

From: Richard Dennis
Sent: 20 October 2017 08:44
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Area

Dear Mr Bosworth,

I would be grateful if the East Herts DC would take note of our views when considering its response to the proposed changes to the Aspenden Conservation Area. We strongly object to the proposed changes. The proposed changes seem quite nonsensical. A conservation "area" should mean just that - an area, in our case the village and its setting. Choosing to remove certain dwellings but not others, and removing most of the immediate environs of the village from conservation status opens up the potential for unwelcome development which will destroy the character of the setting of remainder of village and so destroy any conservation area value. I very much hope that the District Council will register our total opposition to the proposals submitted.

Richard and Susan Dennis

Aspenden

From: Richard Blackburn
Sent: 23 October 2017 16:55
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation

Dear John,

I wholeheartedly support the views of the Parish Council in their letter to the East Herts Conservation team of the 6th October 2017.

There is absolutely no reason to change the boundary of the present conservation area by removing large swathes of land that currently protect this historic settlement.

Further it defies logic to include the majority of the modern properties within the village, however specifically excluding a few which would provide a convenient link to the proposed unprotected land to the north.

It would appear East Herts are actively trying to promote the relaxation of planning controls on land surrounding the village which will no doubt result in speculative development threatening the unique qualities of the setting and thereby eroding the conservation value of the village.

Conversely your report also recommends some aesthetic improvements to the village, of which I support, however with the removal of the land surrounding the village from the Conservation Area, the potential damage would far outweigh any of these improvements.

Having witnessed the complete unchecked residential development taking place in and around Buntingford, due chiefly as a result of East Herts DC failure to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, I have no confidence in their ability to safeguard the County's history by protecting important historic villages such as Aspenden - any proposals to relax of the extent of the current planning controls in force should be soundly rejected.

Regards

Richard Blackburn

Richard Blackburn

From: Richard Blackburn
Sent: 15 September 2017 17:15
To: Bosworth John
Cc: Chris Seymour; 'Tony Burton'
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Dear John,

Many thanks for your time down in Aspenden on Tuesday evening.

As you witnessed your proposals have created quite a stir and quite rightly the residents do feel somewhat under threat of becoming part of Buntingford – perhaps not your intention, but nevertheless, a very real possibility.

Your report (page 37 (f)) states that the area of open land between the A10 and edge of the village was included within the boundary of the conservation area in 1981, but you don't know why.

My understanding from local residents who lived in the village over that period, is that the land was included at the time the by-pass was pushed through – essentially to create a buffer zone from the by-pass and to protect the village from development encroaching from Buntingford. It was I understand the subject of many Parish Council meetings and therefore should be fully documented in the council records which I understand are held at County Hall – I have checked and unfortunately the minutes from this period are not available on-line.

We would therefore be grateful if you could check the relevant Parish Council records where hopefully this information can be found.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Comment Form

Your comments are sought on the Aspden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. These should be made in writing and either sent or emailed to the address below by 24 October 2017. Alternatively you can leave this form tonight. Any comments submitted will be publically available but will exclude personal details. If you wish to discuss the document further please contact the Council's Conservation Team on the number below.

Conservation Area: Aspden

Name : Mr & Mrs Hutchins

Address:

Telephone No:

Email:

Comments: Dear Mr Bosworth,

We attended the meeting held at the Fox pub chaired by yourself and listened to your views about what the district council was proposing. As per your request if anyone has objections or concerns please respond. My wife and I have lived all our lives in this area and have actually seen the expansion of Buntingford over the last 50 years, it is apparent that with the alteration or removal of the current conservation status it will enable the future envelopment of Aspden into a greater Buntingford.

