

14 December 2020

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Alistair Day ☎ 282479
Title	Proposed Extension to Garrison Conservation Area		
Wards affected	New Town and Christ Church		

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report is seeking approval to commence consultation with a view to extending the Garrison Conservation Area.

## 2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To agree to consult for a period of 6 weeks, on a proposed extension to the existing Garrison Conservation Area to incorporate the Roman Circus House, ABRO site, the area of public open space to the south of the ABRO site and Artillery Folley

## 3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The MOD are expected to dispose of the ABRO site and given the site's historic importance it is considered appropriate to include this site (together with Roman Circus House, the public open space to the south of ABRO and Artillery Folley) within the Garrison Conservation Area. This will afford these sites with extra protection.

## 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Councillors could decide not to carry out the consultation or to extend the Garrison Conservation Area.

## 5. Background Information

- 5.1 Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Local Authorities are required to review, from time to time, those parts of their area that are of special interest and to designate such areas as conservation areas. When making decisions in respect of buildings or land within a conservation area, a local authority must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. Conservation areas are subject to tighter planning controls and trees (above a certain size) are afforded temporary protection.
- 5.2 The Garrison Conservation Area was designated as a conservation area in May 2004. The conservation area covers the historic core of the old garrison and was established following the preparation and adoption of the Colchester Garrison Masterplan. The Garrison Conservation Area lies immediately south of St Johns Abbey Gatehouse and encompasses the greater part of the St Johns Abbey Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is bounded on the west by Butt Road and the Garrison boundary wall. The southern boundary follows Circular Road South and, to the south east, the edge of Abbey Fields as far as Mersea Road. An appraisal of the Garrison Conservation Area was prepared by Alan Stones in 2004 which can be viewed here: <https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/Source/SCC74367>
- 5.3 The Council has recently been informed that the MOD propose to dispose of the former vehicle workshop site known as ABRO (now renamed DSG). The ABRO site and Roman Circus House, which are located to the north of Le Cateau Road, fall outside the Garrison Conservation Area. It is proposed to extend the conservation area to include these sites together with the adjacent area of open space and Artillery Folley. The area of land that is proposed for inclusion within the Garrison Conservation Area historically formed part of the Royal Artillery Barracks (1874-5) and is the only part of the former Artillery Barracks site that is excluded from the conservation area. (The barracks were later renamed Le Cateau Barracks to commemorate the actions of British II Corps at Le Cateau, north-eastern France). Within the ABRO site, the Infirmary Stables and the boundary wall are the only surviving buildings from the first phase of the Royal Artillery Barrack's development. The stables are of a Neo-Georgian design and mirror the surviving buildings within the main area of the Le Cateau Barracks to the south. The stables appear to be in relatively good condition and retain some interesting architectural detailing. Officers are aware of only two other examples of military Infirmary Stables (Plymouth and Aldershot) both of which are listed grade II. The significance of the boundary wall lies in its use as a physical division between civilian and military land and as part of the original barracks. The wall and Artillery Folley that runs adjacent to it, are included on the Council's Local List. Other buildings within the ABRO site that are of potential interest include: the Carpenters & Telecommunications Shop, the Store and the Dining Room and Cook House. The significance of each of these buildings is primarily derived from their architectural interest as examples of Neo-Georgian designed military buildings that echo the styling of the surviving former military buildings to the south-east of this site. The buildings with the ABRO site have however suffered from alteration, although the exterior of the Carpenters & Telecommunications Shop building retains the greatest number original features. The drafted Development Brief for the ABRO site identifies the Infirmary Stables and the Carpenters & Telecommunications Shop as non-designated assets that should be retained as a part of the redevelopment of this site. In addition to the above, the area proposed for inclusion with the Garrison Conservation Area includes part of the remains of Colchester's Roman Circus. The Roman Circus was discovered during garrison redevelopment and was designated as a scheduled ancient monument on 13 November 2007. The Circus is one of only six proven locations for

Circus' within the north-western provinces of the Roman Empire. As a result, the Circus is of high significance as an important monument both nationally and internationally.

- 5.4 Officers have prepared a Development Brief for the ABRO site which sets out the parameters for any future development; this brief will also be the subject of public consultation. It would however also be useful to publicise the fact that the Council regards the ABRO site as being worthy for inclusion within the Garrison Conservation Area before the site is marketed. It is intended that the consultation will commence early in the new year for a period of 6 weeks, with the start date to be confirmed.
- 5.5 The public will be notified and given the opportunity to participate in the consultation exercise in two ways:  
A) via the Council's Planning Consultation webpage; and  
B) the owners or occupiers of the properties within the limits of the proposed Conservation Area will be notified by letter.

The webpage will set out the implications of Conservation Area designation and responsibilities for property owners due to the proposed designation and invite them to participate in the consultation process.

