EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of bringing this report is to seek approval to adopt the Beccles Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, with the exception of those parts of the documents which relate to the area within which the Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority.

Secondly, in order to bring proposed extensions to the conservation area in line with the existing conservation area, to seek approval to impose an article 4 direction on any approved extensions, with the exception of the extension which is in the area within which the Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority.

Thirdly, to include in the ‘Local List’ properties both within the existing Beccles Conservation Area and within proposed extensions to it, with the exception of those in the area within which the Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority. These properties have been identified using previously adopted selection criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is the report Open or Exempt?</th>
<th>Open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Wards Affected:             | North Beccles  
|                             | South Beccles |
| Cabinet Member:             | David Ritchie  
|                             | Cabinet Member for Planning & Rural Affairs |
| Supporting Officer:         | Ruth Summers  
|                             | Design & Conservation Officer  
|                             | 01502 523078  
|                             | ruth.summers@waveney.gov.uk |
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 There are 14 conservation areas within the Waveney District for which Waveney District Council is the Local Planning Authority.

1.2 Two other conservation areas exist within Waveney District (Ellingham and Oulton Broad) but as they fall entirely within the Broads Authority Area it is the Broads Authority who act as the Local Planning Authority and consequently have responsibility for all planning related work within their area.

1.3 Three of the remaining 14 conservation areas within the Waveney District contain areas of land under Broads Authority Management – Beccles, Bungay and Somerleyton.

1.4 An informal agreement has been reached with the District’s conservation officers whereby areas that fall mainly within the Broads Authority area will have appraisal work carried out by the Broads Authority and areas that fall mainly outside the Broads Authority area will have appraisal work carried out by the relevant district.

1.5 In this instance, Waveney District Council have carried out the appraisal and public consultation, and have involved the Broads Authority at officer level at all stages, and in all proposals concerning Broads Authority land.

1.6 A similar report requesting endorsement for adoption of those parts of the Beccles Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan concerning Broads Authority land will be placed before Broads Authority Councillors in the near future.

1.7 English Heritage guidance suggests that conservation areas should be reappraised and a management plan produced every five years.

1.8 A rolling programme of conservation area appraisals has been put in place and 13 of the 14 conservation areas have had conservation area appraisals and management plans completed and adopted.

1.9 As each conservation area appraisal and management plan has been adopted, the opportunity has been taken to impose an article 4 direction to cover the entire area of each of the adopted conservation areas.

1.10 Article 4 directions are used to make further restrictions on permitted development rights to residential properties in conservation areas. Once imposed, planning permission is required to make any change of design or material to any part of the property fronting a public thoroughfare, for instance the replacement of windows, which would otherwise be permitted development.

1.11 In recognition of the fact that permitted development rights are removed by an article 4 direction, any resulting planning application benefits from there being no application fee required.

1.12 As each conservation area appraisal has taken place, unlisted buildings that are considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area, and to proposed extensions to it, have been identified using previously adopted selection criteria.

1.13 In line with previous appraisals, these properties are proposed to be included in the Local List. Inclusion in the Local List does not bring with it additional obligations for householders, but is a material consideration in any planning application.

2 BECCLES CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

2.1 During 2009, a conservation area appraisal was carried out for the Beccles conservation area.

2.2 The conservation area appraisal researches the history and identifies and describes the special character of the area within the existing conservation area boundary.

2.3 It also identifies properties that are considered to make a positive contribution to the existing conservation area – ‘Local List’.
3 BECCLES CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

3.1 The conservation area management plan identifies the possible changes that should be introduced, which may include extension or reduction of the conservation area, suggestions for effective control of development and opportunities for enhancement which have arisen from the appraisal of the conservation area.

3.2 In Beccles a number of extensions are proposed to the conservation area, in order to include all parts of Beccles thought to be of special interest. This includes areas of historic or architectural interest but also important green spaces, such as Beccles Cemetery, and, in the case of the proposed extension on the Norfolk side of the River Waveney, a footpath giving an important historic view of the Beccles side of the river and open country views on the Norfolk side. No removals from the conservation area are proposed.

3.3 The management plan recommends the imposition of an article 4 direction on the extended Beccles conservation area.

3.4 It also identifies properties that are considered to make a positive contribution to both the existing conservation area, and proposed extensions to it – ‘Local List’.

4 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Managing Finances - This decision can be made within existing budgets.