Yours faithfully
Mr & Mrs Hutchins

Our Contact Details:

Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk

Email: john.bosworth@eastherts.gov.uk

Phone: 01279 655261

Ask for Conservation Officer

East Herts District Council
Wallfields, Pegs Lane
Hertford, SG13 8EQ

From: TD BURTON
Sent: 19 September 2017 11:57
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Fwd:
Attachments: HISTORIC ENGLAND ADVICE.pdf

With Attachment

----Original message----

From :
Date : 19/09/2017 - 11:53 (GMTDT)
To : John.bosworth@eastherts.gov.uk
Subject :

Dear Mr. Bosworth,

Following the public meeting last Tuesday in Aspden I undertook to forward to you the document I referred to in the meeting and formal copies of my comments.

Accordingly I attach copy of Historic England's Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management – Advice Note. In the meeting I drew your draw your attention to page 17, para 66 and also para 17 & 18 on page 4 (extracts below). I would argue that the proposals do not follow this guidance in that it draws attention to the importance of spaces in protecting the assets and defined settings as well quite clearly advising that boundaries should not divide a plot and should generally follow defined features – further the boundary should consider if further additional controls are required or whether the setting is itself sufficiently protected by national policy or the Local Plan.

You will have detected the strength of feeling from those who attended the meeting that the agricultural land around the village is a necessary buffer to protect the nature and character of Aspden from a necessarily and inevitably expanding Buntingford.

These buffer spaces will offer long term safeguarding of the assets against that background.

The exclusion of Jubilee Cottages from the proposed boundary creates a similar problem whereby new development could occur within the heart of the village but outside of the conservation area. Whilst I understand your points about the nature of the Jubilee Cottages and the on street parking they are none the less now part of the character of the village and it seems wholly wrong to me to exclude spaces within the heart of the conservation area from the same status as the rest of the village.

Finally I have checked my records an you were quite correct that the Foxglade/Perryden area is a WILDLIFE site not an SSI. Your proposed boundary runs through the wildlife site and divides two of the plots on no definable geographic line. It also divides the ponds forming the wildlife site. The Foxglade Pond is in the conservation area but the Perryden Pond is excluded. I think the boundary at this point should include the whole of the plots encompassing Foxglade, Shem's Barn and Perryden.

Conservation Area status does offer some protection from development in that in any assessment of an application regard must be had to the conservation status of an area and the bar is set higher for a developer to demonstrate their application causes no harm to the area. Loss of this status for the land buffering the village from Buntingford would inevitably make development of that land easier from a planning perspective. I believe that would be to the long term detriment of the conservation area and indeed Buntingford.

Finally we heard at the meeting that much of the land which come out of the conservation area under your proposals is in the ownership of three members of the parish council. If that is the case then there is a clear conflict of interest in respect of the decision to remove this land from the conservation area as it would be to the potential benefit of those individuals.

Kind Regards

Tony Burton

Identifying the boundary

66 An important aspect of the appraisal (and review) process will be considering where the boundaries should be drawn (and whether the boundaries of an existing conservation area should be re-drawn). An explanation of why the boundary is drawn where it is (or extensions are suggested, in the case of existing conservation areas), and what is included and what is excluded, is helpful. The position of the conservation area boundary will to a large degree be informed by the considerations identified in paragraphs 17-18 (Finalising and reviewing the boundary). As spaces contribute to enclosure, as well as framing views of assets and defining settings, a unified approach is desirable to their management as well as suggesting that in almost all situations the conservation area boundary runs around rather than through a space or plot. It will generally be defined by physical features and avoid for example running along the middle of a street, though including the boundary wall of a property which is otherwise not included can in itself cause problems when applying conservation area policies in development management decisions.

Finalising and Reviewing the Conservation Area Boundary

additional controls that result from designation, or whether the setting is itself sufficiently protected by national policy or the policies in the Local Plan.

