

**THE HOUGHTON AND WYTON CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER
ASSESSMENT AND BOUNDARY REVIEW
(Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being))**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 13th November 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) considered the report by the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy on the Houghton and Wyton Conservation Area Character Assessment and Boundary Review. The following paragraphs contain a summary of the Panel's discussions on the report.

2. THE PANEL'S DISCUSSIONS

- 2.1 The Conservation Area Character Assessment and Boundary Review have been produced in compliance with an undertaking given to Houghton and Wyton Parish Council. The Panel has congratulated Officers on the quality and high standard of their content. In particular attention has been drawn to the fact that the size of the Conservation area will increase by 30%. As a result, there will be comprehensive coverage of green space in the Ouze Valley.

- 2.2 Members have discussed a suggestion that Area Two of the map at Appendix 4 should be included in the Conservation Area. An appraisal of this area is included in the report by the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy at paragraphs 5.5 to 5.8. The document needs to be robust enough to withstand legal challenge and, as the area does not meet the Conservation Area criteria, its inclusion might undermine this. The Conservation Area Character Assessment is needed to reinforce the Urban Design Framework (UDF). If the UDF is implemented Area Two will be of a standard that would make it eligible for inclusion in the Conservation Area. It has been argued that, in this case, the opportunity should be taken to include it at this stage. However, given that this might undermine the ability of Conservation Area Character Assessment to withstand a legal challenge, it has been accepted that this matter should be revisited when the obstacles to its inclusion have been removed.

- 2.3 The Panel has recommended the Cabinet to:

- endorse the revised Houghton and Wyton Conservation Area Character Assessment and Conservation Area Boundary Review and adopt both documents, and
- revisit the inclusion of Area Two in the Conservation Area at the appropriate time.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The Cabinet is requested to take into consideration the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) as set out above when considering this item.

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Background Documents - Reports and Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) held on 13th November 2012.