

Appendix B

**The Coppice Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

**Public Consultation Process Report**

November 2021



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Proposals outlined in the *Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal for The Coppice Conservation Area* were approved for consultation by the Development Control Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 and were the subject of public consultation between 28<sup>th</sup> June and 13<sup>th</sup> August 2021.
- 1.2 This Report of Consultation describes the various methods employed to engage the local community and key stakeholders in the process of preparing the Conservation Area Character Appraisal. All the participants were invited to fill in a questionnaire offering their views on the proposals. The questionnaire responses have been analysed and the results are presented in this report.

## 2. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.1 Between the 28<sup>th</sup> June and 13<sup>th</sup> August 2021 a public consultation exercise was undertaken on the **draft** Conservation Area Character Appraisal for The Coppice Conservation Area. Dudley MBC sought to engage all members of the local population.

## 3. QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

- 3.1 By the 13<sup>th</sup> August, 16 questionnaires had been received where most questions had been answered or a comment made. Three specific questions were posed in the questionnaire which allows quantitative assessment of the results. Respondents had the choice of answering 'yes', 'no' or 'no opinion' to this series of questions posed by the Draft Character Appraisal proposals. Two further questions were provided on the questionnaire for people to make general comments and state their own opinions. **Appendix 1** provides detailed analysis of the results.

*Quantitative Questions; Nos 2, 3, 5*

### Q2. Does the draft management plan clearly explain what is special about the historic and architectural character of The Coppice Conservation Area?

All 16 respondents answered this question with 100% supporting the view that the draft management plan clearly explained the special status of the historic and architectural character of The Coppice conservation area.

Several respondents provided some very positive additional comments:

*'Being the 4th generation living in the lane, the draft briefly explains the need to protect and improve this beautiful area and reflects my personal feeling towards its historic value.'*

*'The maps and photographs along with the descriptions of historic and environmental significance explains the nature of the Coppice.'*

*'The whole area is well defined and described including the ancient woodland and the limestone extraction area which marginally predates the Wrens Nest limestone workings.'*

*'The draft document clearly sets out a timeline of the history of the area, how this has developed over time and with what architectural features make the area special.'*

*'Yes, and being a local of the area and living in Turls Hill I am in total agreement that the area is in need of protecting.'*

Another respondent also agreed, but felt that some of the information in the report was inaccurate:

*'Apart from the fact that the so called early nineteenth century cottages are actually early eighteenth century, the report is very thorough. We don't actually refer to Turls Hill Road itself as The Coppice. To the locals The Coppice is the Baptist Church and area directly around it.'*

**Q3. Do you think the proposals set out in the draft management plan will help to preserve or enhance the special character of The Coppice Conservation Area?**

Again, all respondents answered this question with a 100 % agreeing that the draft management plan will help enhance or preserve the special character of The Coppice conservation area.

Again, a lot of positive comments were provided expressing support for the proposals set out in the draft management plan:

*'I do; I hope this encourages the residents of the 1930's houses to improve the standards of their works and make them more in keeping with the rest of the lane.'*

*'By changing the boundary to exclude the modern houses and categorising the buildings inside the boundary as of historic interest will help with future preservation.'*

*'The designation will enlighten the local community to the importance of the historical areas around and. induce them to appreciate and protect the local area. Signage on-site is required following approval so that the community stays Alert and take ownership for its preservation.'*

*'It is a starting point. The area is significant not just to the local community, but to the social history of the Black Country.'*

*'This is an area of historical and environmental interest and needs to be preserved from modern life.'*

*'Anything to preserve this precious & fragile site is welcome.'*

**Q4. What do you think are the most important issues facing The Coppice Conservation Area?**

All but one respondent answered this question. Several issues were raised with a few respondents focusing on the importance of retaining the historic character of the area, and the use of UPVC windows:

*'Loss of traditional style windows due to replacement with modern uPVC. Lower quality materials in general. Rejection of pastiche.'*

