

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
REPORT NO:	HEP/07/19
DATE:	12 March 2019
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor David Kelly (Organisation – Planning and Corporate Services)
CONTACT OFFICER:	Anna Irwin (Tel 298760)
SUBJECT:	Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan
WARD:	All wards

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek adoption of the Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Authorities to identify 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' for designation as conservation areas. Furthermore Local Authorities are required to formulate policies and proposals for their preservation and enhancement.
- 2.2 The Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in January 2009. This document has now been reviewed and revised to take account of changes in national and local policy, new initiatives and changing circumstances within the town centre.
- 2.3 The Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan aims to provide clear guidance for those seeking to undertake works of development and change within the Conservation Area and provides a framework for decision-makers to ensure that through these works, the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced.
- 2.4 A public survey was undertaken during September 2018 which has helped to shape and inform this document. A further period of public consultation was undertaken during November and December 2018.

3 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That Members adopt the draft Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- (i) To provide guidance to those seeking to undertake works of development and change within the Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area, ensuring the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area is preserved or enhanced.

4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Authorities to identify 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' for designation as conservation areas. Furthermore Local Authorities are required to formulate policies and proposals for their preservation and enhancement.
- 4.2 The Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area was first designated in March 1974 and subsequently extended in August 1975, June 1985 and most recently in April 2007. The Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan was adopted by Wrexham County Borough Council as supplementary planning guidance in January 2009. This document has now been reviewed and revised to take account of changes in national and local policy, new initiatives and changing circumstances within the town centre.
- 4.3 The Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan aims to provide clear guidance for those seeking to undertake works of development and change within the Conservation Area and provides a framework for decision-makers to ensure that through these works, the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced.
- 4.4 Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area encompasses an historic market town with a character largely dominated by the 18th and 19th century architecture of the Georgian and Victorian periods. St Giles Church is the principal Medieval structure and focal point around which the town has developed. The majority of buildings are two and three storeys high giving the town a human scale and intimate urban character.
- 4.5 The document comprises a brief history of the town and its development and a character assessment defines the areas special character and appearance. A management plan, included as Chapter 5.0, seeks to highlight the factors which diminish the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area and aims to identify opportunities through which the special character and appearance of the area may be better preserved and enhanced within a 10 year action plan. Detailed design guidance and advice on maintenance is also provided to assist those who have a responsibility for delivering change and in making informed decisions that will protect the special significance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.6 Once adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance, the document will be published on the Council's website.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Policy Framework** - Amplifies existing policy within the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan and takes account of national guidance. The publication of the updated document also contributes to meeting object PI3 of the Council Plan.
- 5.2 **Budget** - Any resources required to implement the action plan will be sought through a combination of cash limited budgets, Section106 monies and the private sector.
- 5.3 **Legal** - The relevant statutory provisions are identified in the main body of the report.
- 5.4 **Staffing** - No staffing implications.
- 5.5 **Equality/Human Rights** - Members are advised of their duty to consider the full Equality Impact Assessment which is available at <http://vmwinsqld/equalityisalive/Menu.aspx> report number EP/EIA00100/2019. Members of the public can request a copy of the full Equality Impact Assessment from the Contact Officer named in the header box of this report. A summary of the EIA is attached at Appendix 1.
- 5.6 **Risks** - None.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 A public survey was undertaken during September 2018 on 'Your Voice' which has helped to shape and inform this document. A further period of public consultation was undertaken over a 6 week period during November and December 2018. A drop in session was also held at the Guildhall, Wrexham on 28 November 2018.
- 6.2 Through the public consultation exercise, comments were received from 52 respondents including private individuals, voluntary groups and Welsh Government departments. The comments along with a response and any recommendations for amendments, as appropriate, are set out in Appendix 2.
- 6.3 The consultation draft was generally welcomed and only relatively minor changes are proposed to the document. Proposed changes are highlighted in the attached draft document, included as Appendix 3.

7. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

- 7.1 The proposals have not been considered by a Scrutiny Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	LOCATION	WEBSITE INFO
None		