

Council

18 April 2024

Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area – Request to Extend the Conservation Area

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Curry, Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration

Report from: Adam Bryan - Director of Place

Author: Ross Crayford – Conservation Officer

Summary

This report seeks Council approval to extend the boundary of the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area, as recommended in the Management Plan.

The Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan were previously approved by Cabinet on 13 February 2024, as set out at section 6 to this report.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1. The Council is asked to approve the extension of the boundary of the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area to include the Bethal Chapel, Chatham High Street, Manor Road and Hammond Hill, as set out in Appendix 4 to the report.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. The Medway Local Plan is the statutory development plan for the area and forms part of the Council's Policy Framework. Conservation Areas are included as part of the development plan. Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the formulation, publication, and public consultation on proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. From time to time Conservation Areas must be also be reviewed as required by Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 2.2. The Conservation Area Appraisal complies with the Policy Framework. Approval for the adoption of the Conservation Area Appraisal is a matter for Cabinet. It has no budget implications. The Appraisal is produced to meet statutory requirements for the local planning authority for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas.

- 2.3. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been produced as part of the current High Street Heritage Action Zone which ended in March 2024. It is an ambition of the project programme to adopt a Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 2.4. The Cabinet agreed the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan on 12 March 2024. However, extensions to the Conservation Area boundary, as proposed within the Management Plan, require Full Council approval.

3. Background

- 3.1. Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans help define the historic, architectural and townscape qualities that make a Conservation Area special. Their production helps the Council meet their legal duty under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for the formulation, publication, and public consultation on proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. From time to time Conservation Areas must be also be reviewed as required by Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 3.2. Medway has 24 Conservation Areas, 6 of which currently have adopted Conservation Area Appraisals. The last Conservation Area Appraisal adopted in Medway was for the Upper Upnor Conservation Area in 2022.
- 3.3. The Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was produced as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme in tandem with the Significance-Led Development Framework.
- 3.4. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was subject to public consultation as set out in section 7 of this report.

4. Options

- 4.1. The options available are:
 - A. Approve the proposed extension of the boundary of the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area.
 - B. Reject all or part of the proposed extension to the boundary of the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area.
- 4.2. Option A is the recommended option following approval of the Conservation Area Management Plan by the Cabinet.

5. Advice and analysis

- 5.1. The Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been prepared by Conservation Officers within the Planning Service to ensure it meets the requirements of national planning policy and guidance.

Historic England also provided comments on the Appraisal and Management Plan.

- 5.2. Officers advise that the adoption of the Appraisal and Management Plan will support the continued conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.
- 5.3. As part of the production of the Appraisal and Management Plan, four potential extensions to the existing Conservation Area boundary were identified and included as part of the public consultation.
- 5.4. Responses to the proposed boundary extensions were favourable, these extensions require the agreement of Full Council.
- 5.5. Details of the proposed extension to the Conservation Area boundary, comprising an extract from the Management Plan explaining the rationale for each area of extension, and maps of the existing and proposed boundary are set out at Appendix 4 to this report.

6. Cabinet

- 6.1. The Cabinet considered the report on 13 February 2024 and its decision is set out below:
- 6.2. The Cabinet agreed to the adoption of the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

7. Risk management

- 7.1. Risk management is set out below:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Not extending the Conservation Area.	The areas proposed to be included into the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area are not currently within a Conservation Area.	Extend the Conservation Area will allow for these areas gaining the recommended recognition for their heritage significance as part of the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area.	CIII

For risk rating, please refer to the following table:

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very likely	I Catastrophic
B Likely	II Major
C Unlikely	III Moderate
D Rare	IV Minor

8. Consultation

- 8.1. The public consultation ran between 16 October 2023 and 26 November 2023 and included a presentation to the Intra PACT group to help meet the requirements of Section 71(2) and (3) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 8.2. Electronic copies of the Appraisal and Management Plan were made available through the Council website, and paper copies made available for inspection at Chatham and Rochester libraries.
- 8.3. Internal and external consultees and stakeholders were contacted directly for any comments that they wished to make on the revised appraisal.
- 8.4. Statutory consultees (such as Historic England) were also consulted.
- 8.5. 32 responses were received to the public consultation, with 29 arriving through the online survey, and 3 arriving separately by email. Most comments were supportive of the approaches presented in the Appraisal and Management Plan, but some amendments were also suggested, as set out in the table in Appendix 3.
- 8.6. Where suggested amendments to the content of the appraisal could be accommodated, the content has been altered accordingly.
- 8.7. Some suggestions were beyond the scope of the appraisal and so could not be incorporated into the final content or were of more relevance to the Development Framework and so were considered accordingly.

9. Climate change implications

- 9.1. There are no direct climate change implications emerging from the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, however guidance is provided within the Management Plan with regard to retrofitting and building adaptation to help address climate change. Further guidance on the matter is due to be published by Historic England later this year.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1. There are no financial implications to the council other than officer time which can be accommodated from within existing budgets.

11. Legal implications

- 11.1. The legal implications are set out in the body of this report.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Appraisal.

Appendix 2: Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Management Plan.

Appendix 3: Consultation response table

Appendix 4: Details of the proposed extension to the Conservation Area boundary, comprising an extract from the Management Plan explaining the rationale for each area of extension, and maps of the existing and proposed boundary.

Background papers

None