

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 17 JUNE 2009

CUMNOCK CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL **Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to adopt the Cumnock Conservation Area Appraisal report as supplementary planning guidance.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the July 2008 meeting Cabinet agreed:

- (i) To submit a bid to Historic Scotland for grant assistance to establish a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) for Cumnock Conservation Area;
- (ii) To the appointment of a consultancy team, led by a RIAS accredited architect with specialist knowledge and experience in relation to listed building repairs and Historic Scotland's grant requirements;
- (iii) In principle, to commit funding to the Cumnock CARS to enable the funding bid to be submitted but that the level of funding to be considered at a future Cabinet;
- (iv) In principle, to the appointment of additional temporary qualified conservation staff and associated administrative support to deliver the Cumnock CARS, if the bid is successful.

- 2.2 As was reported to Cabinet on 18th February, Historic Scotland formally announced on 6th February 2009 that the Cumnock CARS bid was successful and that a Historic Scotland CARS grant of £888,050 would be made available to the Cumnock scheme.

3. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL CONSULTATION

- 3.1 As part of the original bid a Conservation Area Appraisal was required. A draft report was produced by the approved consultancy team, Austin-Smith:Lord in September 2008.
- 3.2 The Draft Conservation Area Appraisal report identified the special character and significance of the town's historic core through reference to statutory designation, its historic development, an architectural appraisal, an appraisal of the townscape and urban realm and an archaeological assessment. The report also assessed how the town

might be vulnerable to change and sets out planning and implementation guidelines which will inform future development in the area.

3.3 During the period 10th November to 12th December 2008 consultation was carried out in Cumnock to ascertain public views on the recommendations contained within the Draft Conservation Area Appraisal report.

3.4 The consultation exercise included;

- Exhibitions at Visions Leisure Centre and Cumnock Town Hall where staff attended to discuss issues raised by the public;
- A window display in the Cumnock Town Centre Regeneration Project office within the Glaisnock Shopping Centre;
- Circulation of the report, comment proformas and reply-paid envelopes to all council offices in the area; all documents were made available online;
- Letters sent to all property owners in the existing Conservation Area supported by advertising in the local newspaper;
- Copies of the report being forwarded to local elected members and other key stakeholders inviting their input and comments.

3.5 The consultation process resulted in 6 responses, 1 from Historic Scotland and 5 from members of the community. The responses received from members of the community were generally positive and did not necessitate any changes to the draft appraisal. A summary of the comments is appended.

3.6 Historic Scotland submitted a number of comments on the draft appraisal, most notably;

- that the buildings appraisal be expanded to discuss strengths and weaknesses in order to inform proposals for enhancement.
- that the public realm be dealt with in more detail in terms of exploring any remaining historic materials and;
- that the boundary of the Conservation Area should be reviewed on the basis that certain elements of the Conservation Area are not worthy of protection as buildings of historic or architectural merit.

The appraisal has been amended to take account of the first two points. The third point relates specifically to the existing boundary along the A70/Tanyard/New Bridge Street parts of Glaisnock Street and the incorporation of Greenmill Primary School on Barrhill Road.

3.7 Historic Scotland's opinions have been considered. However it is concluded that there is substantial advantage in retaining the Conservation Area boundary as it currently exists. A great deal of regeneration activity will be taking place in Cumnock town centre by way of the implementation of the approved Cumnock Town Centre

masterplan, the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme and the involvement of the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment through the Enquiry by Design Process. As a result it is likely that there will be an increase in development taking place within or adjacent to the Conservation Area. In order to ensure all development is of a high standard and is in keeping with the character of the town, there will be clear benefits in retaining the proposed boundary of the Conservation Area to enable the Council through its conservation area planning policies to have greater control over the quality of any proposed developments in this locale.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

5. FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial or personnel implications directly arising from this report.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The preparation and approval of the Conservation Area Appraisal is in accordance with the adopted East Ayrshire Local Plan and the Alteration to the Local Plan (Finalised Version with Modifications), both of which give support to proposals that preserve and enhance the architectural and historic qualities of Conservation Areas.
- 6.2 It should be noted that although the Conservation Area is not contained within the Cumnock Town Centre Masterplan area the masterplan itself has now been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING

- 7.1 The approval of the Conservation Area Appraisal will contribute towards achieving targets within the 'Delivering Community Regeneration Action Plan' of the East Ayrshire Community Plan.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Cabinet is asked to;

(i) Approve the Cumnock Conservation Area Appraisal as Supplementary Planning Guidance

(ii) Otherwise note the contents of this report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1 June 2009 (KD/SA)

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (i) Report to Cabinet – Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) for Cumnock Conservation Area (2nd July 2008).
- (ii) Report to Cabinet – Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) for Cumnock and Conservation Area Appraisal (22nd October 2008).
- (iii) Report to Cabinet – Cumnock Town Centre Regeneration Projects Update (18 February 2009).
- (iv) Cumnock Conservation Area Appraisal Report – Austin Smith:Lord (May 2009)

