

HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Appendix A1 Public Consultation

Summary: This document sets out the public consultation undertaken with local residents and other stakeholders by Holmfirth Conservation Group (HCG) between November 2015 and December 2017 relating to the Holmfirth Conservation Area Appraisal.

Introduction: This report reviews HCG's public engagement on the HCA between December 2017 and November 22nd 2017.

Following the publication of the Draft Conservation Appraisal on the 22nd January 2018 there will be a period of further Public Consultation period ending on 5th February 2018.

The report should be read in conjunction with the appraisal document. This report also considers responses from attendees of the day's open meeting of the 22nd November 2017 and from questionnaire which was available until December 11th 2017.

Consultation Strategy : Government guidance advises that public participation should be an integral part of the appraisal process. It is recommended that the appraisal should be issued for public comment as soon as a draft is completed.

The aims of the Holmfirth Conservation Area Appraisal consultation strategy were as follows:

- . To inform members of the public about the appraisal document and how they could comment on it.
- . To seek public views of the conservation area;
- . To consider views on proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area.
- . To review the Conservation Area boundary and whether it should be amended;
- . To raise the profile of Conservation Areas and provide useful advice and guidance to affected property owners.

Consultation Outcome: There have been three questionnaires during the process of preparing the draft CAA where views of members have been collated.

18th May 2016

Following the establishment of the Holmfirth Conservation Group (constitution approved and signed on the 9th March 2016) an open meeting was held at Brambles at which 33 members and volunteers were recruited. Questionnaire complete by 21 people.

28th February 2017

Open Evening at the Picturedrome to brief the community on progress to date and invite comment. Over 90 people attended. Questionnaires were completed by most attendees.

The answers given to these questionnaires helped inform the questions of HCG's third questionnaire on which this report is based.

22nd November to 11th December

A public meeting was arranged for all day on the 22nd November 2017 using space kindly provided by the Old Bridge Inn. The key issues from the draft appraisal were available for public comment using a variety of display material

To gain the widest possible reach, flyers were delivered to every address in the conservation area, and distributed throughout locations in the Holme Valley. Schools in the area were sent out electronic versions of the flyer to all their families. In all, 2500 flyers were printed and distributed. HCG attempted to reach an audience of 5000 or more.

External consultees were invited to attend including English Heritage, Kirklees Metropolitan Council and Council members, Holme Valley Parish Council, Ward Councillors and community groups

An advertisement was placed on the Holmfirth Community FB page, the Holmfirth Events FB page, Holmfirth Conservation Group's FB page and its website. Letters were sent to all HCG members.

The meeting was attended by over 90 people the majority of whom completed the online version of the questionnaire using the SurveyMonkey application. The results are tabulated in Appendix A1.

Following the consultation the display material was re-erected at the Library until the 12th December. Hard copies of the questionnaire were available for completion.

The questionnaire: contained 14 questions, 4 of which had both a tick-box element and an open-ended question asking for comments. The deadline for completion of the questionnaire was the 11th December 2017.

126 questionnaires were completed. Analysis of the questionnaire shows enthusiastic support for the conservation area. Fifty seven people completed the open ended questions and gave thoughtful and comprehensive answers. These can be viewed in the summary Appendix A2

Question 1: Have you completed an HCG questionnaire before?

Results: 20% yes, 80% no.

Question 2: Did you know Holmfirth is a Conservation Area?

Results: 85% yes, 15% no

Question 3: Did you know Holmfirth is on Historic England's At Risk Register?

Results: Yes 36%, 64% no

Question 4: What is important to you about Holmfirth Town Centre?

Results: A positive response of 90% or more was received by 123-125 respondents to all character elements. The strongest responses were to parks and open spaces, views and character with more than 60% strongly agreeing.

Question 5: (Open ended) Is there is anything else you consider to be important about Holmfirth please add it to the box.

Issues identified include: *HGVs need to be discouraged from passing through Holmfirth, need for rebranding, traffic congestion, parking, pedestrian safety, encouraging and supporting small business, condition of the town, street furniture and keeping the character of the built environment.*

Question 6: What do you think are the most important issues facing Holmfirth?

Results: A positive response of more than 60% was received from between 115-125 respondents for all elements. The two most important issues were Traffic flow and protection for listed buildings, both scoring a positive response of more than 90%

Question 7: (Open ended) Is there anything else that you consider to be an important issue facing Holmfirth?

