

Report to	<b>Planning Committee</b>
Date	<b>13 July 2017</b>
By	<b>Director of Planning</b>
Title of Report	<b>West Meon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan</b>
Purpose of Report	<b>To approve the West Meon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for adoption</b>

**Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1) Approve the West Meon Conservation Area and Management Plan attached at Appendix I for the purposes of development management and to inform the wider activities of the South Downs National Park Authority and its partner organisations.**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 West Meon Conservation Area lies within Winchester District in the Meon Valley about twelve miles north of Fareham and six miles west of Petersfield. It was first designated as a Conservation Area in 1972 by Hampshire County Council.
- 1.2 The consultation draft of this Appraisal was prepared by the SDNPA Conservation Officers in-house and does not replace previous guidance. The final text and analysis map of the new document, amended in the light of public comment, will be found attached to this report as **Appendix I**.
- 1.3 The appraisal will satisfy the statutory obligation to periodically review conservation areas placed on Local Planning Authorities by Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The document formulates recommendations for preservation and enhancement within a formal Management Plan.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 As Local Planning Authority, SDNPA has responsibility for policy matters, including conservation area management and periodic review. A programme of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans gave priority to the towns in its early stages and had turned to smaller settlements by 2015, when West Meon was surveyed.
- 2.2 West Meon is a larger village located in the upper reaches of the River Meon, located on an ancient crossroad. It originally had a Saxon-Norman church, wholly replaced with a much larger structure by George Gilbert Scott in the 1840s.
- 2.3 The village is noteworthy for its collection of well-preserved late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century domestic architecture.
- 2.4 Communication north and south was improved by the Fareham – Alton turnpike around 1780. The short-lived Meon Valley railway arrived as late as 1903. Although it ceased operation by 1962, the site of the station, just outside the Conservation Area, remains highly legible. Today, the tranquillity of the wider settlement is somewhat compromised by busy traffic on the A32.

2.5 Conservation Areas are a local heritage designation. Central Government does not seek to fetter the judgement of Local Planning Authorities to assess the boundaries of conservation areas from a local perspective, as they see fit. However, paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework states;

*When considering the designation of conservation areas, Local Planning Authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural and historic interest and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.*

The established boundaries of the West Meon Conservation Area have been considered against this test and are believed to comply with it. No boundary extensions are proposed.

2.6 Action points in the Conservation Area Management Plan relate to:

- Inclusion of the Queen Victoria Institute to the emerging Local List of historic buildings.
- Enhancing the existing Buildings at Risk survey with up-to-date photographs of identified buildings.
- Seeking to secure repairs to *Mill House* and *Shafts House* in co-operation with the owners.
- Effective and well informed development management.
- Monitoring change, in case an Article 4 Direction, to prevent degradation of character through loss of architectural detail or boundary treatments becomes necessary.
- Undertaking feasibility for a scheme of public realm enhancement.
- Considering a plan to remove overhead cables.

2.7 The consultation draft was published on the SDNPA website for public comment from the 22 February to the 5 April, 2017. All householders within the conservation area were alerted by letter and a hard copy of the document was sent to the Parish Council with another lodged at Petersfield Library. Specific consultations were sent to the Parish Council, Winchester City Council, Hampshire County Council and Historic England.

2.8 Two responses were received, summarised in **Appendix 2**. Amendments made to the final document are recorded in the right-hand column.

### 3. Conclusions

3.1 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for West Meon is an entirely new document which should provide assistance to all participants in the development process by identifying aspects of heritage significance and providing an authoritative point of reference.

3.2 Action points in the Conservation Area Management Plan will codify existing measures and introduce new ones to offer greater guidance and control of those aspects of development which may affect the special interest, character and appearance of the historic settlement.

### 4. Other Implications

Implication	
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was prepared by the Conservation Officers of SDNPA and it is proposed to undertake the implementation of the Management Plan in-house, within the existing resources of the Planning Directorate. Once the document has been adopted it will be made available as a downloadable PDF document from the Authority's website so will not incur any printing costs. There are costs involved in the implementation

	of the Management Plan, but the majority of these will be absorbed within existing budgets of the Planning Service. Where this cannot be achieved, prioritisation, partnerships or external sources of funding will be considered.
Has due regard been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	Due regard, where relevant, has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equalities Act 2010.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	This Appraisal and Management Plan has been considered in the light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	None.
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	It is not thought there are any Health and Safety implications arising from the adoption of this document.
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy: 1. Living within environmental limits 2. Ensuring a strong healthy and just society 3. Achieving a sustainable economy 4. Promoting good governance 5. Using sound science responsibly	Principle 1 - Living within Environmental Limits Principle 3 - Achieving a Sustainable Economy

## 5. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

- 5.1 Physical and environmental risks associated with this recommendation are not significant.
- 5.2 Should SDNPA neglect the timely implementation of proposals arising from Conservation Area Appraisals without good cause, a reputational risk to the National Park Authority could arise. Mitigation of this risk relies on the implementation of action points in the Management Plan, so that they are built into the work programmes of the SDNPA and its partner organisations through the South Downs National Park Management Plan and its action plans.

### TIM SLANEY

#### Director of Planning

#### South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officer: Michael Scammell

Tel: 01270 811232

E-mail: michael.scammell@southdowns.gov.uk

Appendices  
1. West Meon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan  
2. Consultation Responses

SDNPA Consultees Legal Services; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer

External Consultees Historic England, West Meon Parish Council, Hampshire County Council, Winchester City Council.

Background Documents

- National Planning Policy Framework, 2012.
- West Meon Village Design Statement, 2002.
- The Buildings of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Sir Nikolaus Pevsner and David Lloyd, 1967.

