

**10 June 2020**

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Assistant Director of Place and Client Services</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Alistair Day</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Extension to Garrison Conservation Area</b>		<b>282479</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>New Town and Christchurch</b>		

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report is seeking approval to proceed with the proposal to extend the Garrison Conservation Area.

## **2. Recommended Decision**

- 2.1 To agree the extension of Garrison Conservation Area to incorporate the DSG [ABRO] site, Roman Circus House and Artillery Folley (see plan in Appendix A).

## **3. Reason for Recommended Decision**

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

## **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 Councillors can decide not to carry out the proposed extension to 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 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 on 14 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 east, beyond Mersea Road to include the former garrison buildings that front this street. 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 formerly known as ABRO and now called DSG. The DSG 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 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 DSG site, the Infirmary Stables and the boundary wall are the only surviving buildings from the initial formation of the Royal Artillery Barrack. 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 of Buildings of Interest. Other buildings within the DSG 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 aforementioned buildings have however suffered from alteration, although the Carpenters & Telecommunications Shop building retains the greatest number of external original features. The drafted Development Brief for the DSG 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 At its meeting on 14 December 2021, the Local Plan Committee authorised Officers to consult on the proposal to extend the Garrison Conservation Area and it was agreed that representations would be reported back to Committee to inform any decision about extending the Garrison Conservation Area.
- 5.5 The formal public consultation exercise ran from 8 February 2021 to 8 March 2021 (not six weeks as stated in the previous report); however, all representations that have been received prior to writing this report have been considered. The public consultation was undertaken in two ways:
- via the Council's Planning Consultation webpage; and
  - the owners or occupiers of the properties within and adjacent to the limits of the proposed Conservation Area have been notified by letter.

The public consultation was coordinated with the consultation on the updated Roman Circus Management Plan and the draft Development Brief for the DSG (ABRO) site. In total 34 responses were received to the consultation of these documents; many of the responses were in the form of a combined response. No objections were received to the proposal to extend the Garrison Conservation Area and two of the responses expressed specific support for this proposal. Members may wish to note that the whilst the landowner has not explicitly commented on the proposal to extend the boundary of the Garrison Conservation Area, in their representation on the draft DSG Development Brief their agent made the following comments:

*"We note the CBC are currently consulting on proposals to extend the Garrison Conservation Area boundary (so that this now includes the Site). If extended, this conservation area would become an 'on site heritage asset'. As the DIO has already taken part in an earlier informal consultation process concerning the Draft DB, its team was already aware of the Council's intentions to extend the conservation area boundary. Therefore, the current Concept Masterplan has been prepared to be mindful of this context, and we consider that it is fully compatible with (and respectful / sensitive to) the Garrison Conservation Area even in the event that its boundary is extended".*

- 5.6 On the basis that no adverse comments have been received to the proposal to extend the Garrison Conservation Area, Members are asked to endorse the recommendation to extend the boundary of this conservation to include the DSG site, Roman Circus House and Artillery Folley.

## **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 The proposal to extend the Garrison Conservation Area has been the subject of a public consultation exercise (from 8 February 2021 to 8 March 2021). No objection has been received to the proposal to extend the boundary of the conservation area to include the DSG site, Roman Circus House and Artillery.

## **9. Publicity Considerations**

- 9.1 Under section 70(8) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in addition to notifying both the Secretary of State and Historic England, a local planning authority is required to publicise designation of a conservation area (or a proposal to amend or cancel a conservation area designation) by a notice placed in the London Gazette and in at least one newspaper circulating in the area of the local planning authority. The Council has also registered the designations as a land charge. Whilst there is no formal duty to notify current owners or occupiers individually. The Council will also need to own and other local people about the extension of the conservation area boundary, it is considered good practice to do so, so that they are aware of its implications. The publication of the proposal may attract attention from the media but should be seen in a positive light.

## **10. Financial implications**

- 10.1 There will be costs associated with advertising the proposed extension to the Garrison Conservation Area boundary. These can be covered by existing budgets.