*'172 is building an ugly concrete wall. This is not in keeping, reclaimed bricks should have been used. Sky dishes on frontages White PVC instead of cream for Edwardian Houses. Tarmacking all drive, loss of front gardens. White PVC instead of brown for the 1930's.'*

*'Making sure the area is preserved and protected from development and keeping the existing houses in keeping with the aesthetics of the age/area.'*

*'Need to be wary of small incremental changes by owners that go "below the radar" but over time are cumulatively detrimental to the character of the area. Need to ensure the "error" of the new properties in the grounds of the former Tavern and the conversion of the Tavern itself are not repeated.'*

However, a couple of respondents did comment in favour of the use of UPVC windows:

*'UPVC should be acceptable. This was in place when our home was renovated - if it was an issue it should've been raised then with the builder. As well as security cameras - we as homeowners live here and have the right to feel safe.'*

*'UPVC should be acceptable providing it is shaped sized and in proportion are as before. The legal ownership of the wall fronting the pet hotel should be established before approval we believe it to be the local authority. We understand that the seat built into the wall was formed before the 1950s by Coseley urban district Council.'*

Several respondents also raised concerns over the conservation of the natural habitats and the threat of development in these areas:

*'Loss of non-vehicular access to woodland. Loss of a daily well-used bridleway. Loss of an inner-city sanctuary for wildlife. Loss of a natural walkway for local children and adults to access a safe, life-affirming and enriching, green area which encourages a healthy lifestyle and provides space to develop healthy mindfulness pursuits. Loss of a significant and well-preserved range of historic everyday dwellings.'*

*'Preserving this area for this generation & for generations to come. We, as human beings, need this tranquil space & the education opportunities are invaluable.'*

*'Keeping all the woodland and meadows intact and to prevent any development of new housing or buildings.'*

**Q5. The above map of The Coppice boundary revisions shows some additional areas outside of the current Conservation Area boundary that are also considered to be of architectural or historic significance. Do you support the proposals to amend the conservation area boundary to include these additional areas?**

Again, all respondents answered this question with 100% supporting the proposals for the extension of the conservation area. Many positive comments were made regarding planned changes to the boundary of the conservation area:

*'It is always important to conserve the significant past for the interest and reminders of those in the present. We need to learn from our past!'*

*'It is right and appropriate that numbers 162-172 are included as they enhance the mass and variety of the area and require the same protections to avoid inappropriate changes or development.'*

*'This area is a unique and beautiful area; I've been living there since 2013 and we've renovated a house that had been empty for 14 years. It's been renovated sympathetically to the area, but my neighbour has had building bags of sand outside his house for 3 years now and the walls that he's had built are an absolute eyesore. I believe had this been in place, the walls would not have had been built.'*

*'The extension of the area is welcome as the buildings etc are all part of the overall environment. It's a pity that this was not done earlier before the partial construction of new walling at one of the 1930's properties which is totally out of character. The property is also an utter mess and has got worse over the last 4 years. Is there anything the Council can do even though it is privately owned.'*

*'I used to live in Clifton Street and spent many happy hours as a child going for walks 'up the lane ' with my Dad. it is and always was a tranquil unspoilt area and should remain so for future generations. It is a part of our local history.'*

All respondents agreed with the proposal, though a few argued that it should be extended even further:

*'This area is rich in history. I would hope in the future Clifton Street, Rock Road and the Allotment Gardens are included.'*

*'We believe the boundaries of the conservation area should be extended to include the lane up to Queens Road and also the ancient woodland and the*

*limestone extraction area. The tree canopy is a typical example of the canopy of the whole area in the 14th and 15th centuries prior to mineral extraction. The line is a typical example of the lines connecting the villages in that Era.'*

*'Absolutely. It could go much further to include the lane leading to Sedgley and also areas along the path running parallel behind the houses in Queens Road and Whites Drive.'*

*'Whilst I support the extension of the CA boundary, however, I would seek for an additional area be added outside of the current conservation area boundary. Whilst I believe modernist architecture to be harmful to the setting of conservation areas in the main, I believe the 'double stacked' garages off Rifle St to be a rare and unusually unique asset. As this offers special interest, I would question if the boundary could be extended to include these as a separate character area and a non-designated heritage asset. As a distinctly different character area I don't believe it would harm the conservation area but still safeguard a special asset of interest.'*