18 The special interest of areas designated many years ago may now be so eroded by piecemeal change or by single examples of poorly designed development that parts of the area may no longer have special interest. In such cases, boundary revisions will be needed to exclude them or, in exceptional circumstances, reconsideration of the conservation area designation as a whole. Conversely, the existing boundary may have been drawn too tightly, omitting areas now considered of special interest such as historic rear plots with archaeological potential, later phases of development (such as more recent housing), or parks, cemeteries and historic green spaces. In such cases the existing boundary may need to be extended.

From: Gordon Devonshire
Sent: 23 October 2017 10:22
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Re: Aspden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation

Dear Mr Bosworth

Thank you for your reply.

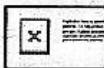
Further to my last re the conservation area.

A long standing village resident recalled a meeting that took place in Aspden some time in the summer of 1981 (possibly June) between villagers and the Chairman of the Buntingford Bypass enquiry, when villagers were assured that the inclusion of land in a conservation area between the bypass and the village would be a safeguard against future development and was felt by many in the village at the time to be a compensating factor in the decision to opt for the bypass following the western route.

Regards

Gordon Devonshire

I



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On Mon, Oct 23, 2017 at 9:53 AM, Bosworth John <John.Bosworth@eastherts.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Gordon and Tracy Devonshire thank you for your comments relating to the Aspden Conservation Area Appraisal. I will compile a report for Members consideration after the consultation period and this will summarise your representation (suitably redacted to omit personal contact details) and respond to it. At that time I will contact you again so you are aware of the manner in which officers have responded to questions you and others have raised.

John Bosworth

From: Gordon Devonshire
Sent: 23 October 2017 09:45
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation

Dear Mr Bosworth

From: Gordon Devonshire
Sent: 23 October 2017 09:45
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation

Dear Mr Bosworth

Thank you for taking the trouble to come to Aspenden a few weeks ago to present EHDC's proposal regarding the Aspenden conservation area.

Whilst accepting that government rules require such areas to be reviewed periodically, there seems to be very little(if any) local support for any changes.

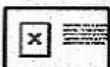
As I'm sure you were made aware, resident of this area feel they have unfairly borne the brunt of new housing development and any changes to a conservation area are bound to be seen as an aid to further unwanted planning applications.

I would think it is a generally accepted view that local councils are there to serve the best interests of local people and would expect local opinion to be at the forefront of any decision making process.

Aspenden Parish Councils view on these proposals is one that we endorse fully.

Yours

Gordon & Tracy Devonshire



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23 OCT 2017

Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Comment Form

Your comments are sought on the Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. These should be made in writing and either sent or emailed to the address below by 24 October 2017. Alternatively you can leave this form tonight. Any comments submitted will be publicly available but will exclude personal details. If you wish to discuss the document further please contact the Council's Conservation Team on the number below.

Conservation Area: Aspenden

Name: ALAN + GILL KINNEAR

Address:

Telephone No:

Email:

Comments. We moved from ~~Aspenden~~ Buntingford to Aspenden 10 years ago because we sought a quiet area with a village identity. We believe it is imperative to have a clear buffer to protect this conservation area from further development emanating from the town and A10 corridor. No new road access should be allowed over land shown ^{in red} in the draft map (PDR2 character analysis). Any access would severely detract from the historic and unique settlement that is Aspenden. We strongly believe that the area colored red should be in the conservation area to protect ^{an} environmentally important areas in this part of Hertfordshire, for the benefit of residents and visitors to this beautiful part of the country.

Our Contact Details:

Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk

Email: john.bosworth@eastherts.gov.uk

Phone: 01279 655261

Ask for Conservation Officer

East Herts District Council
Wallfields, Pegs Lane
Hertford, SG13 8EQ

From: Chris Newman
Sent: 26 September 2017 13:03
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden conservation plans

would like to register our opposition to proposals to remove the fields surrounding Aspenden from conservatiion area as we feel they will become more accessible for building on
chris newman

Bosworth John

From: Glyn Jones
Sent: 22 October 2017 16:48
To: Bosworth John
Cc: glyn jones
Subject: Re Aspended Conservation Area Appraisal (ACAA)

Attn John Bosworth

Could someone please acknowledge receipt of this email before the end of the 24th October.

