

# BRIGHTHOLMLEE CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS



**March 2007**

After a period of public consultation Sheffield City Council adopted these Conservation Area Management Proposals and the accompanying Appraisal for Brightholmlee on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007, which means that they are now a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications in the area.

## **BRIGHTHOLMLEE CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS**

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The recommendations in this document are based upon the findings the Brightholmlee *Conservation Area Appraisal*, which assesses the special interest of the Brightholmlee Conservation Area and identifies negative factors and weaknesses which detract from the conservation area's character and appearance.

Based upon the appraisal and supported up by a further site survey, this document identifies a number of specific and general issues affecting the Brightholmlee Conservation Area, including enhancement opportunities, negative features and threats. Each issue is accompanied by recommendation(s) for action, sometimes identifying further or more detailed work needed for their implementation.

The recommendations include proposals for enhancement and policies for the avoidance of harmful change, some of which are the responsibility of the City Council

The proposals are written in the awareness that in managing the City's conservation areas the Council's resources are limited and therefore need to be prioritised. Financial constraints on the Council mean that proposals for which it is responsible may take longer than is desirable to implement. However, the Council will continue to encourage improvements to the conservation area in co-operation with property owners, groups and local businesses.

The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework published by English Heritage in *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (2005). Both the Conservation Area Appraisal and the Management Proposals will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis (see below).

## 2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

This document reflects Government guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15: 'Planning and the Historic Environment' and satisfies the statutory requirement of section 71(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 namely:

*"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas."*

The *Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (UDP)* is the statutory development plan for Sheffield, adopted in March 1998. Policies BE15-22 relate to historic buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and archaeology (pages 76-86).

Other key documents include:

- The emerging *Sheffield Development Framework (SDF)*.
- *Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): Designing House Extensions*.
- *Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): Historic Parks and Gardens*.
- *Sheffield Urban Design Compendium (2004)*.
- *Sheffield Buildings at Risk Survey (2005) and emerging Buildings at Risk Strategy*.
- *Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology (HMSO)*

Up-to-date details of current planning policy can be obtained from Sheffield City Council's Development Services or the Council's website at:  
[www.sheffield.gov.uk/in-your-area/planning-and-city-development](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/in-your-area/planning-and-city-development)

Breaches of planning control that are causing significant harm and are clearly unacceptable will be enforced against. A planning application may be invited where breaches of planning control might be acceptable, possibly with amendment. This will enable the issues to be thoroughly tested, including consulting local people.

Sheffield City Council has signed up to the 'Enforcement Concordat' (1998), which sets national best practice standards for planning enforcement.

Other specific strategies that will impact upon this management plan either currently being developed or already adopted:

Woodland Policy (1987)  
Sheffield Nature Conservation Strategy (1991)

## Forthcoming Tree Strategy (proposed 2007)

### 3. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Brightholmlee is a tiny farming hamlet of exceptional beauty and tranquillity on the edge of the Peak District National Park. Because it is so small, the issues affecting the character of the conservation area can be pinned down to some very specific problems.

#### 1. Loss of historical and architectural features and poor quality of design

Brightholmlee has suffered from the over-restoration of some of its historic stone buildings, which have been converted from agricultural to residential use or 'restored' using inappropriate materials with poorly designed extensions. For example:

- Porches - too large in relation to the height and scale of the buildings
- New windows that are considerably larger than is traditional, Upvc windows, dormers and stained finishes
- The replacement of traditional natural stone slates with artificial slate and other unsympathetic roofing materials
- Rendering in concrete and re-pointing using cement mortar and strap pointing.

Where single family dwellings are concerned, many changes can, with certain exceptions, normally be carried out without planning permission from the Council. Development of this kind is called "Permitted Development" and falls into various classes which are listed in the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995*. Powers exist for the Council, known as Article 4(2) directions, to withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interest of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area. This might be considered to prevent the further erosion of historic character of residential properties, particularly where they form a coherent group of well detailed properties.

