

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROJECTS TO BE TAKEN FORWARD FROM THE CONSERVATION STRATEGY 2010-2015

The 2010-15 strategy outlined the approach towards the conservation of the historic built environment for Rossendale Borough Council. It set out a series of ongoing and future tasks that form the role of the Conservation Officer. This was divided into a series of Action Points relating to specific topics. These are reviewed in order that they appear on the strategy.

This document summarises the work outlined in the 2010-15 strategy and assesses the achievements, ongoing tasks, the work to be taken forward into the 2016-2021 strategy and work no longer deemed necessary.

General note

Government proposals for changes to heritage protection legislation include renaming statutory designations, however these were not taken forward so for the sake of simplicity this report uses the traditional names for heritage designations.

Listed Buildings

Listing/designation of buildings is carried out by Historic England (previously English Heritage) on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The Council must ensure that development proposals that affect listed buildings have special regard to the impact on their character, features and setting.

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Ensure that there is a publicly accessible register of listed buildings in the Borough available at the One Stop Shop – by March 2010.”

- Achieved. The National Heritage List is accessible on line and a paper copy of listed buildings in the borough is retained in the Planning Department should members of the public require this.

“Provide professional guidance on the determination of heritage related planning, listed building and conservation area consent applications and the determination of the extent of listed building curtilages, on a case by case basis.”

- Ongoing. (Please note that since the production of the 2010-2015 Strategy, Conservation Area Consent has been replaced with Planning Permission for Relevant Demolition).

“Provide annual returns to English Heritage on Buildings at Risk”

- Ongoing.

“Develop and populate a listed buildings database – by October 2011 with ongoing updates.”

- The National Heritage List is now available online as a searchable database and is updated to include new information. This task is therefore no longer necessary and will not be taken forward to the 201-2021 strategy.

“Prepare and publish guidance notes on the repair and management of listed buildings – by October 2011 with ongoing updates.”

- To be carried forward into the 2016-2021 Strategy.

Conservation Areas

Conservation areas are designated by local authorities. They are designated for their special architectural and historic interest. It is the Council’s duty to update appraisals from time to time in full consultation with the local community.

The conservation area appraisals funded by Historic England were adopted as material planning considerations between 2010 and 2011. These are used as material planning considerations when assessing the suitability of development. However, the conservation area appraisals will need to be updated by 2021 in order for these to remain fit for purpose, as recommended in national guidance.

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Complete area specific public consultation exercises on the proposed boundary revisions for the Bacup Conservation Area Appraisal – by June 2010.”

- Achieved. However, conservation area appraisals will need to be updated by 2021 in order for these to remain fit for purpose and this is brought forward to the next strategy.

“Prepare a concise revised draft of the Bacup Conservation Area Appraisal incorporating the boundary review proposals for consideration by Cabinet – by September 2010.”

- Achieved.

“Prepare a short term management plan for Bacup Conservation Area for consideration by Cabinet – by January 2011.”

- Achieved via the Bacup Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted 2 December 2011).

“Manage the preparation of conservation area appraisals and management proposals plans by consultants – 4no. by July 2010 and 4no. by January 2011, and present reports on their adoption to Cabinet for approval.”

- Achieved. All conservation area appraisals have been adopted as material planning considerations.

“Re-designate as necessary any conservation areas following boundary reviews and formalise the adoption of conservation area appraisals – by October 2011.”

- This will be taken forward to the next strategy.

“Assess the conservation area management proposal plans (including Article 4 Direction revisions) and present to Cabinet for adoption with an implementation programme – by July 2012.”

- This will be taken forward to the next strategy.

“Identify and evaluate through preliminary appraisal any additional areas for subsequent designation as conservation areas – by July 2013.”

- To be considered in the next conservation strategy.

“Provide annual assessment returns to English Heritage on Conservation Areas at Risk”

- Ongoing.

Archaeology

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Provide professional guidance on archaeological issues relating to the determination of planning applications on a case by case basis”

- Ongoing. Rossendale Borough Council has a Service Level Agreement with Lancashire County Council (LCC) Archaeology, a statutory consultee on certain applications involving historic areas and buildings archaeology.

Historic Environment Record

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Lancashire is held and maintained by Lancashire County’s Archaeology Service. Rossendale Borough Council has a Service Level Agreement with LCC Archaeology to provide specialist archaeology information, which also includes access to the data on the HER.

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Ensure that the Planning Control Service has access to and that potential developers are aware of the Lancashire County Historic Environment Record – by April 2010.”

- Achieved and ongoing.

Historic Parks and Gardens

These are designated by Historic England. Registered Parks and Gardens are a material planning consideration. Whitworth Cemetery, which is managed by Rossendale Borough Council, is currently the only site in the borough on the Historic England Register and is Grade II. It is significant as being one of only 106 cemeteries on the Register.

“Provide professional guidance on the heritage aspects of the management of Whitworth Cemetery on a case by case basis”

- Ongoing.