I am emailing you as I do not seem to have a copy of your teams specific justification for their proposed recommended changes to the current Aspended Conservation Boundaries, as raised by residents at the recent meeting in 'The Fox PH'.

Meaning what has happened since the current Plan was formulated in 1981 to require the wholesale removal of our countryside buffer and sensible designated boundary as challenged at the meeting.

Please take this email as a formal protest against the proposed changes to the amended Plan.

I look forward to your response.

Regards
Glyn Jones

ASPENDEN
HERTFORDSHIRE
SG9 9PG

Attn: The Conservation Team

20th October 2017

Dear Mr Boswell

Ref Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal

Further to the recent Public meeting in The Fox PH Aspenden I wish to register my objection in principle to your proposed realignment of the Conservation area.

This is primarily because of the proposed piecemeal removal of swathes of land from the existing village curtilage as defined in the 1981 Conservation Plan. You propose to decimate the 'breathing space' which was granted in the earlier Plan without explanation or justification.

If I were a cynical person I would suggest it smacked of political pressure, which I am not.

I fully support and endorse the points contained in Denise Anderson's letter of the 6th October.

In conclusion I would add that A Conservation 'Area' should mean just that: an area, which in our case is the village and its setting. Choosing to remove certain dwellings but not others, and removing most of the immediate environs of the village from conservation status opens up the potential for unsuitable development which will destroy the character and value of the remainder of the village and thus destroy any conservation value.

Yours sincerely

Glyn Jones

East Herts Council
Customer Services
23 OCT 2017

Received



Attn The Conservation Team
East Herts Council
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ
20th October 2017

20 Oct. 2017

East Herts Council
Customer Services

23 OCT 2017

Dear Mr Boswell

Received

Ref Aspden Conservation Area Appraisal

Further to the recent Public meeting in The Fox PH Aspden I wish to register my objection in principle to your proposed realignment of the Conservation area.

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In conclusion I would add that A Conservation 'Area' should mean just that: an area, which in our case is the village and its setting. Choosing to remove certain dwellings but not others, and removing most of the immediate environs of the village from conservation status opens up the potential for unsuitable development which will destroy the character and setting of the remainder of the village and thus destroy any conservation value.

Yours sincerely

Joan Jones



Development
Control

24 OCT 2017

From: Helen Curtis
Sent: 24 October 2017 14:10
To: Bosworth John
Cc:
Subject: Comments re Aspden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
Consultation

Dear John,

We were present at the meeting on Tuesday 12 September in The Fox to discuss the proposed changes to the Aspden Conservation Area. We have concerns over the proposals, specifically

1. Land and buildings to the north and west of Aspden Hall (5.54b)
2. Tudor House and its curtilage (5.54c)
3. Open countryside to the west of the church including part of The Bourne stream south of the track (5.54d)
4. Elevated section of the A10 and land to its north (5.54e)
5. Expansive area of open land, for the most part countryside and farmland, between the A10 and the edge of the village (5.54f)
6. 1-8 Jubilee Cottages (5.54g)
7. 9-14 and 15-20 Jubilee Cottages (5.54h)
8. Extensive areas of land, much of it being open and underused, located south of The Street (5.54i)

We agree with the letter sent to you by the Aspden Parish Council, dated 6th October 2017, and hope you will reconsider your proposals to shrink the current boundaries of the conservation area.

Yours sincerely

From: katie beach
Sent: 23 October 2017 11:25
To: Bosworth John; katie beach
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Area

Dear Mr Bosworth

I write to record my views of the conservation area around Aspenden Village being removed. I strongly object to it and believe these areas should remain protected as they are what makes us a village, being surrounded by countryside and separates us from Buntingford. Should these areas, especially towards the A10/buntingford direction be removed from protected status it opens it up to be granted planning permission for housing in the future, thus giving no separation between the village and the town. It also gives no protection from the A10 which is perhaps why it was protected in the first place.

