

PLANNING POLICY AND LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

29 OCTOBER 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (PLANNING AND REGENERATION)

A.4 – DRAFT HERITAGE STRATEGY

(Report prepared by William Fuller)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is for this Committee to consider the contents of the draft Heritage strategy and agree feedback to the Cabinet.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tendring's Heritage Strategy aims to promote the protection and celebration of the area's rich history, predominantly contained within its historic environment, and guides its evolution to enhance the positive contribution it makes to the lives of those people living in and visiting the District.

The Strategy promotes a holistic and collaborative approach to the management of heritage. It draws together existing Council strategies, priorities and approaches in order to identify areas within Tendring with significant heritage and provide a basis for future management and identification of opportunities for enhancement. To deliver the Strategy a partnership approach between the Council, its partners and key stakeholders will allow for the full potential of Tendring's heritage to be realised.

Having a clear adopted strategy for heritage is important when making funding bids to support projects in the district.

The strategy is organised into two parts:

Part One: The Baseline

This section explores the historic development of Tendring, and identifies existing heritage assets, sites and resources. It covers the physical heritage of Tendring in the form of the historic environment, and includes archaeology, buildings, settlements, landscapes, archives and artefacts. It also creates a comprehensive list of the people who are involved in looking after the historic environment today

Part Two: Assessment and Strategy

This section draws on the findings of Part One to identify key issues and opportunities within Tendring. It proposes actions to preserve and protect the district's heritage for the future.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee:

- 1) Notes the contents of the Draft Heritage Strategy;**
- 2) Agrees comments (if any) to be reported to Cabinet as part of its consultation on the Strategy.**

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The Heritage Strategy will contribute to the following corporate priorities:

- Make the most of our assets
- Engaging with the community
- Support rural communities
- Effective partnership working
- Promote healthier lifestyles and wellbeing
- Local regeneration
- Support business growth
- First rate leisure facilities
- Attractive events programme

RESOURCES AND RISK

Resources:

TDC Officers are leading on this project with the input of Essex County Council Place Services under a service level agreement.

Adoption of a Heritage Strategy will assist in attracting external funding for heritage related activity in the District. Potential sources of funding include:

- National Heritage Lottery Fund
- Heritage Action Zones (Historic England)
- Section 106 Agreements
- Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas with Historic England

Risks: The adoption of a heritage strategy supports the Council's duties to maintain and enhance heritage assets.

LEGAL

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019), paragraph 185 states: Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take

into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Crime and Disorder: Heritage assets are, unfortunately, vulnerable to crime. Having a strategy for promoting heritage assets in the district should contribute positively to their maintenance.

Equality and Diversity: Conservation of the historic environment can bring wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.

Health Inequalities: There is a wealth of evidence that demonstrates the role heritage plays in improving mental wellbeing and physical health. People who visit heritage sites reported higher life satisfaction and happiness scores, as well as lower anxiety (Department for Culture Media and Sport 2015). Across Essex there are a number of schemes and organisations to encourage and support healthy activity, such as Active Essex and Healthy Life Essex. Tending's heritage provides a positive platform to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors and take positive steps for their personal health and wellbeing. Heritage Trails, for example, are already established in Harwich and Dovercourt, Frinton-on-Sea, Clacton- on-Sea, Jaywick Sands and Walton- on-the-Naze encourage walkers to take routes through the historic environment. Promoting these to new groups and partnering with healthy organisations can open heritage to new audiences and increase wellbeing.

Area or Ward affected: All.

Consultation/Public Engagement: This report is brought to the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee as part of the consultation process. The outcomes of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet for consideration.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

Heritage strategies allow all aspects of the historic environment to be identified and considered within one document. They cover physical heritage that we can see and interact with, including buildings, monuments, sites, areas, landscapes, archives, museums and artefacts, as well as intangible heritage such as traditions, events, culture and character. All of these elements combined give an area its unique identity. A strategy explores and celebrates the unique heritage

of an area, and encourages a holistic, collaborative approach to its preservation, enhancement and enjoyment.

This Strategy will form a baseline document, accessible to all, pertaining to the management and promotion of all aspects of the historic environment.

