

<b>13 December 2023</b>		<b>ITEM: 13</b> <b>Decision: 110683</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>		
<b>East Tilbury (Bata Village) &amp; Corringham Conservation Areas Character Appraisal and Management Plans - April 2023</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Yes	
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Ben Maney, Cabinet member for Regeneration and Highways		
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Tracey Coleman, Chief Planning Officer		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Mark Bradbury, Director of Place		
<b>This report is Public</b>		

## Executive Summary

The East Tilbury (Bata Village) conservation area and Corringham conservation area are two of seven conservation areas designated by Thurrock Council, as a Local Planning Authority, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Both the previous East Tilbury Character Appraisal and Corringham Character Appraisal were adopted in March 2007. They are now significantly out of date given new historical research, recent major developments in East Tilbury, as well as the impact of incremental change across both conservation areas.

The updated Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CAMP) provides an up-to-date baseline for the Conservation Area, in line with updates to best-practice and national guidance. This includes an assessment of heritage significance, highlighting opportunities for enhancement, as well as setting out management proposals.

No changes are proposed to the East Tilbury conservation area boundary. Minor amendments are proposed to the Corringham conservation area boundary to allow it to better follow existing physical features and boundaries along the south-west and south-eastern edges. For both CAMPs, no objections were received on the respective public consultation documents. Historic England were complimentary of both consultation documents and provided minimal comments on points of detail.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

#### 1.1 That Cabinet approve the adoption and publication of the East Tilbury (Bata Village) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management

## **Plan (April 2023) (Appendix 1) and of the Corringham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (April 2023) (Appendix 2)**

- 1.2 That Cabinet note the management proposals within the Conservation Area Management Plans with regard to potential use of Article 4 Directions, and asks that a report be brought to the Planning, Transport, and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Cabinet for further consideration on this matter.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 The East Tilbury (Bata) conservation area was originally designated in March 1993. The Conservation Area comprises the former factory complex of the British Bata Show Company and a large housing development of some 352 houses in a 'garden village' setting.
- 2.2 The Corringham conservation area was originally designated in 1973. Its boundary was extended in 1986. The conservation area reflects a special interest in Corringham, primarily drawn from its legibility as a compact historic village established on the very edge of the marshes. The settlement retains a strong connection with its landscape setting and a number of high-quality buildings of historic and architectural merit.
- 2.3 Under the 1990 Act, the Local Planning Authority has a duty to review past conservation area designations from time to time, as well as formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their designated conservation areas. This is done via the development and regular publication of a conservation area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CAMP).
- 2.4 The CAMP provides a technical baseline heritage assessment of the conservation area. This includes a detailed assessment of significance, identifying those features and characteristics that contribute to the special historic interest of the area. The CAMP also identifies opportunities for enhancement as well as management proposals. These provide guidance on appropriate positive management approaches that could be progressed to enhance and protect the conservation area, as well as the identification of potential funding opportunities to support such approaches.
- 2.5 The current CAMPs for both East Tilbury (Bata) and the Corringham conservation areas were adopted in March 2007. They are now considered out-of-date for several reasons:
  - Substantial change to the East Tilbury conservation areas since 2007 including major developments within an adjacent to the designation. There is a need to also consider the impact of incremental change within both conservation areas over the past 16 years (acknowledging that the Conservation Area does not currently benefit from an Article 4 Direction which withdraws some or all permitted development rights).

This includes loss of trees, and public realm works within Corringham conservation area.