Kind regards
Katie Morrison

Sent from my iPhone

From:
Sent: 24 October 2017 18:56
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden conservation land

Dear John,

As a resident of Aspenden I strongly disagree with the changing of the conservation area boundaries and feel that future changes and possible future development will greatly damage the character of the village.

My property is grade II listed and we have country views which we would like to protect, we believe the views form a part of the heritage of our property. Just as we abide by the listed property regulations to keep out property a historic feature of the village we would like East Herts to respect the land surrounding our village and its inherent historic value to the properties.

Access to the village is poor and an increase in traffic coming to and through the village would be ill advised.

Yours sincerely

(I trust our views will be anonymous if published)

From: Carol Easton
Sent: 23 October 2017 18:32
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden conservation area appraisal and management plan.

We are strongly opposed to the proposals in the consultation paper for Aspenden. We feel the current conservation boundary should stay in place and not be reduced at all. If the area were to be reduced it would leave it open to unwanted possible future housing development. Baring in mind that there is currently a huge number of new houses(2000 plus) being built on the Buntingford side of the A10 bypass, the worry is that there aren't enough infrastructure facilities at the moment, e.g. Schools, medical centres etc.. let alone for possible future housing development. The removal of very large areas of land north and south of Aspenden from conservation would have an impact on the village , so changing its character and being swamped by Buntingford . These areas form a buffer zone for the village. The conservation area is for everyone to enjoy not just a few villagers. Indeed I see everyday from my garden many people dog walking, hiking and biking and generally enjoying the countryside. It would be a shame to lose such a lovely place to possible development in the future. We definately need to keep this conservation area as it is. Yours sincerely, Mr and Mrs Easton.

Sent from my iPad

From: barnaby cornish
Sent: 30 September 2017 10:05
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Appraisal of Aspden Conservation Area.

Dear John,
I met you at The Fox in Aspden at the recent Presentation.

I live at Bourne Cottage in Aspden and strongly oppose the removal of the Conservation Area around Aspden.

I understand the need to remove various unlisted properties from this category. However, the farmland that is also at risk acts as an important transitional zone between these areas of debate and Buntingford.

Kind regards,

Mr Barnaby Cornish

Sent from my iPhone

Bosworth John

From: Pat Murray
Sent: 24 October 2017 16:38
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Plan changes

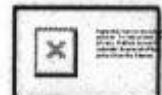
Dear Mr. Bosworth,

As the churchwarden of St. Mary's Church, Aspenden I would like to register my objections to any changes in the fields around the church which I feel are so important to the position of this early medieval building.

The fields around the village are so important in preserving the entity of the community so that it does not end joined to nearby Buntingford, already swelled to nearly twice its former size.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Patricia Murray



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From:
Sent: 21 October 2017 14:24
To: Development Management - Planning
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal

Dear Sirs

I wish to comment on the conservation area boundary changes proposed in the ASPENDEN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION 2017.

Point 5.54 (f) states "Exclude an expansive area of open land, for the most part countryside and farmland between the A10 and the edge of the settlement. The reason for including this land originally in 1981 is unknown."

Buntingford has had an 80% increase in household development in recent years with the A10 being the southern border to new development. I believe that the current conservation area helps secure this border. If the new proposals removes the conservation status of this farmland I am concerned later plans will allow new building to spread south of the A10 to back onto Aspenden. Therefore I would wish the area to retain the conservation status.

The 2007 Local Plan states: "16.2.4 The overriding planning objective of defining settlement limits is the prevention of urban sprawl and the coalescence with nearby settlements, and the protection of the settlement's special character." I believe the current plan helps with this aim. Can you give an assurance that the removal of this conservation area (point 5.54 F) is not a first step toward housing development south of the A10?

regards

Richard Jablonski

19th October

2017

**ASPENDEN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL FORM AND MANAGEMENT
COMMENT FORM**

We have lived in the area for the last 26 years and in Aspenden for over 20.

