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Mr P Trehitt  
Chairman of Environment Subgroup  
Parwich Village Action Group  
Hallcliffe House  
The Green  
Parwich  
Derbyshire  
DE6 1QA

Your ref:  
Our ref: SA/ A4181  
Date: 21 July 2008

Dear Mr Trehitt,

### **Parwich Draft Conservation Area Appraisal: Public Consultation Responses**

I am writing to you in your role as Chairman of the Environment Subgroup of the Parwich Village Action Group, in response to the comments on the Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, received as part of the Public Consultation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the Village Action Group for the time and trouble you have taken in making your extensive and informative responses. I recognise the extent to which this reflects your commitment to the future of your village.

The Environment Subgroup of the Parwich Village Action Group has requested sight of the Authority's responses to all comments received and of any changes which are to be made to the Draft document as a result. The same issues were raised by a number of respondents, with only a few miscellaneous additional comments, and I have therefore produced a combined response to all comments, including details of any changes that will be made to the document, which you can place on your village website. It is intended that this response will be an appendix to the report to Committee on the draft Conservation Area Appraisal. The responses (please see attached tables) are separated into two groups: those to comments made by yourself and by the Environment Subgroup of the Parwich Village Action Group; and those to additional comments raised by individual residents.

A number of issues are obviously of particular concern within the village and are therefore discussed in detail below (these issues are also responded to individually within the attached tables). These key issues concern the purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal, the consultation process and the Conservation Area boundary.

#### **1. Purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal**

*There remain, on occasions, significant misconceptions about the purpose and remit of a Conservation Area Appraisal. Respondents refer to the setting of objectives for future action, to the proactive management of change, and to the development of design guidelines, all of which are beyond the remit of an Appraisal.*

For clarification once more, English Heritage guidance states that the purpose of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal is to define and analyse the special historic character and appearance that justified the designation of the area. The setting of objectives for improvement and change, in partnership with relevant parties, falls within the remit of a Management Plan and is not the purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal. When resources are available for the production of a Management Plan, these issues will be explored more fully with a wide range of partners and stakeholders.

It is also beyond the scope of an Appraisal to provide specific design guidance or recommendations. A number of Detailed Design Guidance Notes, as supplements to the Authority's Design Guide, will be published in the near future and will provide detailed advice to guide new development. These, together with the Design Guide, will need to be read in conjunction with an Appraisal.

## **2. The Consultation Process**

*Respondents have requested a broader and more extensive consultation for the Draft Appraisal.*

It should be noted that the standard Authority procedure for consultation on Conservation Area Appraisals, incorporating English Heritage advice, has been followed in Parwich, as elsewhere. The Authority's procedure is as follows:

- A preliminary internal consultation period where other Authority services are able to comment.
- This is followed by a six-week public consultation period, including an open drop-in session, with Authority Conservation Officers in attendance, during which time anyone, whether individually or as a group, may submit comments on the draft document. All residents within the Conservation Area, together with the Parish, District and County Councils, relevant Members and other relevant interested groups (e.g. the Village Action Group and Local History Society in Parwich, via P. Trehitt) are all informed by letter of the existence of the Draft Appraisal, of the six-week consultation period and of the drop-in session, and therefore have the opportunity to attend and/or comment if they so wish.
- Following the consultation period and any resultant amendments to the document, the amended Draft Appraisal is presented to Committee for adoption.

It is considered that the above process enables all those with a potential interest in the contents of the Appraisal to become aware of its availability and to be able to access it and make comment. Any wider extension of notification and consultation is not considered to be either cost effective or provide value for money.

## **3. The Conservation Area Boundary**

*i) A number of respondents have proposed that the Conservation Area boundary should be extended to include West View, Chestnut Cottages, Sycamore Cottages and Smithy Close.*

When the Conservation Area was designated in 1986, an explicit decision was taken to exclude the Local Authority housing on the edges of the village, as it was felt that these properties do not make a significant contribution to the special character of the Conservation Area. It was also felt that to exclude similar properties located more

centrally within the village (such as Church Walk and Croft Avenue), would create an unwieldy boundary lacking in coherence.

Although further housing has now been added to the fringes of the village, the same issues remain: these areas of twentieth century housing on the periphery of the village do not make a sufficiently significant contribution to the special architectural or historic character of the area to justify inclusion in the Conservation Area.

However, the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15, Paragraph 4.14) states that "The desirability of preserving or enhancing the area should be a material consideration in the planning authority's handling of development proposals which are outside the Conservation Area but would affect its setting, or views into or out of the area". This means that all of the twentieth century housing on the edges of the village but outside the Conservation Area boundary will be covered by normal development controls. These controls will also take into account the potential impact of any proposed developments in these areas on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

*ii) A number of respondents have proposed that the Conservation Area boundary should be extended to include Carr's Cross on the summit of Parwich Hill, the slopes up to the Flatts and Sitterlow, and the Wings.*

PPG15 (Paragraph 4.6) states that "Designation is not likely to be appropriate as a means of protecting landscape features, except where they form an integral part of the historic built environment". English Heritage's publication 'Conservation Area Practice' states that the immediate setting of the village should only be included within the boundary of the Conservation Area if it justifies the additional controls which designation brings. Inclusion is not necessary if the area is protected in other ways, or if it can be protected by applying normal development controls in a way which recognises the impact of the setting on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is considered that, in line with PPG15, Paragraph 4.14 (see above) most of the landscape surrounding the Parwich Conservation Area is sufficiently protected by normal development control procedures and there is no need, therefore, to extend the Conservation Area boundary to include these areas.

The Conservation Area boundary was drawn to include Parwich Hill, as this was seen to be more closely related to the built environment by presenting a backdrop to the village. Carr's Cross, the woodland at the top of the hill, is separately protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO) Number 26, and has not, therefore, been included within the Conservation Area boundary.

Thank you once again for your consultation responses. I hope that you find the above comments, and the enclosure, useful in clarifying which of the issues that you have raised the Authority is able to take on board and how this has been done, as well as the reasons why this has not occurred in some instances.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Adam  
Conservation Officer  
Cultural Heritage Team