

**Report of Conservation Area Appraisal Working Group
July 6th 2025**

The Working Group recently contributed to the Goring Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Annual Report which was received and noted by the Parish Council at its meeting on 9 June 2025. Action number A.01 concerns the Conservation Area Appraisal and we reported thus:

“Goring's draft Conservation Area Appraisal was received by SODC in Sept 2023 and, after discussion with officers and some minor amendments, the text was transferred into SODC's template and declared ready for public consultation in early 2024.

Nothing happened and after repeated enquiries over several months we were told nothing could be done to hasten the consultation as the 'consultation team' were occupied elsewhere. We were told the earliest date we could expect for consultation would be Spring 2025 and that Goring's appraisal was in a queue of appraisals. Since then, nothing has happened, no appraisals seem to have been processed.

From SODC's website, of 72 conservation areas, only 28 have appraisals. Of these, none were completed in 2024, 3 in 2023, and none between 2020-2022. Only 9 were completed between 2010-2019, and 11 between 2000-2009. Historic England notes that: "Local planning authorities must review their conservation areas from time to time (section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)." (Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition) 2019.)

In the meantime, planning applications frequently challenge the integrity of the conservation area and its historic assets but the draft appraisal carries no planning weight - Parish Councillors and Planning Officers have their hands tied. For example, a recent application threatened to damage a historic Victorian wall characterising late 19C Goring and alterations to architectural features of some non-designated historic assets have reduced their value.

A further major challenge lies ahead to secure the future for the Saunders/Hobbs Boathouse on High St. This has been vacated and is for sale. An application for its admission to the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) has been made and a decision on this is imminent.”

In view of on-going lack of action, the Working Group now requests Goring-on-Thames Parish Council to write formally to SODC's Head of Planning, Adrian Duffield, requesting confirmation of a date for the public consultation and a definite timeline for completion of the Goring Conservation Area Appraisal.

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