

Record of Delegated Executive Decisions by Officers

1. Subject of Decision

Designation of Low Coniscliffe Parish as a Neighbourhood Area for the Purpose of Neighbourhood Planning – as detailed in Appendix 1.

2. Name and Title of Decision Maker

Ian Williams Director of Economic Growth

3. Cabinet Member(s) consulted (and other consultees, if any)

Cllr McEwan, Economy and Regeneration Portfolio

4. Details of any Conflict of Interest and any Dispensation granted in respect of such interest

5. Executive Summary

In designating Low Coniscliffe Parish as a Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of neighbourhood planning, the authority is using the powers of designation set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Designating the area will enable the Parish to undertake neighbourhood planning activity, culminating in a Neighbourhood Plan which, when made by the Authority, will become part of the Borough's statutory development plan. The authority will be required to provide appropriate support to the Parish Council.

6. Alternative options considered

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016) specify what a local authority must do on receipt of a valid application to designate a Parish Boundary as a neighbourhood area for the purposes of neighbourhood planning.

The local authority has established that the application is valid, having been proposed by a qualifying body for neighbourhood planning (the Parish Council) and including the required statement and plan of the proposed neighbourhood area. The proposed area does not overlap any other designated or proposed neighbourhood areas.

Previously Regulation 2(6) required that prior to making a designation, the local planning authority should undertake a consultation on the designation and should also carry out other publicity to bring the area application to the attention of people living, working and carrying out business in the area in the area prior to making a decision on whether to allocate all or part of the area.

However, following the Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016 coming into force on 1 October 2016, the requirement to publicise and invite representations on applications for designation which consist of the full Parish area no longer applies.

Therefore, the Council must move directly to determining the application with regard to:

- (a) the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood area, and
- (b) the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.

Should the authority refuse the application because it considers that the specified area is not an appropriate area to be designated as a neighbourhood area, the authority must exercise their power of designation so as to secure that some or all of the specified area forms part of one or more areas designated (or to be designated) as neighbourhood areas. However this modification may be made only with the Parish Council's consent.

7. Decision(s)

To designate Low Coniscliffe Parish as a Neighbourhood Area for the Purpose of Neighbourhood Planning.

8. Reasons for the Decision(s)

The Parish boundary is historic and was not developed with Neighbourhood Planning in mind; however, the legislation and regulations encourage and seek to expedite neighbourhood planning in Parish areas. The proposed area is relatively small in comparison to neighbourhood areas elsewhere, however the Parish Council has not sought to designate a larger area in collaboration with neighbouring parishes. As there are no significant anomalies in the boundary, or cross boundary sites with particular known planning issues, it is considered reasonable to designate the whole of the area of the parish council as a neighbourhood area for the purposes of neighbourhood planning.

9. Key Decision?

No

(If item is a Key Decision, please contact Democratic Services on ext 5803, to include item in the Forward Plan)

10. Date of Decision

26 May 2017

11. Date of Publication

2 June 2017

12. Implementation Date

2 June 2017

APPENDIX 1



Statement in Support of a Neighbourhood Plan for Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Parish.

Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Parish Council was established in 1949 and has represented the parishioners since. The Parish Council currently meets in the village hall In High Coniscliffe on the second Tuesday on alternative months. An annual general meeting and parish assembly is also held. Ward Councillors regularly attend the meetings, and all meetings are open to the public. A Parish Councillor always represents the Parish at the Darlington Association of Parish Councils.

The Parish Council is a qualifying body for producing a Neighbourhood Plan, and as such we consider that Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Parish Council is an appropriate forum for creating the Plan. The Parish Council realise that to create the Neighbourhood Plan a working party with a broad spectrum of expertise would better represent the parishioners than the Parish Council alone. To this end several people have volunteered to become involved, including a number of members of the Parish Council, a Member of the Board of School Appeals and Exclusions, an Agronomist, local business people, mums, local rambles, conservationists and a multitude of volunteers with expertise in subjects as diverse as financial and legal matters, sustainability, local government, construction management, civil engineering and ground investigation, psychology as well as people who just care for their community. This working party therefore represents a good cross section of the parish community, and will report to the Parish Council.

The neighbouring wards of Mowden and Blackwell and the parishes of Whesoe, Heighington, Middleton St George and Hurworth have all been consulted.

The boundary chosen is that of Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Parish Council. We feel this is an appropriate area as it follows the natural water course of the Baydale Beck to the East, the River Tees to the South and part of the West. The remainder of the Western boundary and Northern boundary follow the perimeter of the farmer's fields.

This area has been chosen because it encompasses all aspects of life within our community: agricultural, domestic, recreational and social. We have a green corridor, rich biodiversity, miles of public footpaths, permissive dog walks, bridleways and The Teesdale Way which passes through Low Coniscliffe and along the Bank of the River Tees and is enjoyed by residents, cyclists and visitors alike.

Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent parishioners recognise that the Neighbourhood plan will be a vital element and will integrate with other adjoining Plans to add substance to the Darlington Local Plan for the foreseeable future and will benefit the whole community.

Low Coniscliffe & Merrybent Proposed Neighbourhood Area Boundary



Plan produced by the Planning Policy Section,
Economic Growth



Scale 1:11,000 @ A3

© Crown copyright and database rights 2016 Ordnance Survey 0100023728.
You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of this data to
third parties in any form, 15 January 2017