#### *Recommendations:*

- *The Council will consider the need for Article 4(2) Directions to protect buildings that retain original features from inappropriate alteration in particular the stone roofscape. The primary focus will be on dwellinghouses that have been identified in the relevant conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.*
- *The Council will encourage property owners to reverse unsympathetic alterations and to reinstate architectural features, notably windows and*

*doors, with modern replacements in the style and materials of the originals.*

## **2. Buildings at Risk**

By far the biggest problem affecting the character of Brightholmlee is the state of Old Hall Farm. As the *Brightholmlee Conservation Area Appraisal* has emphasised, this farm helps to give Brightholmlee much of its character, because of its central place within the hamlet, and its grouping of barns, byres, sties and house around a courtyard. The farmstead has survived into the twenty-first century with many historic features intact.

The very wet autumn and winter of 2005 led to the collapse of the eastern gable end wall of the westernmost of the two roadside barns at Old Hall Farm. The barn has been stabilised with scaffolding to prevent further damage (the walls are built with a very weak mortar of mud, straw and lime), but there are several other buildings that lack windows and roof tiles and that are covered in ivy and hence at risk of damage.

The whole farmstead faces an uncertain future especially should it become subject to pressure for conversion to one or more homes, with the potential loss of historical and architectural character.

Also potentially at risk are some of the stables and outbuilding at Manor Farm: some of these are roofed in asbestos rather than stone and there are windows without glass that are therefore no longer entirely weather proof.

### *Recommendation:*

- *The Council will seek to ensure the effective repair of the historic building ensuring that it is made water- and weather-tight. Further, the Council will seek to monitor the condition of all historic buildings and will report findings and advise action, as necessary. Where the condition of a building gives cause for concern, appropriate steps will be sought to secure the future of the building, including the use of statutory powers.*
- *In the case of Old Hall Farm, an opportunity exists for exemplary repair to ensure that these buildings are restored to the highest standards of conservation and retain all significant features without damage to the character and integrity of these buildings.*

### 3. Boundary walls and signage

The *Brightholmlee Conservation Area Appraisal* has identified the contribution that traditional drystone walls make to the character of the conservation area, and the contribution made by traditional signage (including Public Footpath signs, and a listed milestone of 1860, with an OS benchmark).

Some of these walls are, however, in a poor state of repair: having collapsed, they have either been rebuilt to a lower standard than the adjacent walling, or have been patched with wire or barbed wire fencing (for example, Opposite Rose Cottage, and opposite Manor Farm).

As well as traditional signage, the conservation area has some modern metal signage that is battered, ugly and utilitarian: including the sign at the entrance to the village ('Brightholmlee Parish of Bradfield) and the finger post placed alongside the listed milestone).

#### *Recommendations:*

- *The Council will encourage those responsible for the maintenance of stone walls to repair as necessary.*
- *The Council will normally resist proposals for demolition of, or alterations to, boundary walls, gate piers, fences and gates that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.*
- *Consideration should be given to replacing modern metal signs with finger posts and village name plates of more traditional design (for guidance on this, see the joint Department of Transport and English Heritage leaflet, Traditional Direction Signs).*

### 4. Potential decline and loss of trees

Large and mature oak and ash trees make a major contribution to the rural character of the Brightholmlee Conservation Area, especially at the southern entrance to the hamlet. While these do not at present seem to be under threat, it is important that owners are made aware of their importance.



*Recommendations:*

- *The preparation of a Tree Management Programme would be welcome, identifying all mature trees within the conservation area (privately as well as publicly owned) and ensuring that priorities are agreed and funding set aside for the costs involved in remedial works or replacement;*
- *The Council will normally resist proposals to cut down a tree in the conservation area.*

**5. Opportunity for enhancement: stone troughs**

Like many Peak District farming hamlets, Brightholmlee retains a traditional water supply in the form of two large troughs of sandstone located opposite Old Hall Farm, fed by water that drains off the adjacent field. The area surrounding the troughs is paved in concrete – no doubt a necessary precaution against mud and puddling when the troughs were used by cattle from nearby farms, but now capable of being replaced by a surface that enhances this example of local heritage.

*Recommendation:*

- *Enhance the area around the troughs, by the replacement of the concrete surround with more traditional materials, such as cobbles, and by the planting of flowers and shrubs.*

**6. Archaeological issues**

The conservation area includes an early cruck-built cottage, a 17th-century farmhouse and several 18th-century cart sheds and barns. It is possible that other early farm buildings exist that have not yet been studied or recognised. The whole of the conservation area therefore has archaeological potential above and below the ground, and it is likely that further consideration will need to be given to the effect of applications for substantial new development.