Locally Important Buildings

A list of locally important buildings and sites (a “*local list*”), is employed by Councils where the interest in the building does not merit national designation (listing) but the building holds local interest. The inclusion of a building on a local list is recognition of its local importance and contribution to the landscape and character of Rossendale. A list of locally important buildings, based on their special architectural and historic interest, becomes a material consideration in planning terms when adopted by the Council.

Consultation on whether to create a local list and to decide on what should be included within it will be taken forward in the 2016-21 strategy.

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Hold any information that becomes available on the general heritage of the area and its buildings in a database”

- Ongoing.

“Advise members on Locally Important Buildings”

- To be addressed in the 2016-21 strategy.

Local Authority Owned Heritage Assets

Historic England recommends that local authorities should have an asset management plan to cover authority owned buildings to manage aspects such as maintenance.

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Liaise with Property Services to ensure that all borough owned heritage assets are covered by a management plan.”

- Achieved. The Conservation Officer has regular direct contact with Property Services. The Facilities Manager plans and oversees maintenance to Council owned listed buildings and heritage assets, which is discussed in advance. A conservation management plan is therefore not considered necessary at this point, considering staff time availability and priorities.

“Liaise with Lancashire County Council to ensure that all their heritage assets within the Borough are covered by a management plan”

- Rossendale’s Conservation Officer is consultee on all listed building consent applications that are determined by LCC in Rossendale (i.e. listed buildings owned by LCC). The effectiveness of a plan depends on available resources at LCC which may fluctuate and is out of the control of Rossendale Borough Council, and so this will not be taken forward.

Heritage Funding Opportunities

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Monitor heritage funding opportunities and evaluate their relevance to projects, buildings and areas within the Borough”

- Ongoing.

“Prepare a report for Cabinet on the implications of bidding for a Townscape Heritage Initiative [THI] – by July 2010.”

- Achieved. The THI funding for Bacup has now been secured and the second phase (physical works) of the THI is being implemented. This will see two rows of buildings along St James Street, Bacup, refurbished with new traditional shopfronts, a new shopfront and windows at the REAL building (8 St James Square), and new shopfronts and timber windows at Pioneer Buildings, Alma Street. It is expected that the works the funding has enabled, will act as a catalyst for further investment and regeneration in the town. Several conservation-based training days have been well-attended and the training plan is ongoing.

Local Development Framework (New Local Plan)

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Provide support for the preparation of development briefs for sites within conservation areas as necessary”

- Since adoption of the 2010 strategy it has been decided to produce a new Local Plan. This work will be ongoing and will be taken forward to the 2016-21 strategy.

“Provide design guidance on specific conservation/heritage related topics that emerge as issues during the preparation of the LDF”

- Ongoing. This is included in the 2016-21 strategy.

Training

Effective protection and enhancement of the historic environment depends on effective decision making by informed professionals. The decision making process regarding conservation of the historic environment includes Council members, planning officers, regeneration professionals and other stakeholders.

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Prepare a ‘conservation and design’ based training event for all members of the new Development Control Committee (accessible to all interested members and officers) for the Council year 2010/2011 – by September 2010.”

- To be brought forward to the next strategy

“Make details of external ‘conservation and design’ based training events known to members as they become available” –

- Ongoing

Historic Environment and Design Award and Heritage Champion

The 2010 strategy considered the introduction of an award scheme to recognise good examples of heritage related development.

ACTION POINT 2010

“Prepare a briefing note for Cabinet on the feasibility of running a Heritage and Design award scheme – by September 2010.”

- It may be possible to consider projects for design awards as and when necessary but due to the size of the borough and frequency of development it is not considered appropriate to take forward into the 2016-21 strategy.

ACTION POINT 2010

“Prepare a briefing note for Cabinet to determine whether or not to appoint Historic Environment and Design Champions – by September 2010.”

- Achieved. Councillor Annie McMahon is the new Heritage and Design Champion.

Promotion and Publicity

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Make contact and establish working relationships with owners and residents, appropriate local interest groups and other parties within the Borough – by September 2010.”

- Ongoing.

“Prepare and publish guidance notes on the repair and management of listed buildings – by October 2011 with ongoing updates.”

- To be included in the 2016-21 Strategy

Enforcement

There is no time limit for action against unauthorised alterations to a listed building. Where alterations have damaged the special interest of the building the Council may take action when it is in the public interest to do so. Enforcement is investigated via complaint to the Council’s enforcement department.

ACTION POINTS 2010

“Using photographic records and other available material; assess the changes that have occurred to historic buildings and conservation areas and prepare an evaluation of those cases where sufficient harm has been done to the character and appearance of the property to consider enforcement action”

- Ongoing.

“Assess the effectiveness of existing Article 4 Direction and prepare any necessary additions or revisions to present to Cabinet – by July 2012.”

- To be addressed in the 2015-20 strategy.