The enhanced understanding of Tendring's Heritage will enable the council to:

- Recognise and understand the key assets within Tendring which give it its special character;
- Create a knowledge hub of existing museums, archives, traditions and local groups which contribute to the protection and continuation of Tendring's heritage;
- Provide a platform for collaborative working across Tendring, and encourage a continued joined-up approach to heritage management;
- Identify key areas and assets which make the greatest contribution to the heritage of Tendring;
- Identify priority areas where heritage in the form of the historic environment is under threat and the unique issues faced; and
- Actively engage with and promote heritage opportunities in terms of the wider regeneration and economic development of Tendring to provide a framework for future investment.

The strategy is organised into two parts:

Part One: The Baseline

This section explores the historic development of Tendring, and identifies existing heritage assets, sites and resources. It covers the physical heritage of Tendring in the form of the historic environment, and includes archaeology, buildings, settlements, landscapes, archives and artefacts. It also creates a comprehensive list of the people who are involved in looking after the historic environment today

Part Two: Assessment and Strategy

This section draws on the findings of Part One to identify key issues and opportunities within Tendring. It will address key issues facing Tendring's heritage, and propose actions to preserve and protect it for the future. This approach is illustrated by a case study based in Harwich.

Part 1 - Baseline

The Strategy begins by giving a potted history of the District from 400,000 years ago, the time at which the oldest wooden implement in England dates from; to its Victorian era when seaside holidays thrived in the District.

The Strategy then considers the archaeology historic landscapes of Tendring with its significant Mesolithic settlements, Neolithic enclosures and monuments, and Bronze Age monuments and cemeteries.

The architecture of Tendring is highlighted with illustrations of particular buildings, streets, vistas

and building detailing throughout the District. Physical heritage assets are also detailed here. These include our listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments. Also detailed in this section is Tendring's heritage at risk.

An exploration of Tendring's museums, societies and heritage-focused groups is given. As tourism and attractions can have an historic basis, these are also examined. These cover navigational, piers, military and maritime, arts and culture, industrial and built heritage attractions.

Part 2 – Objectives, Action Plan and Case Study

Objectives

To inform the objectives of the Strategy, six key themes have been formed. These are:

Objective 1: Conservation Ensure the sustainable management of all heritage assets, including buildings, landscapes, monuments, landscapes and settlements, through the appropriate conservation and preservation of their significance.

Objective 2: Collaboration Promote and support initiatives for partnership working involving all people and organisations engaged with the heritage of Tendring District.

Objective 3: Knowledge Support the furthering of knowledge and understanding of Tendring's heritage through research and education, and promote training and education opportunities to share knowledge and skills with all people and organisations engaged in the heritage of Tendring District.

Objective 4: Character and Identity Support and promote initiatives and events that celebrate the culture, traditions and customs of all people and communities within Tendring District, and promote the unique characteristics and attractions of the District.

Objective 5: Interpretation Raise public awareness and appreciation of Tendring's heritage through a considered approach to communication methods with different audiences, and support initiatives to encourage the promotion of heritage and the engagement of residents and visitors with it.

Objective 6: Accessibility Recognise and promote the value heritage offers to people's wellbeing, health, identity and sense of belonging by supporting improvements in accessibility to Tendring's heritage sites, buildings and monuments and encouraging initiatives which provide wider audiences with access to heritage.

Actions

The objectives often work together to contribute to the idea of heritage, and future actions and management may need to consider some or all of these themes to ensure that Tendring's heritage is protected, sustainable and continues to develop as a resource.

Opportunities for enhancement include:

- The use of technology,
- Promoting museums and collections,
- The re-use of vacant historic buildings,
- Education of both landowners and children,

- Promoting 'Healthy Heritage'
- Helping existing attractions reach full potential and
- New development and quality design.

Once adopted, a programme of implementation can be developed to manage delivery of the heritage strategy actions. Projects delivered through this programme could look to various sources for part funding. These include:

- National Heritage Lottery Fund
- Heritage Action Zones (Historic England)
- Section 106 Agreements
- Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas with Historic England

Case Study

A case study of Church Street in Harwich's Old Town is used to demonstrate what could be achieved using the objectives of the Heritage Strategy.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Tending Heritage Strategy

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None