## **6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan, and is available to view by clicking on this link: -  
<https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20June%202017.pdf>

## **7. Strategic Plan References**

- 7.1 The Strategic Plan is relevant, in particular in contributing towards priorities under the theme of Celebrating our Heritage and Culture and in particular:
- Protect, enhance and celebrate Colchester's unique heritage.

## **8. Consultation**

- 8.1 Consultation will take place for a 6 week period. Representations received will be reported back to Committee to inform any decision about extending the Garrison Conservation Area.

## **9. Publicity Considerations**

- 9.1 The proposal may attract attention from the media but should be seen in a positive light.

## **10. Financial implications**

- 10.1 N/A

## **11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 None.

## **12. Health and Safety Implications**

- 12.1 None.

### **13. Risk Management Implications**

13.1 None.

### **14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

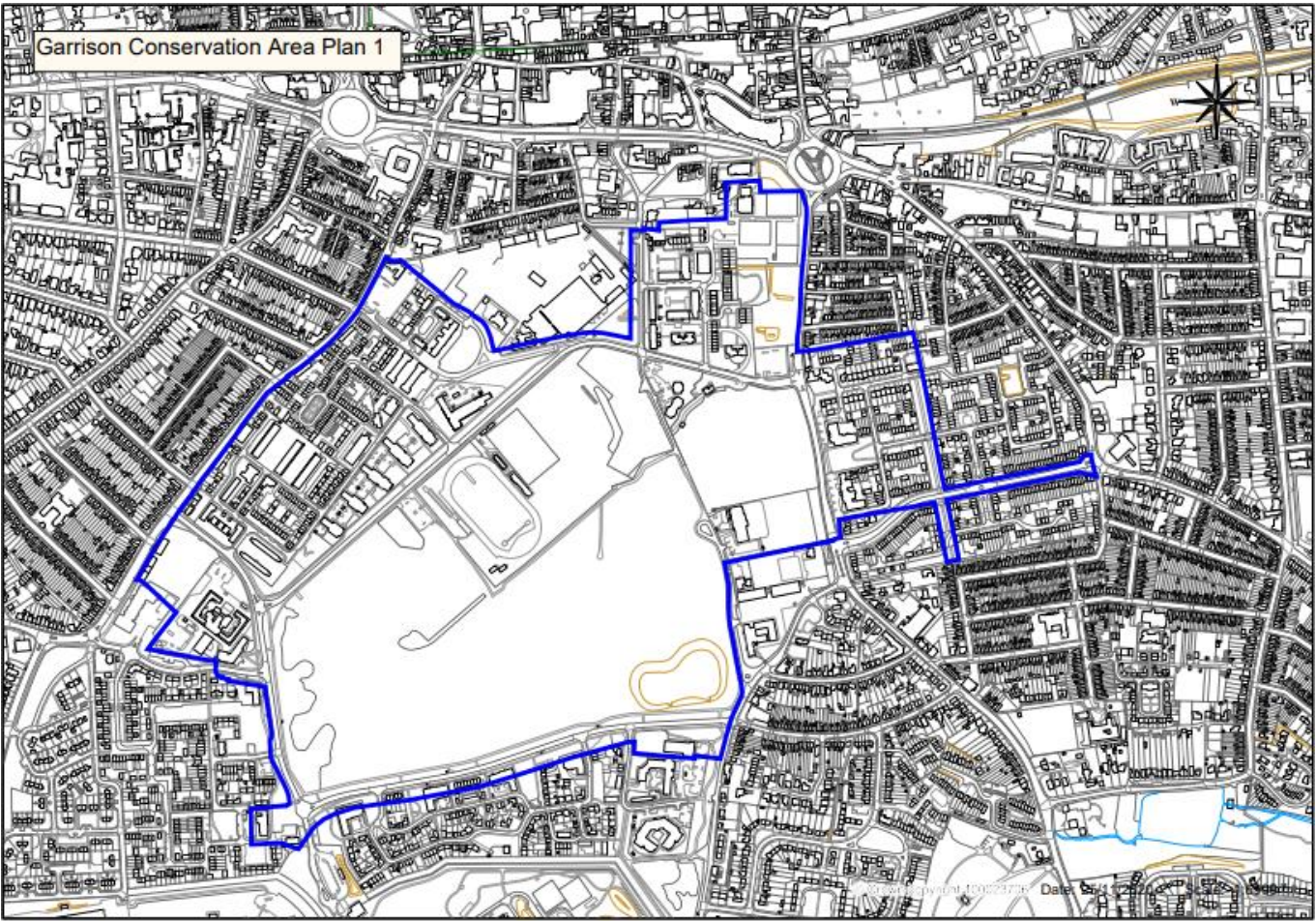
- 14.1 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2030. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 14.2 This report has taken into account the Climate Emergency and the sustainable development objectives set out in the Framework. It is considered that the extension of the Conservation Area can contribute to achieving sustainable development.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A – Map of existing Conservation Area

Appendix B – Map of proposed Conservation Area

Appendix A – Map of existing Conservation Area





## Appendix B – Map of proposed Conservation Area

