

**RAMSEY CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN
(Report by HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Conservation Area Management Plan has been produced to clearly identify, co-ordinate and programme a series of specific projects for the enhancement of the Ramsey Conservation Area.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to consider the Management Plan and approve it for consultation purposes. Once representations have been received and considered, it is intended to adopt the Plan which will carry weight as a material consideration in relevant planning decisions and as a programme for further project work in the town.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Management Plan is the third document relating to the Ramsey Conservation Area being considered by Cabinet today. The first is the Conservation Area Boundary Review, which re-assesses the appropriateness of the original Area boundary drawn on 24th November 1975, and recommends amendments. The second is the Conservation Area Character Statement, which identifies the new Area's special character, as well as the opportunity for future enhancement. The Management Plan flows directly from this second document. It proposes a series of specific projects which, taken together, will help to improve the character and appeal of the town.
- 2.2 Local Planning Authorities are required by Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to review the boundaries of their designated Conservation Areas and to consider programmes for their enhancement. The Management Plan satisfies this requirement.
- 2.3 At a strategic level, the Plan also corresponds with proposals emerging from the Ramsey Area Partnership (RAP) Action Plan.

3. THE PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The Management Plan is presented to Cabinet in the form of a strategy plan and a schedule of projects. If Cabinet approves these documents, subject to public consultation, the intention is for each project to be progressed in more detail. Where appropriate, this

detailed work will be subject to further public consultation and approval by Cabinet.

- 3.2 The schedule of projects is divided into distinct areas of work. These will require the contribution of a range of officers and interest groups, but they are all intended to respond to deficiencies identified by the Character Statement. The intention of the Plan is therefore to co-ordinate projects being carried out within the Conservation Area and to avoid piecemeal outcomes - thereby maximising benefit.
- 3.3 The following areas of work are presented in the Plan:
- 3.4 *Urban Design Frameworks*: these are major documents making a comprehensive assessment of large areas of land. Each Framework document will require separate consultation and approval as Planning Guidance.
- 3.5 *Development Briefs*: these look in detail at specific opportunity sites, giving specific advice about planning and design issues. Once approved as Planning Guidance, this information will be used by the District Council to achieve the most appropriate forms of development.
- 3.6 *Negative or neutral areas*: there are parts of the Conservation Area which are of indifferent quality and either detract from its character or, at best, do not make a positive contribution to it. This study identifies the location of these, explains the deficiencies and gives general advice about possible improvements.
- 3.7 *Enhancement areas*: it is important to identify specific areas of a Conservation Area where projects of enhancement would further benefit its character. These are usually developed as a result of 'street audits' and a list of potential minor or major improvement projects. In the first instance, the Plan identifies key areas of the town where funds should be targeted. Further detailed work will identify the location and content of specific projects.
- 3.8 *Heritage/tourism areas*: as part of a wider strategy for the promotion of tourism in the town, the Plan identifies specific locations where improvements could be made to reinforce the town's sense of place as well as its appeal as a tourist destination.
- 3.9 *Community facilities*: the Plan identifies locations where potential exists to provide an appropriate community focus. These will form part of a wider strategy promoted within the Ramsey Action Plan.
- 3.10 The Management Plan will be subject to revision as projects are completed and new opportunities arise.

4. CONCLUSION


- 4.1 As a complementary document to the Boundary Review and Character Statement, the Plan represents best practice in the management and enhancement of Conservation Areas. It will enable the District Council and local community to be actively involved at an early stage in the development and implementation of a series of projects intended to improve to the Conservation Area.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That the Cabinet approves the Draft Management Plan as a material consideration in planning decisions and as a basis for further consultation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPG 2004
Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment SPG 2004
Ramsey Conservation Area Boundary Review
Ramsey Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Conservation Area Boundary Review Policy Document Jan 2003

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