

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CABINET
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	OXFORD STREET CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	13 FEBRUARY 2012
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT
<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
None.	

### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

An appraisal was carried out of the Oxford Street Conservation Area during 2010 as part of the continuing appraisal programme. While no boundary changes have been suggested, (page 51 of the Appraisal will be amended to reflect this), the final document recommends a number of management proposals that will help to guide future development in the area over the coming years.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (i) To adopt the Conservation Area Appraisal and to agree that the policies contained within the Management Proposals will guide future development proposals in the Conservation Area.

### **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To enable the Council to manage change inside the Conservation Area within a clear framework.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

2. Not to adopt the Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA). This would result in a significant loss of good will built up with the residents and traders over the last year, and would result in additional strains on resources, as the Council is obliged to review the existing Appraisal in any event.

### **DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

3. A Conservation Area (CA) is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Southampton City Council designated Oxford Street as a CA in 1972 to conserve the special character and appearance of the area. The last appraisal of the area was published in 1982, and is therefore some 30 years old.
4. The Oxford Street Conservation Area is a mix of buildings of different ages, with primarily commercial properties at the east end, and primarily residential; at the west. Many of the properties on Oxford Street itself are listed, dating from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There are some 1960s-1970s blocks, mainly of poor quality, and a substantial amount of more recent residential units which attempt to reference the predominant Georgian style of the area.
5. The Appraisal was carried out over several months by Turley Associates, who were appointed after a process of competitive tender. As well as carrying out an analysis of the area, they arranged for public consultation, including postcard drops and public meetings. It was finalised and approved in November 2011.

6. Since the appraisal was commissioned there have been a number of policy proposals that will or may have an effect on the area. Chief amongst these are the proposals to dual Platform Road, (which forms the southern boundary of the Conservation area), and the partial pedestrianization of the eastern end of Oxford Street. Both of these proposals were discussed at public meetings, and both received broad support for the attendees.
7. The main issue raised by both residents and traders was the volume and speed of traffic in the area, particularly along John Street and around Queens Park. While it is outside the scope of the appraisal to resolve these issues, it is clear that the work currently being undertaken by the Council will go some way to improving the situation.
8. Anti-social behaviour and an increase in begging were seen as another key issue, although there was no general agreement as to the extent and nature of the problem. Many residents felt that instances had increased since the refurbishment of the Salvation Army hostel, but the views among traders were less clear-cut. While it may be possible to influence this issue through measures such as designing new projects to reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour, much of the solution lies outside the scope of this appraisal.
9. In common with other areas of the city, vacant properties are potentially damaging to the perception and viability of the CA. This is largely the result of the current economic climate and the problem is not unique to Oxford Street. The CAA will help with any eventual recovery by ensuring that the character of the area (which remains vibrant despite the downturn) is protected and enhanced by providing guidance on appropriate design for redevelopment. It should be noted that the appraisal makes it clear that there is no reason why certain sites could not be developed using modern architectural practices. The key to such development lies not in a slavish adherence to neo-Georgian pastiche, but in respecting the character of the area through good design, appropriate materials, and a respect for the scale and massing of existing buildings in the area.
10. The adoption of this appraisal will assist the Local Planning Authority to ensure that proposals for future development both enhance the area and assist with future regeneration.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Capital/Revenue**

11. There are no capital implications arising from this report.
12. The revenue costs of publicity of up to £3,000 arising from this report can be contained within existing approved Environment & Transport revenue estimates.

### **Property/Other**

13. There are no Property implications arising from the recommendations contained within this report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

14. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

**Other Legal Implications:**

15 The Council must be satisfied that any conservation area management plan conforms to the requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998, in particular Article 1 of the First Protocol in relation to the Protection of Property. Any interference with property rights (including restricting development opportunities etc) must be necessary and proportionate in order to control the use of property in accordance with the general public interest.

**POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

16 The recommendations set out in the CAA are based on and complement the existing policies set out in the Core Strategy and the saved policies of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review.

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**KEY DECISION?** No

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	Bargate
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**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line**

**Appendices**

1.	Oxford Street Conservation Area Appraisal
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**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	N/A
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**Integrated Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	No
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**Other Background Documents**

**Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	N/A	
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