

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Cabinet	Date:	11 October 2023
Subject:	Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy		
Wards Affected:	All wards		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
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Appendices:	1. Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal – Draft for Consultation, Oct 2023		
	2. Map of the Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To obtain Cabinet's approval to consult on the Draft Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan prior to issuing the document for public consultation. Following consultation and further amendment the Council will be asked to adopt the Assessment as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that the draft Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be approved for consultation amongst the public and interested parties in the city centre.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 A draft of the Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 The document has been drafted by the Council's Principal Conservation officer, Ullin Jodah McStea drawing on consultancy advice commissioned from Donald Insall Associates, Chartered Architects and Historic Buildings Consultants.
- 3.3 A conservation area appraisal defines the special interest of the conservation area that merits its designation and describes and evaluates the contribution made by the different features to its character and appearance. It will be used by Council officers and the Planning Committee when considering applications for development, and serve as a guide for developers, owners, and tenants in preparing proposals for development.

- 3.4 The Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area includes the Gate Streets, the King's Quarter, the Eastgate including Greyfriars, and the Blackfriars area. A map of the area within the scope of the document is at Appendix 2. This is one of 14 Conservation Areas covering the city and does not include the Cathedral, the Prison and other areas that sit within the city centre, which are included within adjacent conservation areas.
- 3.5 The City Centre Conservation was last appraised in 2007 and much has changed to the character and context of the area to warrant the current review. Significant parts of the area have been the subject of enhancement and regeneration, and the local and national policy context affecting development has also changed. The Council's adopted Heritage Strategy (2019-2029) refers to the requirement to review certain conservation area boundaries, including the City Centre Conservation Area, and to review the management plan associated with each of them.

4.0 Key points within the Draft Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

4.1 The Appraisal and Management Plan is set out in the following three sections:

- 4.1.1. **Understanding the area:** This consists of a brief summary of the area, its historic development, its significance and components. Much of this has been compiled from third party documents, including the 2007 Conservation Area Appraisal
- 4.1.2 **Site appraisal:** The conservation area is divided into four character areas. The key elements of each character area, and how they contribute to the character and significance of the conservation area, are outlined and appraised. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to each character are also assessed and used to inform the final section of the document.
- 4.1.3 **Management of change:** This section sets out a series of principles to guide future development whilst ensuring that the special character of the area is preserved and enhanced where possible. They have been updated since the earlier appraisal. Many of these principles relate to other council policies.

5.0 Social Value Considerations

51 The adoption of an updated Appraisal and Management Plan that has been subject to public consultation will strengthen the Council's ability to extract social value from development schemes in the area.

6.0 Environmental Implications

6.1 The Appraisal provides interpretation and context as well as a framework to further the protection and enhancement of the environment. The document deals mainly with the built environment, including buildings of architectural merit and heritage importance, and it also acknowledges the importance of the public realm and areas of open and green space within the conservation area.

7.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 7.1 To continue without updating the Appraisal and Management Plan. The extant document, produced in 2007 would become increasingly outdated and irrelevant, potentially exposing the Council to challenge and resistance to its efforts to improve the city centre.

8.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 8.1 To strengthen and update the relevance of the Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

9.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 9.1 In order to recommend to Council that the Draft Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance it needs to be subject to public consultation for a minimum period.
- 9.2 The draft of the Appraisal and Management Plan will therefore be subject to consultation amongst the public and with key stakeholders over a 6 week period. It is Officers' intention to hold at least one public meeting to which all members of the City Council will be invited. Officers will also request to attend meetings of the Gloucester Civic Trust, the Gloucester Heritage Forum, the Gloucester Business Improvement District, the Gloucester Development Forum and the Gloucester City Centre Commission.
- 9.3 Following the above programme of public consultation the document will be reviewed and amended in the light of the consultation responses and comments received. The amended document will then be presented again to Cabinet in December, followed by Council in early 2024 for adoption as SPG.

10.0 Financial Implications

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

11.0 Legal Implications

- 11.1 It is a statutory requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for a local planning authority from time to time to review parts of their area that are designated as conservations areas and to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation areas. In so doing there is a duty to consult the local community on the proposals, including the holding of a public meeting, and for the local planning authority to have regard of the views expressed by consultees.
- 11.2 Due to the fact that the finalised Appraisal is intended to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document the consultation and publication arrangements of the Appraisal will also need to take account of the requirements of the Town and

Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 as amended and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

11.3 One Legal has been consulted on this report

12.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

12.1

Risks	Mitigation
That the public fails to engage with the public consultation programme on the document.	Officers will carry out an extended consultation period, promoting opportunities to engage via social media channels and contacts within local communities within the Westgate Ward.
Objection to management proposals	Consultation amongst relevant businesses within the development industry

12.2

Opportunities
To enhance the city centre by strengthening the protection afforded through the planning system.
To raise awareness of the enormous heritage value of the City Centre Conservation Area.
To communicate and reinforce the Council's ambition to drive up standards of development in the city centre.

13.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

13.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact; therefore, a full PIA was not required.

14.0 Community Safety Implications

14.1 There are no direct Community Safety implications of this report.

15.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

14.1 None

Background Documents: None