

DRAFT SHAWLANDS CROSS & WAVERLEY PARK CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

PUBLIC CONSULTATION STATEMENT

The Draft Shawlands Cross & Waverley Park Conservation Area Appraisal was issued for public consultation on 10th September 2012, for a 7 week period, ending on 2nd November 2012. A link to the document was posted on the Council website homepage and all addresses within the proposed conservation area(s) were contacted by letter inviting feedback on the draft Appraisal and proposed conservation area designation of **Shawlands Cross and/or Waverley Park**. Further copies of the Appraisal were deposited in local Libraries and also DRS Reception. A comments form was provided which could be e-mailed to a dedicated mailbox and comments were also accepted by post or telephone. A range of specific stakeholders including statutory consultees, elected members and local amenity/business groups were also contacted by letter and asked to comment. Local members were informed of the consultation and a presentation was made to the Pollokshields Area Committee in advance of the consultation. A press release was also issued, together with bulletins on appropriate social media sites concerned with the area.

A public meeting took place on Friday 27th September at Shawlands Academy. The meeting was publicised via the letters issued during the consultation and noted on the Council website together with posters and web based updates. Approximately 80 people attended the meeting although it is assumed not everyone completed the register. The purpose of the meeting was to raise awareness of the consultation, outline the information contained within the Draft Appraisal and explain the implications of conservation area designation to home/business owners. The meeting was chaired and facilitated by 4 members of staff from DRS, together with 2 local elected members – Bailie Hanif Raja & Councillor Norman MacLeod. The session was introduced by Bailie Raja who set the wider context of the proposals, followed by a summary of the Shawlands Town Centre Action Plan aims and objectives and how these might be assisted by conservation area status for Shawlands Cross. A Council officer then emphasised the various challenges facing the area in terms of the economic downturn, vacant units, retail competition etc. The principle of conservation areas and what designation means for residents was then explained together with an overview of the Appraisal itself and the key features and rich architectural character of the area. Finally, the potential for grant funding for eligible works to listed buildings/properties within conservation areas was explained by Gordon Urquhart of the Glasgow City Heritage Trust. A question and answer session followed, with the following issues being raised:

- Vacant shop units, including Shawlands Arcade (outwith the proposed Conservation Area boundary)
- Litter
- Policing issues – Bailie Raja asked that this specific query should be raised directly with him
- Lack of diversity of shops and excess of licensed premises
- Anti-social behaviour

- Maintenance of properties and the need for factoring agencies to be informed of conservation area requirements should designation progress
- Enforcement issues
- Financial and practical implications of conservation area status for residents of Waverley Park and Shawlands Cross
- Traffic problems and road maintenance
- Boundary queries including a request to include Queens Park within the proposed boundary for Shawlands Cross Conservation Area
- Need for a leisure facility in the area
- Clutter of street furniture
- Poor quality public realm

Where possible, the above queries were addressed during the meeting, which was closed by Councillor Macleod who also thanked the Council officials for their efforts. Attendees were thanked for taking the time to come to the meeting, and encouraged to submit their written comments. A show of hands was requested to indicate the level of support for the proposals and both Shawlands Cross and Waverley Park proposed Conservation Areas generated a positive response. The consultation results however, must take account of all feedback received therefore the meeting, which was held at an early stage of the consultation cannot be interpreted as the definitive outcome as discussed below.

Shawlands Cross comments and conclusion:

For Shawlands Cross, 45 public comments in support of the proposed Conservation Area were received. These included representations from the Shawlands Business Association, local residents and business owners. Seven further comments were noted as objections to the proposal. Various concerns were included within these comments as listed below. Where issues are not planning/conservation related and therefore outwith the scope of this report, they will be summarised and forwarded to relevant Council departments and forums including Land and Environmental Services and the Shawlands Cross Town Centre Steering Group.