As expected for any landlord / property owner, WDC will be expected to maintain in reasonable condition assets falling within the Beccles Conservation Area.

4.2 Governance – Failing to carry out conservation area appraisals increases the risk of Government terminating conservation area status if they are not reviewed regularly – current English Heritage guidance is every 5 years.

Should the recommendation be adopted, it would mean that the rolling programme of appraising all 14 conservation areas for which Waveney District Council has responsibility will have been completed.

4.3 Legality – Section 69 of the planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that

(1) Every local planning authority -

(a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and

(b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

(2) It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.

4.4 Managing resources – The adoption of the management plan will assist in the

4.5 consideration of planning applications in the Beccles conservation Area as it would be a material consideration. It would provide direction for the management of both natural and physical resources within the area.

5 ISSUES

5.1 This report has been prepared having taken into account the results of an Equality Impact Assessment, a Sustainability Impact Assessment and a Partnership Impact Assessment
5.2 **Equality** – An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

This confirmed that the policies could benefit almost all groups of people with the possible exception of those on low income who are responsible for the maintenance of assets within Beccles conservation area where planning applications would be required for works that would previously have been regarded as permitted development. However in these cases there would be no planning application fee and most of the type of development to which this would apply is relatively straightforward in nature meaning that most people could submit an application themselves without needing to employ an agent, hence actual costs would be very limited, especially in relation to the cost of carrying out the actual work.

5.3 **Sustainability** – The adoption of the management plan supported by both the conservation area appraisal and article 4 direction will help maintain and enhance the Beccles conservation area for the benefit of residents, visitors and those who work within the area.

A sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed and identified 6 significant positive effects, 13 minor positive effects and no negative effects.

The significant positive effects include:

- Conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes
- Conserve and where appropriate enhance areas of historical and archaeological importance
- To improve the quality of where people live and to encourage community participation.

5.4 **Partnership** – The adoption of the management plan should encourage the public and other organisations, including WDC, to work together to maintain and enhance the environment within the Beccles conservation area.

The Broads Authority have been closely involved in the development of the parts of these proposals which concern land for which the Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority, and will be taking a report to their own members to adopt these parts of the documents.

6 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 A public exhibition was carried out at Beccles Public Hall on Wednesday 19th and Thursday 20th March 2014. Press release issued to local press and posters displayed for 10 days beforehand.

6.2 All householders directly affected by proposed changes were contacted by letter.

6.3 Statutory consultees, relevant WDC staff and other interested parties were consulted. The consultation was held from Monday 17th March to Monday 7th April.

6.4 Draft documents were available on WDC website during consultation period, for comment.

7 **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

7.1 Do nothing has been rejected, as failing to carry out conservation area appraisals increases the risk of the Government terminating conservation area status if these are not reviewed regularly - current English Heritage guidance is every 5 years.
8 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

8.1 In line with recent Government guidance, a conservation area appraisal and management plan has been carried out for Beccles. In order that these can be given weight when considering planning applications within the Beccles conservation area, they require adoption by Council, as does the article 4 direction.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

1. That the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Beccles, with the exception of those parts of the document which relate to the area within which the Broads Authority is the local planning authority, is formally adopted by the Council, to be used for Development Management purposes as a material consideration in determining planning applications.

2. That approval is given to impose an article 4 Direction on any approved extensions to the Beccles Conservation Area, with the exception of those parts of the area within which the Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority.

3. That approval is given to include in the ‘Local List’ properties considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area, both within the existing Beccles Conservation Area and within proposed extensions to it, with the exception of those in the area within which the Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority.

APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix A</th>
<th>Beccles Conservation Area Appraisal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Please note – Due to the size of this document, an electronic version is available to view on the Waveney District Council Website, an electronic copy has been circulated to the Cabinet Members by email, a paper copy placed in the Members Room and a copy can be provided on request.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Appendix B | Beccles Conservation Area Management Plan |

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Available From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Previous Article 4 Directions</td>
<td>WDC Design &amp; Conservation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th May 2014</td>
<td>Equality Impact Assessment</td>
<td>WDC Design &amp; Conservation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th May 2014</td>
<td>Sustainability Impact Assessment</td>
<td>WDC Design &amp; Conservation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th May 2014</td>
<td>Partnership Impact Assessment</td>
<td>WDC Design &amp; Conservation Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>