## **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.

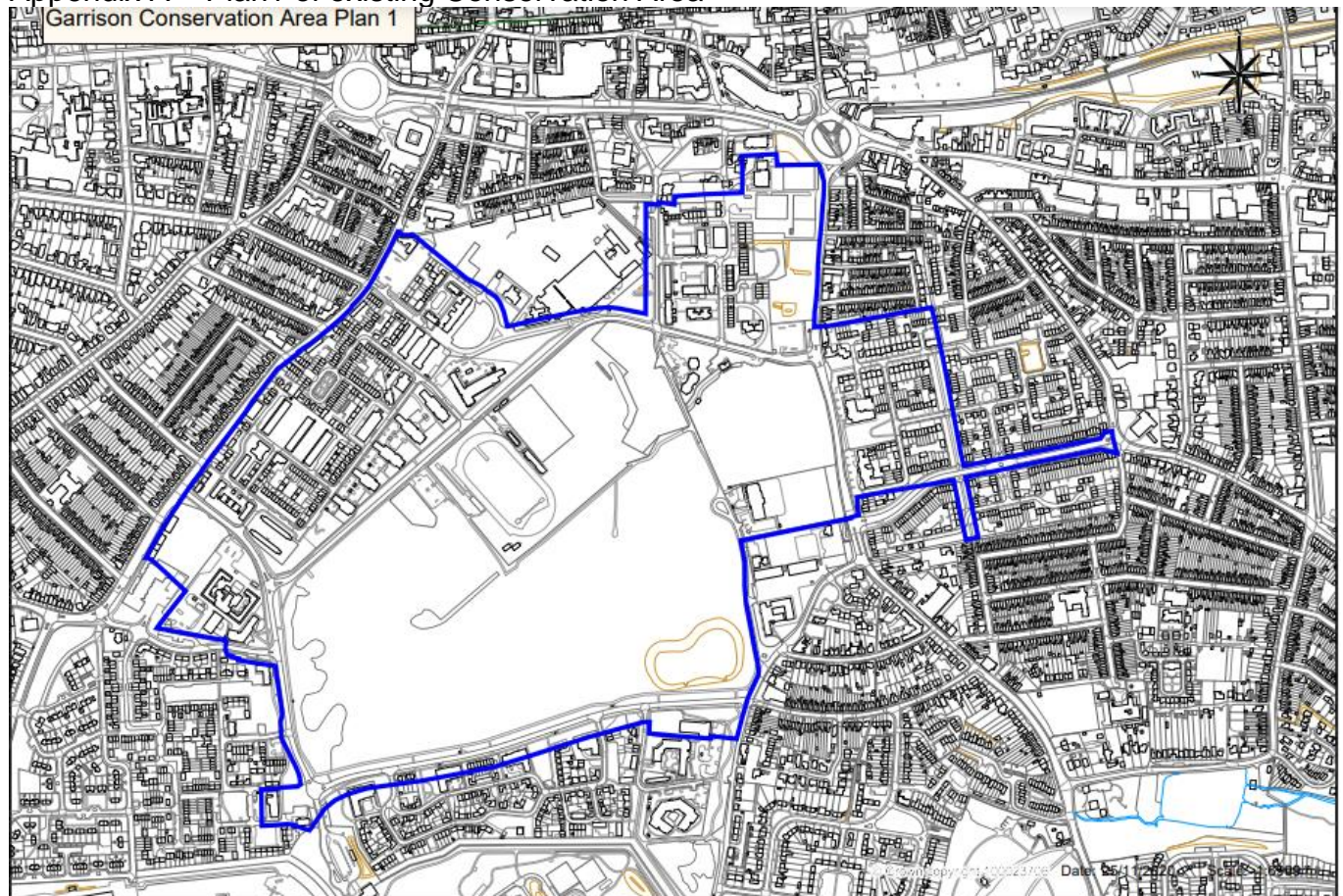
## **14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

- 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 – Plan1 of existing Conservation Area



### Appendix B – Map of proposed Conservation Area extension

