

SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

REVIEW OF CONSERVATION AREA **ON 5TH JULY 2016 AT 7.00PM** **IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL**

Councillors Present

Jenny Bell (JB), Chairperson, Cllr Stanley, Christine Coles - Parish Clerk, Cllr George Reynolds and 16 villagers

Officers in Attendance

Cllr Colin Clarke (Lead Member for Planning), Jenny Ballinger (JB) and Claire Mitchell (CM) of Cherwell District Council.

Cllr Colin Clarke welcomed everyone to the meeting. He spoke about the important buildings in the village such as Tithe Barn, the Church, Swalcliffe Manor and The Stags Head which are all an important part of history.

The last review was carried out in 1988. A conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Early appraisals were carried out in the 1980s and were produced very quickly with a boundary line around the map. They are material considerations in planning applications and appeals. There are sixty Conservation Areas and CDC aim to do five per year. Defining the character enables people planning new buildings or extensions to understand the area they are building in. It identifies the way to preserve the areas unique character without preventing sympathetic alteration.

Swalcliffe is a well preserved historic village, which lies in an unspoilt rural setting. The form is heavily influenced by its geographical location along a ridge of high land. The village is surrounded by remains from Iron Age, Roman and medieval periods. There are a number of significant buildings such as Tithe Barn, the Church and Manor House. All villages have a number of listed buildings and a few are special.

The village is made up of 4 different character areas. The Central street contains the main historical monuments of the Church, Manor, Tithe Barn and School. Rural lanes have a distinctive informal character. Swalcliffe Park is the parkland around the large house. The village environment is the hinterland around the village.

Looking at visual analysis, there is a strong building line along the principle road but also along some rural lanes. There are positive views and vistas to both the north and south of the settlement. There are a number of characteristic stone boundary walls around the settlement. There are a number of important green spaces within the village including the churchyard and Swalcliffe Park.

Looking at evolution of the village, little has changed in form and layout with just a handful of houses being added since the 1880s.

Jenny Ballinger has reviewed the proposed new boundary line and been the only person involved. Swalcliffe is a Category C Village which means there can be infill, extensions and conversions. The Planning policy has far more impact than this review. The proposed boundary to the north has been redrawn to include all gardens, paddocks and woodland area associated within the village. The area removed is in agricultural use. The proposed boundary extension to the south west is to include the current extent of the settlement. The proposed boundary has been extended to include the parkland associated with Swalcliffe Park and still in ownership of the school.

There are local heritage assets which recognise a contribution of a building to an environment.

Article 4 Direction was briefly mentioned. These can be implemented by the local authority to remove all or some of the permitted development rights. This does not mean that normal permitted development can no longer be carried out but instead it must be subject to a planning application. They can help prevent unsympathetic change to the character of a building or area.

Article 4 Direction enables the local authority to retain some control over the design and detailing of the proposed development and to grant permission for appropriate alterations which will not harm the character or significance of the area. The directions cover changes to the front elevations which may include removal of traditional boundary walls, door replacement, erection of porches and window replacement.

Residents are invited to comment on the content of the draft appraisal, the proposed amendments to the boundary and any assets or buildings that they feel are significant and should be suggested for inclusion on the register of local heritage assets.

The consultation runs until 17th August 2016. The appraisal will be published in Winter 2016 and will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

The meeting was opened up to the floor at this point.

Mrs B Taylor asked about areas including gardens within cottages and if they could be sold off separately? JB replied that change of use would have to be applied for whether inside or outside. Gardens form part of a domestic curtilage and can be an agricultural feature or a stream. CDC are trying to follow the guidance given by Historic England. If land changed over time, it would be looked at during the next review time. Listed buildings have greater protection within a Conservation Area.

CLLr Stanley asked why Swalcliffe Lea and The Grange had not been included in the Review. JB advised that she will look into it. This review will cover the core part of the village only. These areas will not form part of this review but be considered separately.

Mr Cowley asked about comments and a final decision. Residents affected by the alterations will be informed by letter. The closing date is 17th August.

Mr Hill spoke about Swalcliffe being a special and protected village. He asked how the village can continue to evolve and continue without restrictions. JB replied that this review is not to stop change but to manage it in a proper way.

Mr Stanley asked if there would be a discount on planning fees if Article 4 was introduced. JB replied no.

The question was asked if this is happening in every village. There are sixty Conservation Areas and CDC aim to carry out five per year. It is a slow process and each appraisal is individual as all villages are different.

This concluded the meeting.

Meeting finished at 8.15pm.