Considerations**

- 6.1 The adoption of this Addendum will support the Council's stage 2 bid for HLF funding. This will in turn support the delivery of the Management Plan as well as its 'policies' and objectives.

The Council are committed to contributing ongoing officer support to this project which will be absorbed through existing budgets. A further report is scheduled to be presented to Cabinet later this year that will cover any further financial contributions the Council may make to the proposed regeneration works.

## **7.0 Risk Management**

- 7.1 Documentary investigation carried out by the Conservation Architects has demonstrated that the area has suffered a continuous decline and lack of adequate investment since the post-war period. Surrounding urban redevelopment and interventions during the latter half of the twentieth-century have further neglected the area and contributed to its decline.
- 7.2 Site investigations have confirmed that much of the existing building fabric is in poor condition. The buildings are under-utilised; most of the upper floors are vacant, which gives the area an air of dereliction. A number of properties around Palmer Lane are derelict and overgrown, and some of the buildings are open to the elements. Historic timber-framing has been allowed to deteriorate, and many windows have peeling paint, missing cills, and broken panes. Many rainwater gutters and downpipes are leaking or absent entirely, causing water ingress and further deterioration of historic building fabric.
- 7.3 A lack of adequate maintenance is evidenced throughout the area. Many patch repairs and emergency works carried out to reverse wartime damage, when materials were in short supply, can still be seen. Examples include replacement corrugated roofing and basic façade repairs. New works and repairs are generally inadequate or inappropriate to historic fabric. Many of the building services are wholly unsuitable for use in a conservation area, and the rear facades feature an ad-hoc array of condensers, security razor wire, and industrial metal fencing.
- 7.4 The conservation area has already been identified by Historic England as at risk due to neglect, decay, and inappropriate development. It has been recorded as in very bad condition and is deteriorating significantly. The proposed works and conservation management plan has set out specific projects and objectives which propose to reverse this decline. These works have been developed based on an understanding of the architectural and historic significance of the area. They aim to reverse the area's decline and launch its regeneration. They hope to restore, conserve, and protect the Burges as a heritage asset.
- 7.5 If this investment is not made it is likely that the area's deterioration will continue and possibly accelerate, contributing to further damage to historic building fabric already at risk. Investigations have also shown there is considerable surviving historic fabric, which could be restored and reinstated, to create an area of considerable distinctiveness and character. This fabric is in danger of being lost, and with it the opportunity to restore the Burges area.
- 7.6 The management plan aspect of the addendum proposes priority 'policies' & objectives in section 11 of the report (Appendix 1) to reverse inappropriate, more modern adjustments to buildings and drive forward the

regeneration of the Conservation Area and preserve, enhance and protect its historic character.

## **8. Equalities and Diversity**

- 8.1** No EIA has been carried out in relation to the Addendum. The adoption of this Addendum will help deliver the aims and objectives of the overall Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, which in turn will help support the delivery of the heritage and regeneration policies within the Local Plan and City Centre Area Action Plan. Both these documents were subject to EIA as part of their development.

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## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Burgess Conservation Area Management Plan Addendum.

Appendix 2 - Regeneration boundary and propose regeneration plan.

Appendix 3 - Summary of consultation comments.