



# Doncaster Council

## Report

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Date: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022

To Members of the Planning Committee

### REVISIONS TO THE CONISBROUGH CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision?
Cllr Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning	Conisbrough	No

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This Report seeks a decision as to whether the boundary of Conisbrough Conservation Area should be amended.

### EXEMPT REPORT

2. This report is not exempt.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

3. For the reasons set out through subsequent sections of this report, Members of the Planning Committee are recommended to approve amendments to the boundary of the Conisbrough Conservation Area as shown on the designation map appended to this Report and to approve the same as the new Conservation Area designation for Conisbrough.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Amending the boundary of the conservation area will ensure that buildings and land that have special historic interest that were not originally included are now included and conversely buildings that are now not considered to add to the character and appearance of the conservation area are removed. This will ensure that there is more control of what can happen in regards to planning within the more historic parts of Conisbrough and allow citizens to have less restrictions when there is no historic interest.

### BACKGROUND

## **What is Conisbrough Conservation Area?**

5. A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council has a duty to consider the designation of conservation areas. Conservation areas are of many kinds; town centres, such as Doncaster and Thorne, or may be centred on squares, terraces or villages. It is the character of the area rather than just the presence of individual buildings, which justifies designation of a conservation area, although such areas often contain listed buildings.

6. Conisbrough was designated a conservation area on 4 January 1974. The conservation area is dominated by the castle and the church, both of which are Grade I listed buildings, with the castle also being a scheduled monument. Conisbrough castle is located on a hill-top with the town, which is centred around the church, on a spur behind. The town dates from at least the Anglo-Saxon period, with its main street pattern and the church originating from this period. Within the conservation area there are eight listed structures. Just outside the current boundary are two further listed buildings which are recommended to be included within the conservation area as part of amendments to its boundary.

7. The conservation area has several 17th and 18th century properties, but there are also numerous buildings from the Victorian period, mainly in the form of commercial and residential terraces. Buildings tend to be mainly of a simple form and use a limited range of materials; brick, render or stone walls, with natural Welsh slate or clay pantiles for the roof. Stone boundary walls are a significant feature. There are a large amount of trees and green spaces especially around the castle and the north-eastern parts of the conservation area.

8. The first appraisal was finalised in February 2010. This was reviewed in March 2015 to take account of any significant changes that had occurred there since the original appraisal. The 2015 review is appended to this report at Appendix 1. Recommendations on the boundary changes have not yet been implemented as a result of the 2015 review due to work taking place on the Local Plan since that time. That work now having been completed and the Local Plan adopted, the recommendations in the 2015 review are now being progressed. Given both the time since the original appraisal and its review the proposed boundary changes were the subject of further public consultation between 6 September 2021 and 18 October 2021. A map and summary of the proposed amendments to the boundary are appended to this report at Appendices 2 and 3.

## **Why does the boundary need changing?**

9. It is a statutory requirement for local planning authorities from time to time to review their conservation areas. As part of any review the boundary of the conservation area should be reassessed to see whether it is still appropriate or not. Some areas included at the time of the initial designation may no longer be considered to make sufficient contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area whereas they might be areas that currently lie outside the present boundary that would enhance the conservation area if included. Revision of the boundary should make the conservation area stronger by improving its overall character and appearance.

## What consultation has been undertaken?

10. Whilst there is no statutory duty to consult on boundary changes, Historic England advises that Local Planning Authorities' consult as widely as possible about the proposals with local residents and other interested groups. Consultation was therefore undertaken by various means to reach out to as many people potentially affected by the proposed boundary changes. These included:

- Conisbrough Conservation Area website was updated and outlined why the boundary needed changing and what changes are being considered and asked for comments
- promotion on social media with links to the above website and asking for comments
- an article within Conisbrough in Focus that goes out to households in the Conisbrough area again with links to the above website and asking for comments
- site notices throughout the conservation area especially the areas affected by the changes, again with links to the above website and asking for comments
- individual letters to affected addresses and interested parties again with links to the above website and asking for comments

11. As a result three letters of support were received with no objections. All three supported all the boundary changes, with two specifically welcoming the inclusion of the Wesley Chapel on Chapel Lane whilst the other particularly supported the retention of the Mill Piece due to its natural beauty and wildlife. There was concern raised from one about the condition of some of the buildings within the conservation area and which also highlighted the local interest of the building now known as The Place on Castle Street, which was built as a decontamination centre at the start of World War II.