Issues identified include: *The public realm including street lighting, inappropriate shop frontages, ugly buildings in the centre,, scruffiness of town, noise pollution caused by traffic and road surfacing materials, illegal and thoughtless parking, necessary promotion of tourism, poor maintenance by property owners and tenants, HGVs threatening stability of buildings, need to encourage the use of green transport – move away from dependency on cars, industrial and domestic wheelie bins, inappropriate developments. Need for better signage.*

Question 8: Do you think the following proposals will help to look after the heritage of Holmfirth

Results: 126 responses to all elements in this question with 83%-94% of respondents giving positive responses to all elements. The highest importance was given to Implementation of planning policies (1), guidance for developers (3), guidance for shop front design (4) Education packs for schools (5) – all respondents gave a positive response of more than 90%

Question 9: (Open ended) Are there any other proposals, which you are aware of or would like to suggest?

Issues identified include: *Planning with a focus on preservation but not to exclude good modern design that complements, prevent HGVs by road narrowing, shop front guidance, education packs for schools, removal of street clutter, enforcement by local authority, untidiness of the town, well-designed contemporary street lights and other street furniture, build a different route for traffic passing through, waste bins – dirty ugly, untidy, collection like a third world country, inappropriate parking, partnership of community groups, implementation of planning restrictions, underused buildings to provide residential opportunities, improve the riverscape in the centre, conservation day focus on energy and climate change, town museum.*

Question 10: Do you think the following types of development should be restricted?

Results:

1. Replacement of windows with uPVC
2. Replacement of doors with uPVC
3. Addition of a porch
4. Installation of roof windows and solar panels
5. Erection of satellite dishes or aerials

Results: Windows - 55% gave a positive response believing that development should be restricted and 38% disagreed.

Doors – 62% supported restrictions, 31% disagreed

Roofs – 71% supported control and 20% were against

Satellite dishes – 48% supported control, 39% disagreed.

These results indicated an overall support of control but also show less unity than for other issues relating to the CA.

Issues identified include: *Need to balance energy conservation, cost and climate change with conservation rules, uPVC materials have much improved and style is more important than material*

Question 11: (Open ended) If you have further comment regarding restricted development please add it to the box below.

Issues identified include: *Sensible solutions which balance environmental issues within a heritage context with regards to keeping the integrity of buildings (appearance more important than materials), keep the setted paths and streets, street signage, advertisements and banners, development must complement the historical nature of the town, be realistic, open up the river.*

Question 12: (Open ended) What do you think are the three most important changes that could be made to the appearance and character of Holmfirth?

Issues identified include: *Traffic calming, reduce HGVs, remove HGVs from centre, reduce traffic, access to the river, better use for all ages made of green spaces, shop fronts, signs, traffic, maintain heritage of built environment but balance with climate change, streetscape including street furniture and clutter, park and ride facilities, use of vacant buildings, shop fronts, car parking, public transport, underground car parks and grass current car parks, enforcement by planning – with regards to streetscape, clutter and signage, tighter control by planning over applications to renovate buildings, robust plan for former council offices, library and market hall for public use, ugly and underused Riverside shopping centre, street lighting of dark areas, waste bins, repaving with appropriate materials, building maintenance, involve businesses in a review, restoration plan for Victoria Park, reuse of empty buildings, remove central car park and relocate post office.*

Question 13: Please indicate your age

Of those who provided this information, 3 were under 25, 48 were under 60 and 67 were over 60 = 118 of the 126 in total

Further Consultation

Following the online publication of the draft HCA, the public will be asked to make further comments. In addition public views will be taken at a Social Event on 2nd February 2018. If further comments were to be received after the deadline of 5th February 2018, they would be taken into taken into account.

Kirklees consultation

Following the submission of the draft appraisal to KMC the council will provide further consultation

An electronic copy of the draft conservation area appraisal and a questionnaire (a copy of which is included in the appendices) are available on the HCG website with clear signposts at www.holmfirthconservation.org.uk

Hard copies of the appraisal and questionnaires will be made available at:

- . Holmfirth Library
- . Holme Valley Parish Council Offices, Civic Hall, Holmfirth

The draft appraisal will remain online until a final version is written which reflects the views of all stakeholders which will then be published.

The aim of the group is for Kirklees to adopt the Conservation Area Appraisal and use the findings from the surveys and the opinions of the public to formulate a management plan for the Holmfirth Conservation Area, which reflects the view and aspirations of the community.