

<b>Board/Committee:</b>	Economic Development Board
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	28 September 2020
<b>Title:</b>	Public consultation on proposed Stokes Bay Conservation Area and review of Alverstoke and Anglesey Conservation Areas
<b>Author:</b>	Heritage Action Zone Programme Manager
<b>Status:</b>	For Decision

## **PURPOSE**

To seek Members' support to go out to public consultation on the proposal to consider a designation for Stokes Bay as a conservation area, and to review Anglesey and Alverstoke conservation areas, as set out in the Heritage Action Zone Delivery Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

To go out to public consultation on the proposal to consider the designation of Stoke Bay as a conservation area and to carry out reviews of Anglesey and Alverstoke Conservation Areas.

### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 In accordance with Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended), the Local Planning Authority is required to identify areas of special historic or architectural interest which it is desirable to 'preserve or enhance', and shall designate those areas as conservation areas. Stokes Bay is considered to have the potential characteristics making it suitable for designation and through the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) it is proposed that the public are consulted on the proposal and also on a potential boundary for such an area. The complexity of the historic interest of the area makes consultation particularly valuable to ensure less well known aspects of its history are secured through public engagement.
- 1.2 Section 72 of The Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 (as amended) requires that the authority also pay: "special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area". The review of Anglesey and Alverstoke will both assess the merits of the existing boundaries as well as provide up to date appraisals of the special interest of each area, highlighting features worthy of preservation and/or enhancement. An appraisal for Stokes Bay would be developed during the consultation process.

- 1.3 The purpose of a designated Conservation Area is to 'preserve and enhance' the special historic or architectural interest of an area and help ensure that future development has regard to that special interest. It limits some permitted development rights and planning permission is required to demolish buildings with a volume over 115 cubic metres. Six weeks written notice is also required to carry out a range of works to most trees. Designation would not prevent development but would help to ensure that it is appropriate in form, scale, material and design such that it would not harm the setting and would help to positively enhance the site's unique character.
- 1.4 As set out in the Gosport Borough Local Plan 2014, Policies LP10 (Design) and LP12 (Conservation Areas) would be relevant were designation supported.

## 2.0 **Discussion**

- 2.1 The Heritage Action Zone Delivery Plan includes a proposal to go out to public consultation on the potential for a proposed new conservation area for Stokes Bay, to protect the rich military legacy of the area which spans several centuries, as well as to better understand and appreciate the social history of this popular seafront destination. The HAZ project also allows for the review of the boundaries to Anglesey and Alverstoke Conservation Areas and the preparation of up to date appraisals for these areas.
- 2.2 The extent of military defences that are associated with Stokes Bay stretch from earthworks east of Fort Monckton to batteries on the western side of Browdown. In addition to the military defences the area is overlooked by both the Alverbank and Bay House: important and prominent listed buildings in the area. The final boundary, which will be proposed following the public consultation exercise, will be brought to Members for consideration as part of the formal designation process.
- 2.3 The two adjacent Conservation Areas of Anglesey and Alverstoke require Conservation Area Appraisals, and carrying out their review alongside the proposed Stokes Bay designation would be appropriate with the amount of new historic information available on these areas.
- 2.4 Historic England supports the review of Conservation Areas in order to protect their special character and unique place in the history of Gosport.
- 2.5 Historic England have recently undertaken research covering Stokes Bay and provide a detailed assessment in the attached document: <https://research.historicengland.org.uk/Report.aspx?i=16259>. This research will be fed into the consultation process to help inform a decision on the most appropriate boundary.

2.6

As part of the HAZ budget this year, funds are available to engage a Heritage Consultant and run a concurrent schools heritage project with Hampshire Cultural Trust and GFMAT schools. A funding application to Historic England for a Regional Capacity Building grant will be submitted in September if this proposal is supported.

2.7

The consultation will be accessible to a wide range of people, using a variety of inclusive communication methods to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders in keeping with the Council's Statement of Commitment to Equality & Diversity. Consultation documents will include the statement: 'Gosport Borough Council is committed to equal opportunities for all: If you need this document in large print, on tape, CD, in Braille or in other languages, please ask'.

2.8

Consultation methods will include contacting land owners and property owners in the area; local interest groups; using social media, and following the Council's normal methods of communication with residents to gather as many comments as possible. This consultation will inform conclusions on a possible boundary for Stokes Bay and any modification to the existing adjacent conservation areas.

2.9

The Friends of Stokes Bay and the Gosport Society are aware of the proposal to consider Stokes Bay as a potential Conservation Area as it falls within the HAZ Delivery Plan, and they are keen to see it take shape. They will play a part assisting with the surveying and assessment of the area. Other groups, such as the Anglesey Conservation Group, will also be invited to comment. The Heritage Consultant will lead the survey and collate this work in their report.

### **3.0 Risk Assessment**

3.1

£18,000 of funding will initially be requested from Historic England's Regional Capacity Building Grant, which officers have been encouraged to submit for this project. This represents approximately 55% of the estimated total project fund. £15,000 would come from agreed Capital funding through the HAZ project.

3.2

Surveying, and the schools heritage project, will be complete this financial year. The Heritage Consultant's work and recommendations would also be completed in phases by March 2022, with the proposal to consider the designation of Stokes Bay being first. COVID and social distancing may have an impact on community involvement, but work to mitigate this will be undertaken to ensure as much community engagement as possible is achieved.

3.3

Procuring a Heritage Consultant will follow the Council's procurement procedures and they would be appointed within approximately eight weeks of the Board meeting.

<b>Financial Services comments:</b>	Contained within the report.
<b>Legal Services comments:</b>	Contained within the report.
<b>Equality and Diversity</b>	No issues if accessible and inclusive consultation methods are used and corporate equality & diversity guidance followed.
<b>Service Improvement Plan implications:</b>	In line with identified objectives.
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	In line with the corporate plan.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	See section 3
<b>Background papers:</b>	Heritage Action Zone Delivery Plan.
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A: Existing Conservation Area Boundaries for Alverstoke and Anglesey, and area for assessment for a potential Stokes Bay Conservation Area.
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