

REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER PLANNING

STRATEGIC STONE STUDY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for a financial contribution to the proposed Strategic Stone Study of Nottinghamshire.

Information and Advice

2. The architectural heritage of England is underpinned by the wide variety of building stones used, reflecting local geology and contributing to local distinctiveness and stone is the major building material for many of the country's listed buildings and conservation areas. Supplies of new stone are needed for maintenance, restoration and new builds but the source of the original stone is often unknown or quarries are no longer operating.
3. The Strategic Stone Study is led by English Heritage, working with the British Geological Survey and local geologists and historic buildings experts, and is intended to help to address the problem of sourcing new materials. For each county, a combination of fieldwork and historic records and maps is used to select a representative range of historic structures, from churches and houses to boundary walls, bridges and paving, and the types of stones used are identified. The most significant building stones in each county are identified and the location of all quarries that produced these stones is mapped, so that potential sources for conservation and new build can be recognised and safeguarded. Strategic Stone Studies have been completed for 33 counties to date.
4. The ability to obtain stone that matches the original, not only in appearance, but also in terms of mineral composition, porosity and permeability is vitally important for the conservation of our built heritage. If new stone does not match the original in all attributes, it is likely to be a poor visual match and could hasten the weathering and decay of the adjacent stone. Government has recognised the importance of identifying and protecting building stone resources and recommends that local authorities should safeguard important sources of building stones through the minerals planning process.
5. A Strategic Stone Study for Nottinghamshire has been proposed, following the format described above. The outputs would include three digital datasets covering historic and modern building stone quarry sites, the range of stone buildings in the county and the building stones of Nottinghamshire. An illustrated atlas of Nottinghamshire Building Stones would also be produced.

6. The Study would be commissioned by English Heritage and the total cost of the work is £29,960. A contribution of £5,000 from Nottinghamshire County Council has been requested, with the remainder of the costs being met by English Heritage. It is anticipated that this contribution would be found from existing Conservation and Planning Policy budgets.

Other Options Considered

7. The County Council could choose not to make a financial contribution to the proposed Strategic Stone Study of Nottinghamshire but in this instance, it is unlikely that the Study would go ahead.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

8. The completion of the Strategic Stone Study for Nottinghamshire would help to inform the conservation of the County's built heritage and enable the safeguarding of existing and potential sources of significant building stones through the minerals planning process.

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) To approve the financial contribution to the Strategic Stone Study as set out in paragraph 6.

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Group Manager Planning

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Heather Stokes, Conservation Team Manager (0115 969 6508)

Constitutional Comments (SHB 02.11.12.)

10. Committee have power to decide the Recommendation.

Financial Comments (DJK 02.11.12)

11. The contents of this report are duly noted; the contribution of £5000 towards the cost of this study will be met from existing Conservation revenue budgets for 2012/13.

Background Papers

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All