12. The item was due to be considered by Planning Committee on 1st March 2022 but was deferred as one of the areas to be removed contains trees that a tree preservation order was being considered to be served on. A Tree Preservation Order has been served on this area. The item can therefore now be considered.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

13. At this final stage of the process there are only 2 options identified as being available, albeit Option 2 is not considered as being reasonable for the reasons detailed below:

- **Option 1 – (Recommended)** – To approve the revisions to the Conservation Area boundary as shown in Background Papers or,
- **Option 2 – (Not recommended)** – To leave the boundary as it is





## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION





14. Option 1 is strongly recommended as being the only reasonable option to take. It will ensure that the conservation area has a stronger boundary including areas that contribute positively to the conservation area whilst removing areas that make either a neutral or negative contribution to the conservation area.

15. Option 2 is not recommended. Such a decision would effectively mean that areas that would contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area are left unprotected whilst areas that are currently included and which do not contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area are subject to restrictions that are unnecessary and wasteful of time and resources

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

16. The amendment of the boundary of Conisbrough Conservation Area is considered to impact on Doncaster Council's following key outcomes:

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 <b>Tackling Climate Change</b>				✓
Comments: Not relevant				
 <b>Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work</b>				✓
Comments: Not relevant				
 <b>Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs</b>	✓			
Comments: Changes to the Conservation Area boundary will help ensure that the most significant parts of the centre of Conisbrough are protected resulting in a more attractive place for commerce to thrive.				
 <b>Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all</b>	✓			

<p>Comments:  Conservation areas exist to protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place enabling the features that make it unique and distinctive to be preserved. People value conservation areas for their distinctiveness, visual appeal and historic character. Heritage and the historic environment can be seen to be beneficial to health in a number of ways, for communities it contributes to a sense of place that residents identify with and value. Reviewing the areas included in the boundary ensures that the conservation areas continue to positively influence health and wellbeing.</p>				
 <p><b>Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs</b></p>	✓			
<p>Comments:  The most important parts of Conisbrough town centre will be protected with regard to its heritage significance. It is expected that the changes will ensure time and resources are directed to areas that will benefit the most from the involvement of conservation officers.</p>				
 <p><b>Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough</b></p>				✓
<p>Comments:  Not relevant</p>				
 <p><b>Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future</b></p>				✓
<p>Comments:  Not relevant</p>				
 <p><b>Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities</b></p>	✓			
<p>Comments:  The most important parts of Conisbrough town centre will be protected with regard to its heritage significance.</p>				
<b>Fair &amp; Inclusive</b>				✓
<p>Comments:  There are no equality implications in relation to this report.</p>				

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

17. The proposed amendments to the boundaries have been subject to consultation including directly contacting individuals involved. No objections have been raised therefore it is assumed that risks of later complaints will be minimised.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [SC 13.01.22]**

18. Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on Local Planning Authorities' to review their conservation areas from time to time to determine whether any parts or further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas. If so determined those parts should be designated accordingly.

19. Whilst there are no express requirements for the proposed amendments to the conservation area boundary to be consulted upon, it is noted that the Conservation Officer has followed Historic England guidance and has consulted widely, with positive responses to the proposals received.

20. In the event members are minded to approve the recommendation, the conservation area shall be amended as of the date of the committee resolution.

21. Notice of the amended designation must be published in at least one local newspaper circulating in the area and in the London Gazette (section 70(8)). The Secretary of State and Historic England must also be notified (section 70(5)). The amended designation must also be registered as a local land charge (section 69(4)).

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [OB 11.02.22]**

22. It is understood that there is only one council asset affected by this change, which is the Conisbrough Library. This building will no longer be within the boundary of the conservation area. Therefore, we do not expect any financial implications arising as a result of any possible higher costs of any remedial or improvement work to buildings to ensure they are keeping with the other buildings in the area. It is not expected that the change will have any will be any impact upon NDR valuations of the property. There is not expected to be any impact of this boundary change on the planning fee income levels.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [DK 03.02.22]**

23. There are no direct HR Implications in relation to the report and the proposal to change the Conisbrough boundary.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [PW 03.02.22]**

24. There are no technology implications in relation to this report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

25. The following background papers/documents are to be read in conjunction with this report:

- 2015 Review attached at Appendix 1;
- Map of all proposed amendments to the boundary is attached at Appendix 2; and,
- Proposed boundary changes – detailed description of alterations is attached as Appendix 3.

## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

None

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