- the importance of encouraging and enabling maintenance to listed/non listed properties – tenements in particular
- desire for more guidance and information on conservation and sources of grant funding
- the importance of improving the appearance of shopfronts/signage
- the need to improve the public space at the front of Langside Halls, including tree management
- air pollution levels at Shawlands Cross
- tree maintenance required at Springhill Gardens
- vandalism and litter
- waste collection and management
- traffic volume
- parking issues
- enforcement issues

Proposed Conservation Area Boundary

The proposed boundary for the Shawlands Cross Conservation Area was largely supported although there were several requests that **Queens Park** should be included. Consultation with Land and Environmental Services has ruled this out as it is not considered appropriate or necessary. A comprehensive Management Plan (2011 – 2016), prepared by Land and Environmental Services is in place, 'to ensure Queen's Park continues to provide high quality facilities that meet the recreation, leisure, education, environmental and cultural needs of the community whilst protecting the historic & natural landscape character of the park, and at the same time contribute significantly to the economic and environmental regeneration of the city'. According to the Queens Park Management Plan, Historic Scotland will be approached with a view to including the Park within the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland, which would offer the Park further statutory protection. Various buildings and structures within the Park are listed by Historic Scotland and as such have full heritage protection and would not benefit further from conservation area designation. There was also a request that the boundary should be extended to include the full length of Skirving Street and part of Deanston Drive however, this will not be progressed. The focus of the proposed Conservation Area is to concentrate on the historic Cross and immediate area. The boundary at Skirving Street is sufficient to encompass those elements that relate to the Cross.

Conclusion

Whilst the above summary is not exhaustive, the overall response to the proposed Shawlands Cross Conservation Area was positive. Amendments have been made to the Draft document as attached. **It is recommended that a new Conservation Area should be designated at Shawlands Cross** as detailed in the Committee Report attached.

Waverley Park comments and conclusions:

For Waverley Park, 32 public comments were received in support of the proposed conservation area designation, whilst 30 public comments were in objection. Those that were in favour of the proposals, agreed with the findings of the Draft Appraisal and recognised the architectural and historic character of the area and the opportunity to protect and enhance it via conservation area designation. Those that were opposed to the proposal were of the opinion that it has come too late to be effective and that the character of the area has already been affected by incremental changes such as the loss of traditional materials, replaced with modern alternatives throughout the area. The majority of comments from local homeowners concerned the real financial burden that conservation area status could impose in terms of maintenance and improvements to their properties – against the context of the current economic climate. Although the Council made it clear that grant funding may be available via the Glasgow City Heritage Trust for eligible works – this has not been sufficient to alleviate those concerns. The imposition of planning restrictions via the removal of recently relaxed Householder Permitted Development Rights should conservation area status be progressed, has been conceived as unwanted bureaucracy in an area which may be viewed as self regulating in terms of the upkeep and appearance of the area. Many were also concerned that Conservation

Area status may have a negative impact on local property values however in response to this details of recent English Heritage research has shown the opposite effect. A 2012 study by the London School of Economics indicates that houses in conservation areas sell for a premium of 23% on average. A premium of around 9% exists even after adjusting for other factors that affect house prices such as location and type of property. This adjusted premium was lower for conservation areas deemed to be "at risk", being approximately 5%. According to the study, conservation areas also demonstrate stronger house price appreciation than other areas. On average, property prices inside conservation areas have grown at a rate that exceeded comparable properties elsewhere by 0.2% a year.*

A comparative study has not been carried out for Scotland or Glasgow however the City Design Group have suggested such a project to Historic Scotland and hope to take this forward during 2013/14.

Conclusion

Whilst the results of the consultation are marginally in favour of the proposed designation at Waverley Park, the level of support is not considered sufficient for the Council to recommend conservation area designation at this time. **A new conservation area will not therefore be designated at Waverley Park.** The proposal may be reconsidered in the future as part of the ongoing monitoring and review process for the City's conservation areas, if there is considered to be public support to revisit the subject. It is hoped however that the consultation achieved the positive aim of raising awareness of the character of the Waverley Park area and the benefits of using traditional materials in such areas to conserve and enhance their special character. This consultation may be interpreted as a barometer of public appetite for new conservation areas and will inform the Council's approach to future consultations of this nature.

*LSE & English Heritage, 'Value of Conservation Areas', 2012