

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESULTS FOR AUSTIN VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA AND IDEAL VLLAGE CONSERVATION AREA IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSALS FOR CANCELLATION

Austin Village

Public Consultation

A consultation event was held at Longbridge Baptist Church on 10th August 2017 and 39 people attended including Councillor R. Brew, Councillor D. Clancy and Councillor B. O'Reilly.

During the event comment forms were made available and 14 forms were completed, making the following comments:

- The Article 4 direction is too restrictive;
- The Article 4 direction should go along with the conservation area;
- The conservation area should be kept along with the Article 4 direction;
- People move to the area as it is a conservation area and improvements have been made;
- Gardens have been ripped up and driveways have been put down and plastic cladding used and this has not been enforced against;
- The area has changed since 1997 and now plastic is more widespread in use, people do whatever they want and people are punished for following the rules;
- A residents meeting voted in favour of not having a conservation area;
- Many alterations were made to properties prior to the designation being put in place;
- Residents only wish to maintain their properties at a cost that they can afford (therefore UVVC windows not wood).
- More people have cars now and there is a greater need for parking;
- Road kerbs are in a poor condition and trees need better maintenance;
- It is a unique area within the city; and
- Some properties were rendered when built.

Consultation responses

8 consultation responses have been received raising the following issues, including a resident acting as Chairperson of the 'Austin Village Preservation Society' and a non-resident from Ampersand Project CIC:

- Austin Village residents expressed in a survey in 2016 to no longer have a conservation area;
- The Article 4 direction has been continually ignored with the use of modern materials being used with and without permission;

- Many residents do not want to lose the conservation area status but would rather the strict terms of the Article 4 direction be altered to allow them to maintain their properties in an eco-friendly and economical manner;
- The Council have been unable to police the area and ensure the Article 4 direction is being adhered to;
- The residents were not consulted on the replacement of lampposts, the replacing of paving slabs with tarmac and allowing trees to grow over the bungalows;
- The Article 4 should be rescinded and a guidance document published (which is resident led);
- An HLF project recognising the value of the village's heritage and its origins in Michigan will capture the feeling of residents.

Historic England

It is a matter of considerable regret to Historic England that Birmingham City Council has not been willing to back up its own Article 4 Direction, which is in place to prevent harmful change, by using your enforcement powers. As a result, and entirely predictably, this has led to the detrimental changes the Article 4 Direction was designed to resist (as clearly shown in the Council's Conservation Areas Review document). The most obvious consequence has been the extensive installation of uPVC windows. Historic England does not believe uPVC window are acceptable in any Conservation Area, and cannot envisage this being so.

It is note that the designation report (of 17 July 1997) referred to the geometric layout of the building plots as a part of the area's significance, as well as the date of construction during World War I, and the use of imported timber prefabricated "bungalows" from the USA to house those working in the local production plants of Herbert Austin. The Conservation Area still retains some of that significance. However, it is clearly for Birmingham City Council to judge whether or not there is still sufficient special interest after the cumulative change, particularly the extensive installation of uPVC windows, to merit the retention of the Austin Village Conservation Area.

The Victorian Society

Although the Austin Village was erected during the First World War and therefore in the years immediately following our period of interest, it was planned in the great tradition of early 20th century garden village suburbs, but unusually using some 200 imported timber houses from America, and so there is disappointed that this Conservation Area is proposed to be cancelled .

Whilst it is recognise from the statistical evidence that there have been considerable alterations to many properties, including unauthorised works, which have had a negative impact on the Conservation Area, we are not convinced that this is enough to warrant de-designation of the Conservation Area. These inappropriate changes, such as replacement doors, windows, cladding and roofing materials, the additions of satellite dishes or the loss of garden boundaries, could be reversed to enhance the Conservation Area, whereas cancellation of the area's status will precipitate further erosion, and it is likely that the

remaining distinctive character of the Austin Village will be rapidly and completely lost. We fear also that such cancellation of this Conservation Area will be a signal for further erosion of historic character in other Conservation Areas and could set a precedent for the removal of this status elsewhere in the city.

If cancellation is effected, and indeed in any case, we would request that steps are taken to preserve and offer protection to some of these extraordinary houses where they retain features of special character.

The Birmingham Civic Society

The cancellation of the conservation area is not supported on the grounds that the special architectural, historic interest and character of the area is clearly evident today. Whilst it is accepted that there has been a number of alterations to the historic fabric of the dwellings, these alterations are not of detriment to the overall appearance of the conservation area. It is recommended the sufficient guidance/support for owners with-in the area is provided to assist them in ensuring any proposed development to improve their properties ensures that the special architectural, historic interest and character of the area is preserved and enhanced. We recommend that the Article 4 direction is retained.