We feel we have been extremely fortunate to live in such a friendly, generally quiet, peaceful and safe village.

We have brought our family up in what we considered the perfect location to live.

We are very proud of our village and have been activly involved for nearly 20 years with our Village Cricket Team, Aspenden Pavilion Management Committee, The Local Village Fete, and various Village working parties over the years.

In our garden we regularly see a diverse range of wildlife Deer, Badger's, Rabbit's, Fox's, Pheasant's, numerous nesting bird's owl's, woodpecker's, buzzard's, etc etc and we try and encourage this.

It would be a very sad day when our wild life in the garden disapeared due to a loss of their habitat (no matter how small in relation to the surrounding rural land)

The recent development of land around Buntingford has totally changed the dynamic and character of the Town not necessarily for the good.

As Aspenden is in a Conservation Area and has a level of protection against the large developer's we cannot understand why the Local Authority would wish to remove the Conservation status.

At a recent meeting in the Village the East Herts Counciller's denied categorically that the sole purpose of the removal of the Conservation status to the Village was for ease of any further development.

What we would like to know is what benifit to our local community and to East Herts District Council your proposals would bring.

Steve Merriman

To: Sharron Kassim
Subject: RE: Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

From: Sharron Kassim
Sent: 23 October 2017 22:57
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Dear Mr Bosworth,

I am writing to you regarding the Aspenden conservation area appraisal and the proposed changes in the boundary. I wish to object to the changes as the proposed new boundary will virtually eliminate a central part of the village. I am also objecting to the large expansive areas of open land which you are proposing to exclude. This is land which surround and protect the settlement area in Aspenden and I can only conclude this appraisal is taking place to remove a layer of regulation from what is considered prime development plots.

As a resident of 1-8 Jubilee Cottages I was dismayed to find that you wish to exclude these properties as you feel they detract from the street scene. Personally I fail to see how changing the boundary will enhance the street scene. As an owner occupier I would be happy to work with council officers to improve my property frontage at my own expense however, I have never been approached to discuss any of the issues you raised.

The proposed changes also show land to the rear of 1-8 Jubilee Cottages as removed from the conservation area however, this is essentially half of the land of a property that remains within the boundary. Is this accurate?

In conclusion I am opposed to the proposed changes and believe the boundary alterations are so immense, that if they were implemented the impact to the village would be devastating on both the settlement and wildlife.

Kind Regards
Sharron Kassim

****Disclaimer****

The information in this message should be regarded as confidential and is intended for the addressee only unless explicitly stated. If you have received this message in error it must be deleted and the sender notified. The views expressed in this message are personal and not necessarily those of Hertfordshire County Council unless explicitly stated. Please be aware that emails sent to or received from Hertfordshire County Council may be intercepted and read by the council. Interception will only occur to ensure compliance with council policies or procedures or regulatory obligations, to prevent or deter crime, or for the purposes of essential maintenance or support of the email system.

Bosworth John

From: Sarah Wisson
Sent: 22 October 2017 15:32
To: Bosworth John
Subject: Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation

Dear John

We would like to register our opposition to the proposals detailed in the consultation paper. The suggested removal from the conservation area of large tracts of land either side of the village of Aspenden is of particular concern. These areas form an important part of the makeup of the village, sitting as it does in a natural valley with the land either side creating a contextual landscape that is an integral part of the appearance and structure of the village - demonstrated in the picture below – and which also form an important buffer zone around the entirety of the village.



Aspden viewed across land currently within the conservation area from the footpath to the south of The Street

These proposals seemingly ignore the importance of spaces protecting the assets and defined settings and quite clearly in some instances divide plots – all contrary to Historic England guidance.