- Significant and in-depth historical research into the existing heritage at East Tilbury by Historic England, which was published after the adoption of the existing CAMP. This provides new and relevant information to inform the assessment of significance of the conservation area. This is included within the 'East Tilbury, Essex – Historic Area Appraisal, Research Department Report Series no.21/2007, Historic England'.
- The identification by Historic England of the East Tilbury Conservation Area as being 'at risk' (first recorded within their Heritage at Risk 2014 Register – East of England), reflecting the deteriorating condition of the conservation area since the 2007 CAMP adoption.
- The listing by Historic England of further buildings within the conservation area in 2009. This includes the Bata Industrial Buildings numbers 24 and 34 (Victory House and Nelson House) (list entry no: 1393327), and the Bata Industrial Building number 12 (list entry no: 1393328).
- Changes in best-practice and guidance regarding conservation areas since adoption of the 2007 CAMP. This is reflected in updated guidance provided by Historic England (statutory consultee on heritage matters) via their 'Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management - Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition), February 2019.' This includes a recommendation that conservation area reviews should be undertaken every 5 years.
- The need to update and maintain the accuracy of the CAMP to provide detailed and robust evidence to inform the development of the emerging Local Plan, as well as the Development Management process (particularly concerning Thurrock's representations to the Lower Thames Crossing DCO process, as well as other live planning applications).

2.6 The Council had commissioned a full review and update of both the East Tilbury (Bata Village) and Corringham conservation areas CAMPs. These now provide an up-to-date appraisal and assessment of each conservation area, while acknowledging changes to best practice guidance. These reviews have been subject to public consultation, with the draft updated CAMPs subsequently revised to acknowledge relevant submissions received.

2.7 The main changes to the updated East Tilbury (Bata Village) CAMP (**Appendix 1**) include:

- Updates to the character appraisal, assessment of significance, and appendices incorporating findings from 2007 Historic Area Appraisal by Historic England, as well as up-to-date survey of the conservation area (including recent photography).
- Updates to the context and character appraisal to acknowledge recent development that has been delivered within East Tilbury since the 2007

CAMP. This includes the Bata Fields, Bata Mews, the Thames Enterprise Centre, as well as development of the former tennis courts.

- The former 'Factory Site and Bata Avenue' character area is now separated into 'Factory Site' and 'Bata Avenue' character areas to better reflect their special characters.
- Inclusion of a new chapter: 'Opportunities for Enhancement'. This identifies areas of concern and potential regarding enhancement of the conservation area.
- An expanded chapter on 'Management Proposals', including detailed recommendations on positive management approaches and up-to-date identification of funding opportunities.

2.8 The main changes to the updated Corringham CAMP (**Appendix 2**) include:

- Updates to the character appraisal and assessment of significance, including an up-to-date survey of the conservation area (including recent photography).
- Inclusion of a new chapter: 'Opportunities for Enhancement'. This identifies areas of concern and potential regarding enhancement of the conservation area.
- An expanded chapter on 'Management Proposals', including detailed recommendations on positive management approaches and up-to-date identification of funding opportunities.

2.9 No changes to the East Tilbury (Bata Village) conservation area boundary are proposed.

2.10 Minor amendments are proposed to the Corringham conservation area boundary to better align and reflect existing physical edges. This includes a refinement to the boundary along the south-west to better follow an existing field feature (whereas previously it was drawn as a more arbitrary straight line). The boundary to the south-east has also been refined to align with the physical boundary of Corringham Hall farmyard most closely, and hence better reflect the immediate setting of the listed Corringham Hall.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

3.1 The Council, in its role as a Local Planning Authority, has a statutory duty under sections 69 & 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to review, from time to time, their designated conservation areas and formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. The Act does not stipulate precisely how often a CAMP should therefore be reviewed, however, to further delay the adoption of this review of the CAMPs would create risks to the Council in terms of fulfilling our statutory duties.

3.2 Given the balance of risks, the preferred option is to progress with adoption of the prepared and consulted upon updates to the East Tilbury (Bata Village)

and Corringham CAMPs, with a view to review the CAMPs again in line with current best practice guidance (every 5 years).