*Recommendation:*

- *An Archaeological Assessment of the site should be prepared prior to any application being submitted. Where below ground archaeological remains are expected, conditions may then be used to secure a detailed scheme for the foundation design and all new ground works, to protect buried remains in situ, and/or a programme of archaeological excavation,*

*recording, analysis and publication. Further information is available from the South Yorkshire Archaeology Service.*

- *Where substantial alteration/demolition of listed buildings or other historic buildings is proposed a more detailed Building Appraisal will also be required. This includes a detailed appraisal of the special architectural or historic interest of the buildings on the site. The results will inform the design process and act as supporting information with a planning application.*
- *An AABA (Archaeological Assessment and Building Appraisal) should be prepared prior to the application being submitted. Once a satisfactory scheme has been agreed, conditions may then be used to secure a programme of building recording, analysis and publication. Further information is available from Sheffield City Council's conservation section.*

## **7. Buildings of Townscape Merit/Positive buildings**

Marked on the Townscape Appraisal map for the Brightholmlee Conservation Area are a number of *unlisted* buildings, known as Buildings of Townscape Merit, which have been judged as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

*Recommendation:*

- *The Council will only grant conservation area consent for the demolition of a 'building of townscape merit' or 'positive building' (as identified on relevant townscape appraisal map) if demolition is justified against the criteria specified in PPG 15 paragraphs 3.16 – 3.19.*

## **8. New development**

There are few opportunities for development in this small conservation area. For minor works, the City Council has produced guidance entitled 'Designing House Extensions'.

New development should aspire to a quality of design and execution, related to its context, which may be valued in the future. This neither implies nor precludes working in traditional or new ways, but will normally involve respecting values established through assessment of the significance of the area.

Development proposals will be judged on their effect on the area's character and appearance as identified in the Brightholmlee Conservation Area Appraisal together with relevant Development Plan policies and any other material considerations.



#### **4. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging Local Development Framework and government policy generally. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;
- Publicity and advertising.

It is possible that this review could be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the City Council. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement.

## 5. USEFUL CONTACTS AND ADDRESSES

*For information on listed buildings and conservation areas:*

Urban and Environmental Design Team  
Sheffield City Council,  
Howden House,  
1 Union Street,  
Sheffield S1 2SH.  
Tel: 0114 273 5804

[www.sheffield.gov.uk/in-your-area/planning-and-city-development/urban-design--conservation](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/in-your-area/planning-and-city-development/urban-design--conservation)

*For information on the status and interpretation of the statutory Development Plan and supplementary planning guidance:*

Forward and Area Planning Team  
Sheffield City Council,  
Howden House,  
1 Union Street,  
Sheffield S1 2SH.  
Tel: 0114 273 4157

[www.sheffield.gov.uk/in-your-area/planning-and-city-development/forward-and-area-planning](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/in-your-area/planning-and-city-development/forward-and-area-planning)

*For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas:*

English Heritage  
37 Tanner Row  
York  
YO1 6WP  
Tel: 01904 601901

*For an excellent range of technical advice leaflets:*

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB),  
37 Spital Square, LONDON E1 6DY Tel: 020 7377 1644

The Georgian Group,  
6 Fitzroy Square, LONDON W1T 5DX Tel: 0207529 8920

The Victorian Society,  
1 Priory Gardens, Bedford Park, LONDON W4 1TT Tel: 0208994 1019

The Twentieth Century Society,  
70 Cowcross Street, LONDON EC1M 6EJ Tel: 020 7250 3857

## 6. PHOTOGRAPHS



Poor state of repair of Old Hall Farm.



Modern alterations to a historic building.



Manor Farm outbuildings.



Scaffolding stabilising a barn wall at Old Hall Farm



Trees and dry stone walls are a feature of the conservation area.



Unmetalled track leading from road.



Replacement of the concrete surround with more traditional materials, such as cobbles, would enhance the setting of these two large sandstone troughs.



Listed milepost beside modern metal finger post.

## **7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

A consultation draft of this document was subject to a period of consultation between 24<sup>th</sup> January and 16<sup>th</sup> February 2007. All local residents in the conservation area were sent copies of the document along with a survey form asking for their comments. Residents were also invited to contact the Urban Design and Conservation Team if they wished to discuss the Appraisal or Management Proposals further. Local members and local community groups were also consulted as part of the process.