- Q6. Any further comments about the draft Conservation Area Appraisal? Please feel free to share any local knowledge that may give us a better understanding of The Coppice Conservation Area and please do list what improvements you feel could be made to enhance the special character or appearance of The Coppice Conservation Area.**

Located at the end of the questionnaire there was space for members of the public to provide additional comments and raise further important features that may be known only to local residents. Comments generally fell into a few broad categories which can be summarised as follows:

### ***Signage/Presenting Information***

A few respondents commented that there was not sufficient signage within the conservation area, either to provide information to visitors or to guide walkers. Relatedly, there should be further effort made to inform residents about the history of the area:

*'The Lane and area in general needs preserving. Signage would be beneficial. Also, a new road sign on Turls Hill road as the current one is barely readable (moss and graffiti). My concern is communal areas or the public road that aren't maintained. Another is security (from antisocial behaviour, particularly further down the Lane by the bridle path) and graffiti. Security is an issue at that part.'*

*'The conservation area should be widely presented in schools and indeed signage erected on the site so that the public become fully aware - to create an interest which will protect the area in particular from vandalism.'*

*'Perhaps a guide to walks in the area pointing out the historic and environmental points of interest.'*

## **Security/Maintenance**

Several respondents also noted there are issues relating to security, antisocial behaviour and the maintenance problems arising from this:

*'The Lane and area in general needs preserving. Signage would be beneficial. Also a new road sign on Turls Hill road as the current one is barely readable (moss and graffiti). My concern is communal areas or the public road that aren't maintained. Another is security (from antisocial behaviour, particularly further down the Lane by the bridle path) and graffiti. Security is an issue at that part.'*  
*'1. better control of the undergrowth in the footpath/ walkway areas. 2. Better pollarding of the trees where the built-in seating areas are to give better views 3. The volunteer litter picking has improved the area's visual appearance.'*

*'The conservation area should be widely presented in schools and indeed signage erected on the site so that the public become fully aware - to create an interest which will protect the area in particular from vandalism.'*

## **Further Local Information/Areas Requiring Protection**

Finally, some respondents passed on further information regarding this history of the area, as well as other areas that could be included within the conservation area in the future:

*'The Edwardian Terraces 181 - 185 (part of block 4) were built in 1906 (we have paper deeds for 183). 186 was built in 1900 Block 11 (Off Field) was lined with trees up until the late to mid 80's. The allotments to rear of Turls Hill were formed during WWI as the local residents pulled together to grow food as part of the war effort.'*

*'Opposite 168/167/166 there is a natural bog area that I think should be included in The Coppice Conservation Area. It's an important nature area and also when we have torrential rain the water flows from the allotment through the water table and into this area. It's also a bat corridor as the bats live in the limestone caves in Turls Hill Woods so this also needs to be addressed plus there's a huge population of badgers in Turls Hill Woods. I also feel it's sad that front gardens have been lost to create more parking (I know it's necessary) but I do feel that homeowners should be encouraged to keep some of the front for growing flowers/shrubs. Plus there is also the issue of excess water running off concrete or tarmac'd drives. It is a picturesque 'lane' and has a lot of footfall so I think a certain criteria needs to be put in place for all home owners to take responsibility for the aesthetics of the front of their properties in the 'lane.'*

*'I live at 224 Turls Hill Road and we are happy that the Conservation Area is to be extended. A few comments below: 1. The cottages actually date back to the 1730's, not the 1830's as stated in the report. Having undertaken our own research, we discovered maps and documents in Dudley's own Archive Centre that prove this. Can the report be amended reflect this please. 2. As for the 'clutter', the grit bin was provided by the Council and they decided where to locate it as outside our cottages is where we have difficulties in winter. The*