- 3.3 The CAMPs provide a series of management proposals for consideration including the introduction of Article 4 Directions. Permitted development rights allow an owner to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need to make a planning application to Thurrock Council. Where such changes would erode the character and appearance of the area, the Council can introduce special controls, known as Article 4 Directions. The result is that some or all permitted development rights are withdrawn and planning permission is required for such alterations. Consideration of the need for an Article 4 Direction is an important and necessary step to ensure that the unique character and appearance of the Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced.
- 3.4 Government guidance requires that Article 4 Directions are made only in those exceptional circumstances where the direction is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area. In all cases, any potential Article 4 Direction should be based on robust evidence, clear justification, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible. As a result, there are a series of options that the Council can consider in relation to the appropriateness and implementation of Article 4 Directions within the context of Conservation Areas. It is therefore considered that these options and their assessment be subject to a separate report.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 Adoption of the East Tilbury (Bata Village) Conservation Area CAMP (April 2023) and Corringham Conservation Area CAMP (April 2023) is required to fulfil the Council's statutory duty, as a Local Planning Authority, under sections 69 & 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to review, from time to time, their designated conservation areas and formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement.
- 4.2 In relation to the consideration of Article 4 Directions, the recommendation considers that a fuller report and assessment be made of this management approach in relation to the Conservation Areas. This is because there are several options and implications within the detail of a proposed Article 4 Direction that would need to be properly assessed to allow for informed decision making.

#### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 It is a legal duty for Thurrock Council, as the Local Planning Authority, under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to submit for consideration to public consultation any proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas, and to have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons as part of this public consultation.

- 5.2 Public consultation on both the updated East Tilbury (Bata Village) and Corringham CAMPs was undertaken by the Council for 6 weeks in 2022 (from 24<sup>th</sup> January to 6<sup>th</sup> of March). This was facilitated via our consultation portal, Engagement HQ. The consultation was publicised via press releases, emails to Elected Members and Community Forums, and to those who had signed up to the associated mailing list.
- 5.3 The online public consultation for the East Tilbury (Bata Village) CAMP was viewed 109 times, with the survey for responses receiving 6 unique visitors, of which 2 provided responses. One of the responses provided no comment, while the other provided a more detailed response but no objection. This response included a desire for greater listing of the remaining buildings and sites of importance, a concern over the appropriateness of any further growth given lack of additional access over the railway line, and a need to be mindful on the impact of further development on the 'garden village idea' that underpins East Tilbury's conservation area.
- 5.4 The contributor's point about the impact of any potential further development on the character of the East Tilbury conservation area is relevant, however the CAMP is a technical baseline heritage document and is not the appropriate document for defining potential growth in the area. This is a matter best considered within the emerging Local Plan. Instead, the updated East Tilbury CAMP highlights the risk of inappropriate new and/or infill development in and/or around the conservation area in terms of potential harm and has provided some initial guidance as to how this can be best managed. Regarding the comments around further listing, the Council does not have any powers to do this. Historic England and the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport are solely responsible for listing important buildings and determining their grade. It is beyond the scope of this consultation summary to advise on additional buildings which might be eligible for national listing although the Council intend to work with communities to establish Local Lists of important buildings to ensure they are preserved commensurate with their significance.
- 5.3 The online public consultation for the Corringham CAMP was viewed 178 times, with the survey for responses receiving 3 unique visitors, of which 1 provided a response. The response raised no objection to the Corringham CAMP but highlighted several important points which have now been incorporated within the updated document. This included: identification of lost trees on the village green, recent loss of old stone kerbs, as well as a series of opportunities for improvement of the public realm including footpaths, style of lighting and bus shelters, and the impact of advertising. Minor changes to the character appraisal, assessment of significance, opportunities for enhancement and management proposals have been made to reflect these comments. The respondent also raised opportunities to extend the conservation area further along Fobbing Road and Herd Lane, and up Lampits Hill to incorporate the two parades of shops. While it is acknowledged that Lampits Hill constitutes a gateway to the Corringham conservation area,

further extension of the designation north and east has not been considered for the following reasons:

- These areas do not form an intrinsic part of the historical significance at the heart of the Corringham conservation area, as the remnant of a compact historic village at the edge of the marshlands with strong connections to this landscape.
- Fobbing Road and Herd Lane reflect a notable loss of historic buildings (present on earlier maps) and have not retained significant heritage assets (designated or non-designated) to warrant significant expansion of the conservation area. Indeed, this is likely to weaken the assessment of significance of the extant conservation area by absorbing significant areas of modern building that lack historic significance.

