Committee: Planning Committee

Date of meeting: 13 June 2017

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<th>Subject:</th>
<th>Designation of Templemere, Weybridge, as a new Conservation Area</th>
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<tr>
<td>Author:</td>
<td>Heritage, Landscape and Tree Manager</td>
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<td>Portfolio Holder:</td>
<td>Councillor Karen Randolph - Portfolio Holder for Planning Services</td>
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<td>Link to Council Priorities:</td>
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<td>Exempt information:</td>
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<td>Delegated status:</td>
<td>For Resolution</td>
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<td>Key decision:</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

To consider the designation of Templemere, Weybridge as a new Conservation Area and to endorse the Character Appraisal and Management Plan document for Templemere.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE COMMITTEE:

(A) CONFIRMS THE AREA OF TEMPLEMERE, WEYBRIDGE AS INDICATED ON THE PLAN IN APPENDIX A BE DESIGNATED AS A CONSERVATION AREA AS DEFINED IN SECTION 69 OF THE PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990; AND

(B) ENDORSES THE CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN DOCUMENT FOR TEMPLEMERE CONSERVATION AREA.

REPORT:

1. Background

1.1 Section 69 of the Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990 states that “every local planning authority- a] shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance and b] shall designate those areas as conservation areas”. There are also duties to review designated areas and their boundaries and following designation to draw up and publish preservation and enhancement proposals, and to exercise their planning powers for preservation and enhancement.
1.2 Conservation Area Character Appraisals provide a clear written definition and analysis of the character and appearance which makes the area “special”. They cover aspects of historical development, surviving historic features, character areas, types of buildings and negative issues. Management Plans identify actions and opportunities for preservation and enhancement and set out proposals for monitoring and review. These are considered in conjunction with the Council's Local Plan and provide a firm basis for understanding the area, informing decision making including assessing development proposals within and adjacent to the Conservation Area, monitoring and management. These recognise that areas continually evolve and guide appropriate change rather than seeking to stifle innovation or ignore the benefits of new materials and technology.

2. Previous designations and work undertaken to date

2.1 Elmbridge has 25 conservation areas which include historic town centres in Esher and Weybridge, village greens at Giggs Hill Green and West End, an Edwardian “Arts and Crafts” style retirement village at Whiteley and a motor racing circuit at Brooklands. The majority of these historic areas were designated in the 1970s and it is only relatively recently that the significance of mid or late 20th C heritage assets is being recognised. The Planning Committee designated a collection of 16 houses built in the 1970s of modular brick and glass components at Lakeside Drive in Esher in November 2013.

2.2 The Committee also agreed to the recommendation to investigate Templemere as a potential candidate for Conservation Area status. This followed a request by the Committee of Templemere Residents’ Society (TRS) in March 2013 to consider the estate for Conservation Area status. Officers investigated a number of other 1960s’ Span sites in Weybridge but concluded that the most significant example was Templemere. In the interim the Heritage team have undertaken a new Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CAMP) document for Downside Village Conservation Area, a new CAMP document for The Tilt Conservation Area and produced and are implementing the new Heritage Strategy.

3 Investigation of the Templemere estate

3.1 Templemere is an estate of 1960s houses set in a series of octagonal forms and, like Lakeside Drive, these are set in an 18th C historic landscape with a setting of mature trees. Constructed c1963-65, its significance is that it is such an excellent example of the work of Span Developments Ltd. These were housing developers, whose design philosophy evolved from the Modernist Movement in architecture. The
Span ethos was to build new houses to accommodate existing landscape features and to devise plans which fostered a sense of community. The architect was Eric Lyons (who lived and practised in East Molesey) and he and his partner landscape architect Ivor Cunningham laid out a range of 65 houses in crescents and staggered terraces on the higher land within the 18 acre site. They described the space as flowing on like a water course and losing itself in all directions, bubbling round trees and clusters, going down into the woods and disappearing. Existing mature trees were retained and integrated into the development and further planting by Preben Jacobsen used layering, plant form and texture to create a distinctive landscape. Houses were conceived as “modern machines for living” designed to allow maximum light into the open plan layouts. The architectural styles were consistent with repetitive features for windows, doors, porches and brickwork and roof details.

3.2 The estate has an active Residents Society which has maintained the estate in a very good condition, using existing covenants and publishing information such as the House Style and Product Guide. However, they recognised the importance of defining what is important, why this is significant and what elements such as materials, proportionality and colour make up this character as well as identifying negative elements through an investigation and appraisal.

3.3 The initial investigative work and subsequent character appraisal was undertaken by the Templemere Working Group between April and June 2016. This comprised local residents from the Templemere Residents’ Society, the Surrey Gardens Trust, Council officers from Development Management and the Heritage team and independent consultants from Forum Heritage Services. This follows best practice from the Council’s previous CHIP studies and Historic England guidance to work collaboratively with the community. The general consensus from the Templemere Working Group was that Templemere is of architectural significance that this should be recognised by considering it for Conservation Area status and undertaking a Character Appraisal.

4 Context

4.1 A number of Span estates are already designated as Conservation Areas and these include the Parkleys, Mallard Place and Fieldend Estates by the London Borough of Richmond-on-Thames and the Manygate Lane Estate by Spelthorne Borough Council.
5 Consultation

5.1 The proposal to designate Templemere as a new Conservation Area and the Character Appraisal and Management Plan document was the subject of a six-week period of public consultation finishing on 16th January 2017. Consultation letters were sent to all addressees within and adjacent to the proposed conservation area and there was good coverage in the local press. There was a small exhibition in the Civic Centre foyer, and the consultation document was available to view on the Council’s website and in printed form. A list of FAQs was also published within the document and as a separate item to address queries including the separate but complementary nature of the existing covenant and planning legislation including the effects on Permitted Development rights.

5.2 A number of responses were received from residents and organisations and the majority of consultees were very supportive of the CAMP document findings and the proposal to designate Templemere as a new Conservation area. There were also a number of objections and these, together with the actions taken are summarised in Appendix B. If designated it is proposed that a new Templemere Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) is established to ensure local residents are involved, rather than approaching the existing Weybridge CAAC to administer this additional area. If designated, notice of the designation must be published in the London Gazette and at least one newspaper circulating in the locality. The designation will, in addition, be notified to the Secretary of State and to Historic England. The Council would also notify all owner-occupiers within the new conservation area.

6 Conclusion

6.1 A careful analysis of the architectural and other merits of Templemere, taking full account of the representations received, leads to the conclusion that the statutory criteria for designation are satisfied. Templemere, an area precisely defined in Appendix A, is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Committee is therefore recommended to confirm the designation of Templemere as a new Conservation Area and to endorse the Appraisal and Management Plan document.

Financial implications:
None for the purpose of this report.

Environmental implications:
None for the purpose of this report.
Legal implications:
If the Committee so resolves, the designation will take effect from the date of resolution and will be notified as set out in the report.

Equality Implications:
None for the purpose of this report.

Risk Management Implications:
None for the purposes of this report

Community Safety Implications:
None for the purpose of this report.

Background papers:
None

Enclosures/Appendices:
Appendix A – Templemere, Weybridge – Proposed Conservation Area Plan
Appendix B – Summary of Consultation Responses

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