We have all seen the recent massive expansion of Buntingford without the provision of supporting infrastructure, especially with regard to education and healthcare. In addition, the recently consented development off Aspden Road on the edge of the village poses a serious road safety issue, which again appears not to have been considered by East Herts. The proposed realignment of Aspden's Conservation Area will only add to the pressures on the village, make it more likely to be consumed by the larger nearby town of Buntingford and leave the village open to unwanted development.

The land surrounding the village also provides important habitat for many species, some of them protected, including barn owls and tawny owls, red kites, buzzards, deer and honey bees to name a few.

In view of the above points, we strongly object to the proposals submitted by East Herts. A Conservation Area should be just that: an area, which in this case is the village and its setting. Choosing to remove certain dwellings but not others, and removing most of the immediate environs of the village from conservation status opens up the potential for unsuitable development which will destroy the character and setting of the remainder of the village and thus destroy any conservation value.

The conservation team has researched the history of many of the properties in the village and even suggests further protection for some; there seems little point in this if the associated landscape is removed from the conservation area, leaving it more easily available for future development.

We most sincerely recommend that the proposed changes to the conservation area boundary are rejected.

Yours

Sarah & Grant Wisson

The Conservation Team

East Herts Council

Wallfields

Pegs Lane

Hertford

SG13 8EQ

Re: Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation

Aspenden Parish Council are appreciative of the extensive time and research that has been spent in compiling the Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

There are many recommendations which would improve the aesthetics of the village, particularly the details referenced in paragraphs 5.24 to 5.29 and 5.31, 5.34, 5.36, 5.49 and 5.50.

Many of these positive aspects however, would be diminished if much of the associated landscape is removed from the Conservation Area, perhaps making future unsuitable development more likely. We are therefore writing to formally register our strong opposition to some of the proposals detailed in the recent consultation paper. The specific proposals we are concerned about are:

1. Land and buildings to the north and west of Aspenden Hall (5.54b)
2. Tudor House and its curtilage (5.54c)
3. Open countryside to the west of the church including part of The Bourne stream south of the track (5.54d)
4. Elevated section of the A10 and land to its north (5.54e)
5. Expansive area of open land, for the most part countryside and farmland, between the A10 and the edge of the village (5.54f)
6. 1-8 Jubilee Cottages (5.54g)
7. 9-14 and 15-20 Jubilee Cottages (5.54h)
8. Extensive areas of land, much of it being open and underused, located south of The Street (5.54i)

In response, we would argue that:

- a. Jubilee Cottages are centrally located and should be considered an integral part of the village, in the same way that all other modern properties within the village are within the Conservation Area (and will remain so). It seems completely illogical to exclude only these small modern elements, although one possible reason is that they potentially provide access points from The Street to the land north of the village.
- b. Tudor House and the land to the west of the Church mark the edge of the village and should be seen as such. They form an important buffer to the farmland and open countryside beyond, frame Aspenden Hall and St. Mary's Church, and were once part of a larger estate (see Photograph 1 below).



Photograph 1: Aspden: view of St Mary's Church from western aspect

c. The suggested removal from the Conservation Area of large tracts of land to the north and south of the village is of particular concern. These areas form an important part of the make-up of the village, sitting as it does in a natural valley with the land on either side creating a contextual landscape that is an integral part of the appearance and structure of the village (see Photograph 2 below), and which also form an important buffer zone around the entirety of the village.