5.4 However, the contributor's assessment of those further areas that bring merit to the townscape and character of the local area is valuable. While it is beyond the scope of this consultation summary to advise on these areas beyond the proposed Corringham conservation area boundary, the Council intend to work with communities to establish Local Lists of important buildings to ensure they the buildings as identified by the contributor are properly assessed with the potential for preservation commensurate with their significance.

5.5 Historic England were not originally consulted on either of the CAMPs during the public consultation window as they had not been readded to the consultation database following the move from Objective to Engagement HQ, as their email address had changed in the interim. Historic England were instead consulted following the close of the public consultation. Their response was complimentary and positive of both reports, and requested minor amendments in terms of formatting, graphics, and references to external sources. Historic England also provided further clarity as to potential management approaches and funding opportunities, which have been incorporated within the updated CAMPs.

5.6 Following public consultation, both CAMPs were presented to the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 The update to the East Tilbury (Bata Village) and Corringham CAMPs aligns with Thurrock Council's priorities around 'place' in terms of a 'heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future'. The CAMPs provide an updated assessment of the heritage significance of two of Thurrock's conservation areas. It also provides proposals to ensure the enhancement and preservation of this heritage, as well as highlighting opportunities for heritage-led regeneration to ensure this heritage acts as a catalyst for improvement in East

Tilbury, Corringham, and their respective context. The updated CAMPs help ensure a well-maintained conservation area which helps engender civic pride and anchor a community's identity.

6.2 The updated East Tilbury (Bata Village) CAMP does not propose any changes to the boundary of the conservation area designation. As such, it does create any additional impact on local residents within or adjacent to the conservation area than what already exists (in terms of affecting permitted development rights).

6.3 The updated Corringham CAMP proposes minor amendments to the boundary of the conservation area designation. However, these amendments refine boundaries to better follow existing physical defined property lines to the south-west and south-east. As such, it is not considered that these minor amendments create any additional impact on local residents within or adjacent to the conservation area than what already exists (in terms of affecting permitted development rights).

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**  
**Senior Management Accountant**

There are no financial implications represented by adopting these updates to the East Tilbury (Bata Village) and Corringham CAMPs.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Linda Saunders**  
**Planning Solicitor**

A failure to ensure that the CAMPs are reviewed and updated from time to time would be a breach of the Council's statutory duties, as a Local Planning Authority, under the Planning (Listed buildings & Conservation areas) Act 1990. Adoption and publication of the updated East Tilbury (Bata Village) and Corringham CAMPs would ensure Thurrock Council's compliance with the 1990 Act.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**  
**Team Manager, Community Development Team**

There are no direct implications to diversity and equality.



7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children

There are no other implications associated with adopting these updates to the CAMPs.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- East Tilbury Conservation Area Character Appraisal – March 2007 ([Thurrock Council - Character Appraisal - East Tilbury](#))
- East Tilbury Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan – October 2019 (Public Consultation Document) ([c134cb3b4a7fc710c9f349f85b238315\\_220202\\_East\\_Tilbury\\_Conservation\\_Area\\_2019\\_Web.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#))
- Corringham Conservation Area Character Appraisal – March 2007 ([Thurrock Council - Character Appraisal - Corringham](#))
- Corringham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan – October 2019 (Public Consultation Report) ([3b637b089c166bad2fcc8ec01006a1e7\\_220202\\_Corryingham\\_Conservation\\_Area\\_2019\\_Web.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#))

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1: East Tilbury Conservation Area – Character Appraisal and Management Plan – April 2023
- Appendix 2: Corringham Conservation Area – Character Appraisal and Management Plan – April 2023

**Report Author:**

Alec Scragg

Place & Design Manager

Strategic Services