

DRAFT Response for Consideration by the WPC on 13 November 2023

Consultation on the Extension of the Walberswick Conservation Area: Supplement to Conservation Area Appraisal October 2023

ESC is consulting on a proposal to incorporate the Walberswick Quay Conservation Area (established in 1991) and the Article 4(2) Direction confirmed in 1997 into the Walberswick Conservation Area as a whole.

Background

Walberswick Quay has historically been (and remains today) within the Southwold Parish Boundary. Like the Southwold Harbour, Walberswick Quay is in its own conservation area, separate from the rest of Walberswick's conservation area. Because the Walberswick Quay was part of the former Waveney District, it also is covered by an Article 4 Direction which does not allow permitted development without specific planning approval. The rest of Walberswick's Conservation Area was formerly within Suffolk Coastal District which did not provide the same level of protection as the Quay.

Southwold's Harbour was proposed to become part of the Southwold Conservation Area in a separate consultation undertaken by ESC earlier in 2023. This was part of several other proposed changes to the Southwold Conservation Area. ESC is now consulting on incorporating the Walberswick Quay into Walberswick's Conservation Area.

Response of Walberswick Parish Council

The proposal should be supported. Walberswick is a small village and the Walberswick Quay forms an essential part of the Village's historic and environmental character. Although the Parish Boundaries do not change, having the Quay inside the Walberswick Conservation area makes it clear that the Quay is very much part of Walberswick. Moreover, with the consolidation of the Southwold Conservation Area, there would be little sense in leaving the Walberswick Quay as an 'orphan' instead of connecting it up with the Village conservation area. We understand that the proposal would, in no way, interfere with current or future plans or investments associated with maintaining or improving Southwold Harbour, flood protections or footpaths on the Walberswick side of the river.

Although the question was not posed as part of the consultation, the WPC would like to recommend that the Article 4 Direction that covers the Walberswick Quay be extended to the rest of the Walberswick Conservation Area as part of the consolidation. It is our understanding the ESC is undertaking an overall Article 4 Project looking at the designations of all of conservation areas within East Suffolk. Whilst it may be sometime before the Article 4 Project looks at Walberswick, the consolidation of the Quay and Village Conservation areas would be a sensible opportunity to better protect the entire conservation area under the same Article 4 Direction.

