

Protocol for considering Architect Presentations to the Conservation Area Advisory Group (CAAG).

Purpose.

At the 1st April 2008 Conservation Area Advisory Group meeting it was agreed that architect and or agent presentations on development proposals would generally be beneficial in assisting group discussion. Presentations were considered of value providing they sought to amplify the designers' thought processes and underlying principles to enable CAAG to reach an informed opinion. Having used this protocol and guidance for 7 years, the CAAG reaffirmed and ratified the protocol at the January meeting of the Group in 2015.

The historic significance, context and setting of the Berwick-upon-Tweed, Spittal and Tweedmouth Conservation Areas are well documented in three Character Appraisals and Management Strategies produced during 2006/07. Any potential development site within these areas is therefore, sensitive. It would be reasonable therefore, to expect a range of planning applications (from small scale infill schemes to larger developments) to be presented to CAAG and for the Appraisals to have been referred to.

Remit.

In agreeing to present proposals to CAAG, architects and agents need to be aware that;

- The purpose of the presentation is to explain the rationale behind the design so the Group has a clearer understanding of all the issues
- Pre-application and/or alternative sketch schemes are invited so CAAG may provide comments at an early stage
- Amendments/revisions as a result of the Group's feedback will be encouraged to be presented prior to a formal submission

- The relevant Character Appraisal/Management Strategy should be referenced where appropriate
- The form of presentation is for the architect/agent to decide but it will be confined to 15 minutes
- Presentations will be made at the start of the CAAG meeting before any formal business
- There will be an opportunity for questions/dialogue as part of the presentation but CAAG will formally discuss the proposals against its agreed criteria after receiving all the presentation(s)
- The criteria will be made available to the applicant prior to the meeting
- Any drawings/plans/photographs or other visual material should be left with the Group to assist with their continuing discussions and formulation of feedback
- CAAG views are minuted and sent to the relevant Case Officer/Development Management
- Choosing to present proposals to CAAG should be seen as part of the planning consultation process and ongoing dialogue with general consultation bodies. It will not however, give any undue advantage to the prospective receipt of any statutory consent(s).
- Opting not to present to the Group will not prejudice the proposals which may still be considered by CAAG as part of the planning consultation process.

In agreeing to engage with the Group in this structured way, architects/agents need to know that **CAAG will;**

- Receive the presentations with an open mind and use the opportunity to explore and understand the architect's thinking behind a particular design approach
- Confine questions to clarification of conservation/design related matters

- Be consistent with advice and comments given, particularly where a scheme evolves and directly responds to CAAG views
- Make reference to the Character Appraisals and Management Strategies which are material planning considerations
- Discuss the presentation/proposals within the Group using the agreed “check list” criteria for recording a view on the proposals presented
- Provide the criteria to any potential applicants/presenters in advance of the meeting
- Provide written comments and feedback through the HELM within 10 working days

Management of Presentations.

It should be noted that members of CAAG sometimes request planning applications but generally the Conservation Officer and Chair of CAAG refer larger applications of conservation interest. These officers will therefore, invite presentations in advance of the meeting. Meeting dates are scheduled in advance (calendar year). Officers will provide copies of the protocol, checklist criteria used by the CAAG and schedule of meetings to prospective presenters.

Annette Reeves

April 2008