

Date 30th June 2015
Consideration of an application to
designate a Neighbourhood Area for
Haswell Parish Council



Report of Stuart Timmiss, Head of Planning & Assets,
Regeneration and Economic Development to
Cabinet Portfolio Member for Regeneration and Economic
Development – Councillor Neil Foster
and Cabinet Portfolio Member for Neighbourhoods & Partnerships
- Councillor Brian Stephens

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to consider the acceptability of an application which has been made to the County Council by Haswell Parish Council to designate a Neighbourhood Area within its locality.

Background

This Neighbourhood Area application was submitted by Haswell Parish Council in April 2015. The resulting timescales for considering the application have been determined by the timing of the subsequent public consultation which has been undertaken by both the Parish Council and the County Council since submission.

The designation of a Neighbourhood Area is the first formal stage of the Neighbourhood Planning process. The application has been submitted with the intention of Haswell Parish Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.

The proposed Neighbourhood Area falls wholly within Durham County and follows the historical Haswell Parish boundary as shown on the map contained in Public Notice.

Consultation

The application in question has been subject to public consultation in accordance with the relevant regulations and the Council's Neighbourhood Planning Protocol. This included a mailshot of the public notice and map to all residents within the parish area, the publication of the application for an 8 week period on the Durham County Council website and on the Parish Council's Public Notice Board (Hazelwell Community Centre, Windsor Terrace, Haswell, County Durham, DH6 2DY). Representations were also invited from local ward Members of the County Council and adjoining parish councils. No responses have been received objecting to the application.

Issues for consideration

The key considerations in the determination of this type of application are whether;

- the application has been submitted by a ‘Relevant Body’¹
- the appropriate information has been submitted which justifies and confirms the proposed boundaries²
- the specified area is considered by the County Council as an *‘appropriate area to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area’*.
- the proposed Neighbourhood Area should be designated as a ‘Business Area’³

The application has been submitted by the Parish Council which meets the definition of a ‘Relevant Body’ for the area. The proposed area relates completely to its jurisdiction. The application is therefore valid in this respect.

The Parish Council have confirmed that the existing Parish Boundary would be used for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Area, as shown on the Public Notice which was sent to all residents within the Parish and uploaded for display on the County Council’s website. A statement which justifies the extent of the proposed area has been provided. It is therefore concluded that the appropriate information has been submitted.

Continuous engagement has occurred between officers of the County Council’s Spatial Policy Team and representatives of Haswell Parish Council leading up to the submission of the application. The Parish Council have indicated their intention to engage in the Neighbourhood Planning process and that they wish to proceed as an independent neighbourhood planning group whose neighbourhood planning activity does not extend beyond the parish boundary. Consultation with the adjoining local councils has not raised any issues.

There is provision within the Localism Act that requires a Neighbourhood Area application to be considered in relation to other existing Neighbourhood Area boundaries. As no representations raising concerns have been received from neighbouring parishes it is considered that the designation of the area as proposed would not prejudice any subsequent Neighbourhood Area application by adjoining parishes.

Having considered the representations received through the consultation period, of which none were objections or otherwise raised concerns regarding the proposed Neighbourhood Area, the County Council is satisfied that the area proposed is acceptable. The County Council does not consider that the

¹ As defined by Section 61 G (2) Town and Country Planning Act (1990), inserted by para.2 Schedule 9 Localism Act 2011 (c.20)

² As defined by The Town & Country Planning, England The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

³ As required by Section 61 H of the Localism Act 2011).

area proposed would prejudice their interest in relation to the nature of developments that may be considered.

Next steps

Upon the determination of this application there is a requirement for the Council to publicise its decision in the manner it adopted for the previous consultation as described above.

Conclusion

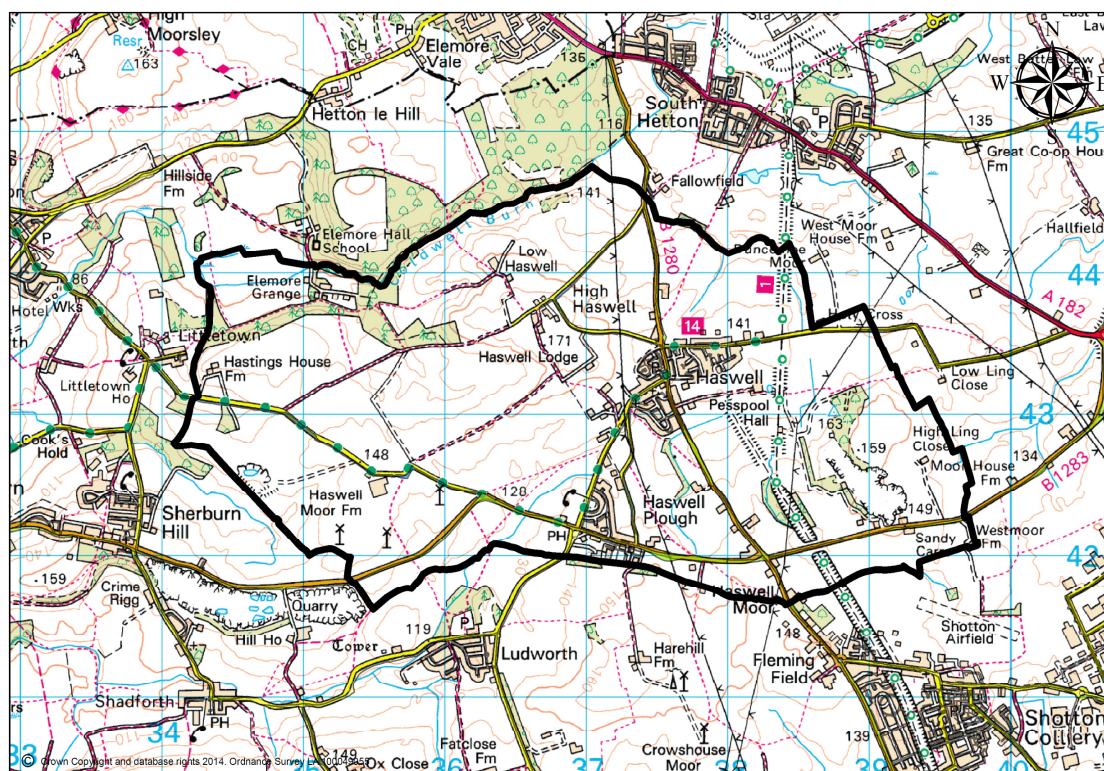
The application has been considered in accordance with the four matters outlined above and those raised through the consultation and is considered to be appropriate in all respects.

Recommendation

That the Haswell Parish Council Neighbourhood Area as submitted is granted approval and the appropriate publicity be carried out.

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Appendix 1: Proposed boundaries of Neighbourhood Area



Appendix 2: Implications

Finance – Upon designation the County Council will be eligible to seek Neighbourhood Plan Grant from DCLG to support neighbourhood plan preparation in this area.

Staffing – The Spatial Policy Team will be required to provide support to forthcoming neighbourhood planning activity within the designated Neighbourhood Area.

Equality and Diversity – Equality and Diversity will be an integral part of policy development in any forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan. An Equality Impact Assessment is not required in respect to the consideration of this application.

Risk- None identified

Consultation – No further consultation is required in respect to this matter although the Council will be required to publicise its decision.

Procurement – None.

Disability Discrimination Act – None.

Legal Implications – The application has been determined in accordance with the relevant regulations.