



MEETING : EXECUTIVE
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : MONDAY 9 DECEMBER 2013
TIME : 7.00 PM

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Councillor Tony Jackson	- Leader of the Council
Councillor Malcolm Alexander	- Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment
Councillor Mike Carver	- Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport
Councillor Linda Haysey	- Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support
Councillor Paul Phillips	- Executive Member for Economic Development
Councillor Suzanne Rutland-Barsby	- Executive Member for Community & Partnership Liaison
Councillor Michael Tindale	- Executive Member for Finance

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DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.

4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes (Pages 7 - 16)

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2013.

3. Leader's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Member(s) declaration(s) of interest.

5. Issues Arising From Scrutiny

To follow

6. Homeless and Homeless Prevention Strategy (Pages 17 - 50)

7. Draft revisions to the Council Tax support scheme for 2014/15 (Pages 51 - 76)

8. Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Pages 77 - 124)

9. Standon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Pages 125 - 186)

10. District Planning Executive Panel: Minutes - 18 November 2013 (Pages 187 - 192)

To consider recommendations on the following matters:

- (A) London Commuter Belt (East) Sub-Region: Older People's Housing Requirements: October 2013

Minute 19 refers

- (B) District Plan – Update Report

Minute 20 refers

- (C) District Plan Topic-Based Policies Report (October 2013)

Minute 21 refers

11. District Planning Executive Panel: Minutes - 3 December 2013

To follow

To consider recommendations on the following matters:

- (A) Transport Update Report and Modelling Results
- (B) East Herts Green Belt Review – Parts 2 to 6 (December 2013)
- (C) Duty to Co-operate – Update Report
- (D) District Plan Update Report and Supporting Document Chapter 6
- (E) Local Development Scheme (LDS) Version 5 (December 2013)

12. Monthly Corporate Healthcheck - October 2013 (Pages 193 - 240)

13. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2013, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A Jackson (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors M Alexander, M Carver,
P Phillips and M Tindale.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, S Bull, M McMullen,
P Moore, M Newman, P Ruffles, J Thornton
and J Wing.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

315 **HUNSDON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and
Transport submitted a report on the Hunsdon
Conservation Area Appraisal following public
consultation. He detailed the outcome of the public
consultation in the report now submitted.**

The Appraisal identified the special character of the Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detracted from the identified character. Once adopted by the Council, the Appraisal would become a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications. It would also link into the development of neighbourhood planning.

The Executive Member advised that there were two outstanding issues to be resolved and for this reason, he recommended delegating authority to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary.

Councillor M Newman, as the local ward Member, expressed his appreciation to Officers, local residents and the Parish Council for their contribution.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Hunsdon Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary; and

(C) the Hunsdon Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

316 **RETAIL AND TOWN CENTRES STUDY UPDATE REPORT
(SEPTEMBER 2013)**

The Executive considered and approved the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel, at its meeting held on 3 October 2013, on the Retail and Town Centres Study Update.

RECOMMENDED – that support for the East Herts Retail and Town Centres Study Update Report, September 2013, being used as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan and for Development Management purposes in the determination of planning applications, be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport.

(see also Minute 325)

317 **STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT UPDATE
2012 (MARCH 2013): LONDON COMMUTER BELT EAST
SUB-REGION**

The Executive considered and approved the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel, at its meeting held on 3 October 2013, on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (March 2013): London Commuter Belt East Sub-Region.

RECOMMENDED – that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (March 2013): London Commuter Belt East Sub-Region, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the preparation of the District Plan, and for housing strategy purposes.

(see also Minute 325)

318 **DISTRICT-WIDE GREEN BELT REVIEW PART 1 (2013)**

The Executive considered and approved the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel, at its meeting held on 3 October 2013, on the District-Wide Green Belt Review Part 1 (2013).

RECOMMENDED – that the East Herts District-Wide Green Belt Review – Part 1, September 2013, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan.

(see also Minute 325)

319 **DISTRICT PLAN – UPDATE REPORT**

The Executive considered and approved the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel, at its meeting held on 3 October 2013, on the District Plan - Update Report.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the latest evidence supplied by Hertfordshire County Council in relation to schools planning, be noted, and an ongoing commitment to urgent joint working be supported;

(B) the proposed approach to the preparation of an Infrastructure Topic Paper, followed by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan based on a specially commissioned delivery study, be supported; and

(C) the latest national guidance, including that in relation to the importance of meeting housing needs within each housing market area, be noted.

(see also Minute 325)

320 **DEVELOPER/LANDOWNER QUESTIONNAIRES AND
ATLAS MEETINGS**

The Executive considered and approved the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel, at its meeting held on 3 October 2013, on the Developer/Landowner Questionnaire and ATLAS meetings.

