

# Item 8

## REPORT TO CABINET

22 November 2007

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

#### Portfolio: Planning and Development

#### Windlestone Hall Rushyford, Planning Statement and Design Brief

#### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Windlestone Hall, a Grade II\* Listed Building, together with its ancillary buildings and related grounds is owned by the County Council but is being currently offered for sale. The Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Development Brief has been prepared by the Design, Conservation, Landscape and Tree Management Team in consultation with English Heritage and Durham County Council's Archaeological Section in order to guide prospective purchasers in the preparation of adaptation, restoration and development proposals for the Windlestone Hall site which is situated within a registered Historic Park and is within the Windlestone Conservation Area.
- 1.2 Through making this a Supplementary Planning Document, it would provide the document with statutory planning weight, it would be tested by public consultation, would be subject to the provisions of Sustainability Appraisal, Appropriate Assessment and would form part of the statutory development plan. Its new status as a Supplementary Planning Document would strengthen the Council's role as Local Planning Authority and add the appropriate weight to and provide Officers with a robust mandate in dealing with any planning or listed building applications to secure a standard of development commensurate with the historic status of the site. This process of producing a Supplementary Planning Document will take 12 months. In order to take this forward, the Local Development Scheme will need to be revised.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees to the production of the Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Design Brief as a Supplementary Planning Document and is incorporated within a revised Local Development Scheme.

#### **3 THE WINDLESTONE HALL PLANNING STATEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

- 3.1 The purpose of this comprehensive planning statement and development brief prepared by the Design, Conservation, Landscape and Tree Management Team in consultation

with English Heritage and Durham County Council's Archaeological Section is to guide prospective purchasers of the site which is currently owned by Durham County Council in the preparation of adaptation, restoration and development proposals for the site which is situated within a registered Historic Park and is within the Windlestone Conservation Area. As a Supplementary Planning Document, the Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Development Brief will form part of the statutory Local Development Framework.

- 3.2 The site extends to 10.3 hectares (25.5 acres) encompassing Windlestone Hall, a Grade II\* Listed Building, and its associated buildings, former kitchen and pleasure garden, pasture and woodlands.
- 3.3 The listed hall and several other listed buildings originally belonged to the Eden Family and once the home of Sir Anthony Eden the former Prime Minister, since 1560. More recently it has served as a special school but is currently empty and awaiting disposal. The school was relocated in 2006 into new purpose built accommodation to the west of Chilton.
- 3.4 The Windlestone Hall site provides an opportunity to utilise its historic stately home connections and setting within an historic park to bring it into a new use thereby helping to safeguard an important heritage asset for future generations.
- 3.5 The many historic designations attached to the property and its grounds make it necessary for any prospective purchaser to prepare from the outset a site-wide conservation plan in order to guide and inform proposals for change. This plan should be prepared in accordance with established good practice and by an appropriate team of specialists with a proven track record of preparing conservation plans on multi-faceted heritage assets.
- 3.6 The removal of an uncharacteristic 1970's block will help to enhance the setting of the historic buildings and spaces.
- 3.7 There is a general presumption against "enabling development" on this site in accordance with English Heritage's policy statement "Enabling Development and Conservation of Heritage Assets".

#### **4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Whilst there will be any direct resource implications, in terms of advertisement, publication and printing costs. There will also be indirect cost implications in terms of Officer time spent on the preparation of this document.

#### **5 CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 The report has been prepared in full consultation with English Heritage and Durham County Council's Archaeological Section as well as relevant officers within the Planning Section.

5.2 As a Supplementary Planning Document, the Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Development Brief will be subject to the statutory consultation procedures as prescribed by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. Further details can be found in the Borough Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2006).

## **6 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **6.1 Equality and Diversity**

There are no Equality and Diversity implications.

### **6.2 Legal and Constitutional Implications**

As Supplementary Planning Document, the document must be published in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

### **6.3 Links to Community Strategy/Corporate Plan**

Corporate Ambition: An Attractive Borough.

Community Outcome: To improve the design and environmental quality of towns, villages and the countryside and to provide a high quality, efficient and customer focused planning service that supports sustainable improvement of the built and natural environment of the Borough.

### **6.4 Risk Management**

If the Supplementary Planning Document is not produced, there may well be a negative impact upon the Borough's historic and natural environment.

### **6.5 Sustainability**

As Supplementary Planning Document, the Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Design Brief will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment) and Appropriate Assessment.

The document aims to protect important historic assets for future generations whilst promoting appropriate alternative uses for the existing buildings and the site in accordance with relevant planning policies and guidance.

### **6.6 Social Inclusion**

No implications have been identified.

## **7 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None.

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**Ward(s):** Chilton Ward

**Key Decision Validation:** This is not a Key Decision.

### **Background Papers**

Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Development Brief.

### **Examination by Statutory Officers**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>