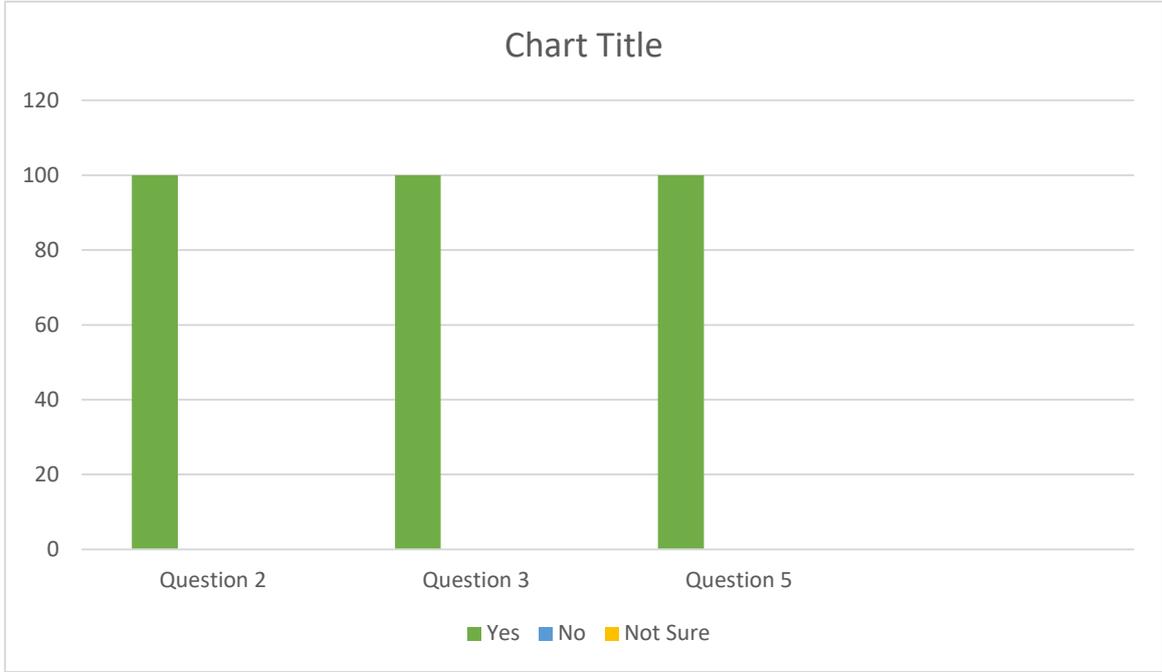
*bollards are totally essential as next door at 225 they have a history of being hit or damaged at least 4 times, with the bollards themselves having to be replaced from damage. 3. We are also concerned about the trees on the street overhanging the cottages and other properties and their chimneys. Whilst PPO's are in place, we believe they need to be properly managed and pruned to protect the buildings. There are times of high winds that are quite scary. Surely pruning can be undertaken without it affecting the character of the street. 4. Can the allotment land be included in the Conservation Area as it has its own heritage, being used as allotments for over 100 years? Or is this part of the Green Belt anyway?'*

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 The questionnaire responses demonstrate complete support for the extension of The Coppice conservation area and the adoption of the draft management plan. The overall total response to all three questions revealed that 100% of the respondents supported the proposals.
- 4.2 Question 2 illustrated that 100% of the respondents think that the draft management plan clearly explained what is special about the historic and architectural character of The Coppice conservation area. Question 3 illustrated that 100% of the respondents believe the proposals set out in the draft management plan will help preserve or enhance the special character of The Coppice conservation area. Question 5 illustrated that 100% of respondents supported the amendment of the Conservation Area boundary proposed.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**PUBLIC CONSULTATION SURVEY RESULTS**

**Figure 1:** Bar Chart and table showing how many people responded to each question



<b><u>Totals</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>No</u></b>	<b><u>No Opinion/Not sure</u></b>
Question 2	16 (or 100%)	0	0
Question 3	16 (or 100%)	0	0
Question 5	16 (or 100%)	0	0

**Figure 2:** Pie Chart showing the overall total survey results

