 <b>Reigate &amp; Banstead</b> BOROUGH COUNCIL Banstead   Horley   Redhill   Reigate	<b>TO:</b>	PLANNING COMMITTEE
	<b>DATE:</b>	22 January 2021
	<b>REPORT OF:</b>	HEAD OF PLANNING
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<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	10	<b>WARD:</b> Reigate

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>To consider designation of the Reigate Hill Conservation Area followed by consultation on the designation</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:</b>	For the Planning Committee to consider designation of the Reigate Hill Conservation Area Conservation Area followed by consultation on the designation.
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is recommended that the proposed Reigate Hill Conservation Area as delineated on the plan in Appendix 1 is designated as a Conservation Area, under sections 69 and 70 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.</li> <li>2. Authorise officers to formally consult on the Reigate Hill Conservation Area following designation and report these views back to the Planning Committee for further consideration.</li> </ol>	
<b>Planning Committee has authority to determine the recommendations.</b>	

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Borough currently has 22 Conservation Areas. They are defined by legislation as areas of special architectural or historic interest, which are desirable to preserve or enhance. The Council has a statutory duty to regularly review designations and boundaries, and a review of all boundaries took place in 2007, looking at identity areas and cohesive character groups as well as the age of buildings and their architectural interest. That programme of designations and extensions was completed in 2013. A review is currently taking place in regard to boundaries of existing Conservation Areas and potential new designations for other areas as part of the regular review process. The potential for the inclusion the settlement at the base of the Reigate Hill escarpment as a Conservation Area has been identified during the ongoing review but is a priority for current consideration due to pressures for development in the area. One of the advantages of Conservation Area status is that it allows the Local Authority

greater powers to facilitate appropriate development and consider the existing buildings in the context of the character of the area.

## **2.0 STATUTORY PROVISION**

2.1 Public attitudes in favour of the retention and enhancement of local character and distinctiveness within the built environment are reflected in statutory legislation and guidance. Historic buildings and conservation areas are, therefore, vitally important to the environmental quality of life in this country. Consequently, local planning authorities have a duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to determine and review which parts of their area are of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate such areas as conservation areas.

## **3.0 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED REIGATE HILL COMMON CONSERVATION AREA**

3.1 The settlement dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the first properties being 101 and 103 Reigate Hill constructed in the 1800's. However Reigate Hill was a dangerous route despite being made a turnpike road in 1755. William Constable, the surveyor who designed Reigate Tunnel, carried out major improvements to Reigate Hill in 1825 including the suspension bridge (replaced in 1910) and an Octagonal toll house was built at the base of the Hill (demolished 1890). From the 1830's this attracted a number of buildings around the Toll House, such as the Yew Tree inn and the Rifle Volunteer public house opposite and a number of artisan's cottages, including the Reigate Stone Quarry Cottages associated with the Chalk pits, lime works and Reigate Stone mines, as well as country houses in large grounds such as The Rock, and The Brokes (Reigate Manor). Following the arrival of the railway in 1847 further large houses in spacious grounds were built in the vicinity and further cottages in the arts and crafts style were built later in the century. The Yew Tree public house was rebuilt in 1937 and was designed by the notable architect Paxton Watson in the local arts and crafts style. During the Second World War properties in the area were commandeered for the Army's South East Command with Montgomery, Eisenhower, Churchill and several generals staying occasionally in the properties and the communication centre known as Monty's Hideout was built into Reigate Hill.

3.2 It is considered that the area forms a cohesive settlement of composite elements. The centre is characterised by low two storey cottages in arts and crafts and Victorian styles, with a collection of Victorian country houses in spacious grounds in the vicinity, with associated lodges and coach houses. Reigate Hill forms a green corridor to the town with buildings set back behind verdant and sylvan setting, except for the cottages on the south east side. The settlement forms a foreground to the backdrop of the Reigate Hill Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, particularly on the north and west sides of the main road. Whilst the Esso garage is a negative element in the area, it was

nonetheless designed to have a reduced impact with clay tile roof and very limited advertising fascias.

#### **4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Whilst heritage resources are finite, the greater certainty in the development management process will considerably reduce time spent on negotiation and discussion of proposals. Conservation Areas also have greater publicity requirements for planning applications although such impacts are considered minimal.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The local planning authority has a duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to review the exercise of their functions in respect of the designation of conservation areas, and to consider the designation of further parts of their area as conservation areas. The legal status of Conservation Areas is not expected to change in the near future.