Photograph 2: Aspden from northern aspect, overlooking land to the north and south of the village proposed for removal from the conservation area.

d. The proposals to redraw the conservation area boundary do not follow guidelines issued by Historic England (Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1, February 2016). ([https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-designation-appraisal-and-management-advice-note-1/heag040-conservation-area-designation-appraisal-and-management.pdf](https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-designation-appraisal-management-advice-note-1/heag040-conservation-area-designation-appraisal-and-management.pdf). Accessed 10 September 2017). These guidelines clearly state:

Identifying the boundary

Para 66: An important aspect of the appraisal (and review) process will be considering where the boundaries should be drawn (and whether the boundaries of an existing conservation area should be re-drawn). An explanation of why the boundary is drawn where it is (or extensions are suggested, in the case of existing conservation areas), and what is included and what is excluded, is helpful. The position of the conservation area boundary will to a large degree be informed by the considerations identified in paragraphs 17-18 (Finalising and reviewing the boundary). As spaces contribute to enclosure, as well as framing views of assets and defining settings, a unified approach is desirable

boundary runs around rather than through a space or plot. It will generally be defined by physical features and avoid for example running along the middle of a street, though including the boundary wall of a property which is otherwise not included can in itself cause problems when applying conservation area policies in development management decisions.

Finalising and Reviewing the Conservation Area Boundary

Para 17: Before finalising the boundary it is worth considering whether the immediate setting also requires the additional controls that result from designation, or whether the setting is itself sufficiently protected by national policy or the policies in the Local Plan.

Para 18: The special interest of areas designated many years ago may now be so eroded by piecemeal change or by single examples of poorly designed development that parts of the area may no longer have special interest. In such cases, boundary revisions will be needed to exclude them or, in exceptional circumstances, reconsideration of the conservation area designation as a whole. Conversely, the existing boundary may have been drawn too tightly, omitting areas now considered of special interest such as historic rear plots with archaeological potential, later phases of development (such as more recent housing), or parks, cemeteries and historic green spaces. In such cases the existing boundary may need to be extended.

The proposals seemingly ignore the importance of spaces protecting the assets and defined settings and quite clearly in some instances divide plots, all of which are contrary to Historic England guidance.

The Parish Council suspects that the inclusion of the land surrounding the village in the 1981 Conservation Plan was essentially to protect the village from any further development after the construction of the by-pass, a crucial point which also appears to have been overlooked and conveniently forgotten in the current proposals submitted by East Herts.

Conservation Area status does offer some protection from development in that in any assessment of an application, regard must be paid to the conservation status of an area; the bar is set higher for a developer to demonstrate their application causes no harm to that area. If areas within the village lose this status, we believe the potential for unwanted and unsuitable development is much greater.

We have all seen the recent massive expansion of Buntingford without the provision of supporting infrastructure, especially with regard to education and healthcare. In addition, the recently consented development off Aspenden Road on the edge of the village poses a serious road safety issue, which again appears not to have been considered by East Herts. The proposed realignment of Aspenden's Conservation Area will only add to the pressures on the village, make it more likely to be consumed by the larger nearby town of Buntingford and leave the village open to unwanted development. The proposals potentially could also result in developments such as solar farms, as seen nearby at Great Munden and Nasty.

We are unsure why only two wildlife sites within the village were identified in the Wildlife Sites Inventory for East Herts 2013, as shown on the emerging District Plan. The area is currently extremely rich in wildlife, including roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), fallow deer (*Dama dama*), brown hares (*Lepus europeaus*; has a Species Action Plan under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan) and various species of owl; the tawny owl (*Strix aluco*) has a conservation status code of amber (of European concern). Removal of large tracts of land and potential future development will inevitably result in a diminished environment for these species. The appraisal also identifies important trees and hedgerows, which we believe could also be threatened. This is of particular concern because, there are several mature ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*) in those areas, which are already under threat from Chalara dieback.

East Herts. A Conservation 'Area' should mean just that: an area, which in our case is the village and its setting. Choosing to remove certain dwellings but not others, and removing most of the immediate environs of the village from conservation status opens up the potential for unsuitable development which will destroy the character and setting of the remainder of the village and thus destroy any conservation value.

Aspenden Parish Council believe it is our duty to protect our fragile environment for future generations to enjoy.

Submitted on behalf of Aspenden Parish Council

Denise Anderson
Aspenden Parish Council