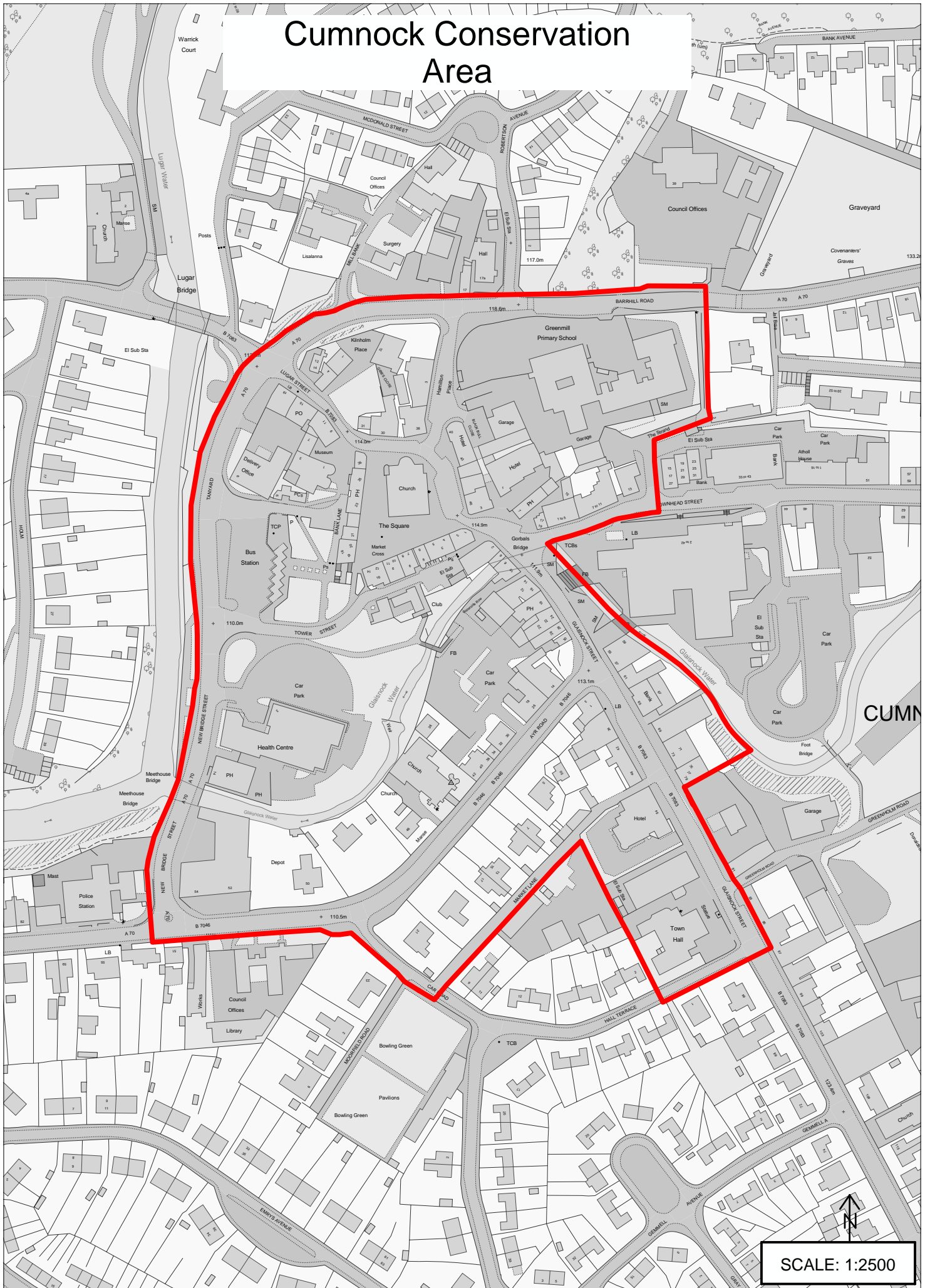
Members wishing further information should contact Karl Doroszenko on 01563 576751

Implementation Officer – Alan Neish, Head of Planning and Economic Development

Appendix 1

Date Received	Name and Address	Comments	Councils' response
12/11/08	Gerald Alexander 11, The Square	Improvement to shop fronts at The Square. Reinforce The Square as centre of the town.	The approval of a CARS for Cumnock will provide opportunities for shop owners to apply for financial assistance to improve their shopfronts. The Square is identified as a priority area for the targeting of small grants. Improvements to the public realm of The Square are planned through the Cumnock regeneration project and the CARS.
12/11/08	Mr D Savage 10, The Square,	Premises on Square require exterior upgrade. Anti social behaviour has detrimental effect on town.	The approval of a CARS for Cumnock will provide opportunities for shop owners to apply for financial assistance to improve their shopfronts. Anti-social behaviour is not an issue that can be addressed through the Conservation Area Appraisal.
27/11/08	J Smith Cumnock Elderly Forum	Suggestion that St John's Church should be a listed building.	Building is category B Listed.
27/11/08	Stewart Birrell 24 Glaisnock St	Supportive of existing conservation area.	The support is welcomed.
27/11/08	Rev. John Paterson 'Old Cumnock Old Church' 33, Barrhill Rd	Crichton Memorial Church should be Trinity Church. Gospel Hall incorrectly referred to as 5, The Square. Suggests St John's R.C. Church be listed. Would like Church to be included in Liaison Group. Proposals may impact financially on the Church and would like to be consulted.	EAC records show the building as Crichton Memorial Church. Comment noted Building is category B Listed. While the CTC Liaison Group is a consultative forum for business representatives plans are in place to create a Sounding Board of all community groups within the town and it would be appropriate to include church representatives in this The approval of a CARS for Cumnock will provide opportunities for the Church to apply for financial assistance.

Cumnock Conservation Area



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