Ideal Village

Public Consultation

A consultation event was held at the St Paul's Centre on 9th August 2017 and 20 people. A representative from the Victorian Society attended but no Councillors were in attendance.

During the event comment forms were made available and 4 forms were completed, making the following comments:

- The area no longer looks like a conservation area and people can build extensions;
- Disappointed the area is being removed and is not protected and this is why the area has deteriorated, this is the councils fault; and
- Disappointed that the conservation area is proposed to be withdrawn, there are many distinctive buildings and features, but the character has been much eroded.

Consultation responses

8 consultation responses have been received raising the following issues, including a resident acting as Chairperson of the 'Austin Village Preservation Society' and a non-resident from Ampersand Project CIC:

- Removing the conservation area would be to remove part of the cultural heritage of Birmingham and the designation should be left in place;

- The survey is seriously flawed as it identifies that any differences from 1910 fabric is evidence that people no longer are complying with the conservation area;
- Plastic windows should be allowed so long as they are the same, or sympathetic to, the original design;
- Slate shouldn't be replaced by tiled roofs and other changes to brickwork and bay windows;
- Alterations had already taken place in 1990;
- An error was found in the survey over a front door not being original when it is;
- The Council have not enforced the conservation area, and the inaction of the Council has led to this proposal;
- Conservation Area status should be retained so we can conserve what elements are remaining;
- New people in the conservation area do not appreciate its architectural qualities and are not respecting that when altering houses;
- Lifting the Conservation Area status would give people a licence to destroy the remaining heritage in this area;
- The area has continued to deteriorate due to poor decisions in planning;
- The conservation area status is preventing owners making changes to their properties in order to meet their needs; and
- There has no investment (grants/works etc) by the Council to help preserve and of the features and character of the area.

Councillor Shafique Shah, Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq and Councillor Uzma Ahmed each have made representations supporting the cancellation of the conservation area.

Historic England

It is a matter of considerable regret to Historic England that Birmingham City Council has not been willing to back up its own Article 4 Direction, which is in place to prevent harmful change, by using your enforcement powers. As a result, and entirely predictably, this has led to the detrimental changes the Article 4 Direction was designed to resist (as clearly shown in the Council's Conservation Areas Review document). This was also noted at the point that the original Article 4 Direction was lifted in 2009 (as referenced in paragraph 3.6 of your Review). The most obvious consequence has been the extensive installation of uPVC windows. Historic England does not believe uPVC window are acceptable in any Conservation Area and cannot envisage this ever being so.

It is also note that the designation report (of 18 October 1990) referred to the Ideal Village as being important both architecturally and historically comprising a "village layout" rich in architectural styles derived from the activities of the Ideal Benefits Society. The Conservation Area still retains some of that significance. However, it is clearly for Birmingham City Council to judge whether or not there is still sufficient special interest, after the cumulative change made following the extensive installation of uPVC windows, to merit the retention of the Ideal Village Conservation Area.

The Victorian Society

There is disappointment that this Conservation Area is proposed to be cancelled. Whilst it is recognised from your statistical evidence that there have been considerable alterations to many properties, including unauthorised works, which have had a negative impact on the Conservation Area, we are not convinced that this is enough to warrant de-designation of the Conservation Area. These inappropriate changes, such as replacement doors and windows, the additions of satellite dishes or the loss of garden boundaries, could be reversed to enhance the Conservation Area, whereas cancellation of the area's status will precipitate further erosion, and it is likely that the remaining distinctive character of the Ideal Village will be rapidly and completely lost. We fear also that such cancellation of this Conservation Area will be a signal for further erosion of historic character in other Conservation Areas and could set a precedent for the removal of this status elsewhere in the city.

The Birmingham Civic Society

There is no support for the cancellation of Ideal Village on the grounds that there are some areas within the conservation area that retain the special architectural, historic interest and character of the original development. It is recommended that further detailed analysis is carried out on the area and Birmingham City Council considers varying (reducing) the area to preserve and enhance the special architectural, historic interest and character of the Ideal village. It is recommended that an Article 4 direction is placed upon the varied (reduced) conservation area to further preserve and enhance the area. Consideration should also be made regarding Locally Listing a number of the properties to serve as exemplar properties within the area.