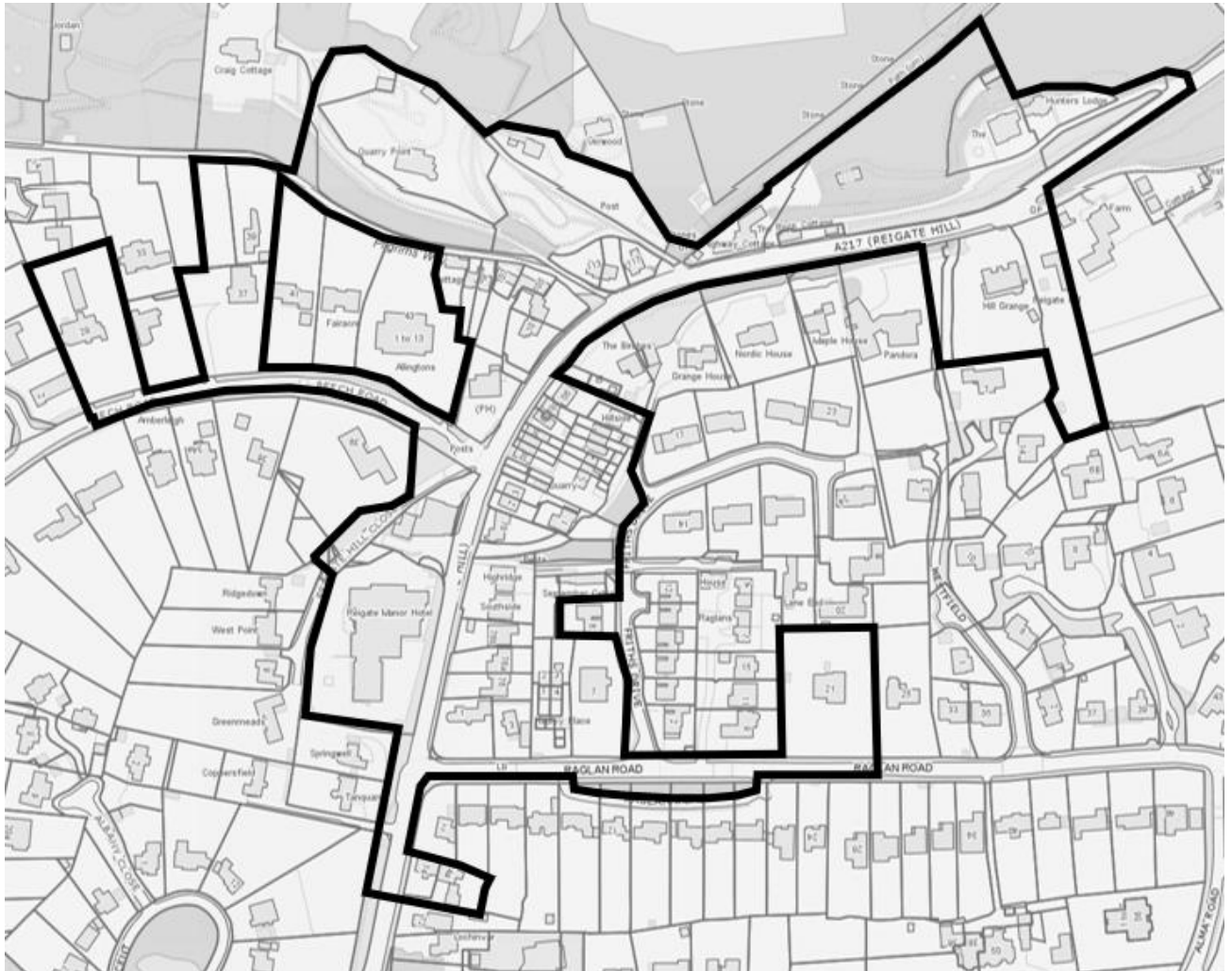
#### **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 It is considered that the settlement at the base of the Reigate Hill escarpment is worthy of designation as a Conservation Area, as the group of buildings contribute significantly to the identity and character of the area. Without designation, there is a danger that the Yew Tree public house may be demolished which will have a negative effect on the character of the settlement. It is recommended that the Committee approve designation of the Conservation Area and consult on the designation, with report back to Planning Committee on the results of the consultation. There is no requirement to consult before designation and designation would provide interim protection whilst the consultation process takes place.
- 6.2 It is recommended that the settlement at the base of the Reigate Hill escarpment as delineated on the plan in Appendix 1 be designated as a Conservation Area, under sections 69 and 70 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and that public consultation be undertaken. .

Background Papers: None

Appendix 1

**PROPOSED REIGATE HILL CONSERVATION AREA**



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**Proposed Conservation Area – Reigate Hill**