RECOMMENDED – that the responses to the Developer Questionnaires (including subsequent information supplied), and the meeting notes between ATLAS and developers and/or their representatives, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the preparation of the District Plan.

(see also Minute 325)

321 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors L Haysey and S Rutland-Barsby.

322 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 1 October 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

323 **DEVELOPING AN INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR EAST
HERTS**

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report recommending a set of principles for developing an Investment Strategy for East Herts. This would seek to address the need to identify new and additional sources of revenue income over the medium to long term, given the context of reducing revenue streams from traditional sources including Government grants.

The Executive Member explained that having taken early expert advice, the proposition was that East Herts should develop a balanced portfolio which provided a spread of cash and property based investments which would optimise income in the context of a balanced approach to risk. This report would pave the way to take more detailed technical advice once policy decisions became clearer.

The Executive was reminded that East Herts currently had in excess of £60m capital available for investment, the majority of which was currently in short-term money markets. Initial thoughts were that a balanced portfolio should be developed across the following 3 areas:

- continued investment in the money market;
- investment in property funds; and
- investment in the purchase of private housing or commercial property potentially through joint venture activities with third parties.

The Executive Member stressed the need to improve investment performance and detailed the policy principles in the report now submitted.

Councillor J Thornton questioned the value of making direct investments in commercial properties and suggested that the risks would outweigh the return. He also referred to the care needed in identifying the expert advice needed.

Councillor J Wing asked if the level of investment return sought had been defined as this would help understand the level of risk involved. He also asked to what extent the positive impact on the District and immediate neighbouring areas would be a factor in making investment decisions.

The Executive Member accepted the points made by Members as valid considerations that needed to be made. He stressed that the purpose was to improve investment performance and that careful consideration needed to be given before any decisions were made in order to avoid the pitfalls. He was looking to achieve a 5 – 7% return over the

long term, if the appropriate governance arrangements were in place. The management of investments would be one of the issues that would need careful consideration.

The Executive approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the policy principles for property investment as detailed in Section 3 of the report now submitted, be approved;

(B) the draft outline of the timetable for action be noted and that a further progress report be submitted to a future Executive meeting; and

(C) the requirement for additional resources to support the development of this policy that will be funded from the 2013/14 planning contingency be noted.

324 SCRAP METAL DEALERS ACT 2013

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment submitted a report detailing the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013, which considered the proposed application fees and delegation of powers.

The new legislation repealed the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964 (as amended) and Part 1 of the Vehicle (Crime) Act 2001, and created a revised regulatory regime for the scrap metal recycling and vehicle dismantling industries. The new Act maintained local authorities as the principal regulator, but gave them the power to better regulate these industries by allowing them to refuse to grant a licence to ‘unsuitable’ applicants and a power to revoke licences if the dealer became ‘unsuitable’.

In response to Members’ questions, the Director of Neighbourhood Services stated that the proposed fees were in line with neighbouring authorities. He added that the enforcement teams had been restructured with appropriate training on the new legislation.

The Executive approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the proposed fee levels as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, be adopted; and

(B) the proposed delegations for dealing with licensing and enforcement as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'C' of the report submitted, be approved.

325 DISTRICT PLAN EXECUTIVE PANEL: MINUTES - 3 OCTOBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting, held on 3 October 2013, be received.

(see also Minutes 316 - 320)

326 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - SEPTEMBER 2013

The Leader submitted an exception report on the finance, performance and risk monitoring for East Herts Council for September 2013.

The Leader referred to the Council Tax Support Scheme and the one-off assistance given to parish and town councils in 2013/14. He referred to the ongoing budget process for 2014/15 and asked Officers to explore the possibility of providing further assistance for another year only.

The Director of Finance and Support Services undertook to advise parish and town councils that, as part of the budget process, the District Council would be considering support in 2014/15 of 50% of 2013/14 levels on the basis of no support in the year after.

The Executive approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the budgetary variances set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report be noted;

(B) the re-profile of Capital Scheme budgets totalling £1.08 million to 2014/15 as detailed at paragraph 2.34 of the report submitted, be approved;

(C) the virement of budget (£15,000) savings from the Hertford Theatre: McMullen gates refurbishment to the renewal of the Theatre's Boilers, as detailed at paragraph 2.37 of the report submitted, be noted;

(D) the 2013/14 savings position, as detailed at paragraph 2.38 of the report submitted, be noted;

(E) the controls and scores listed in the strategic risk register for the period July to September 2013, as detailed at paragraph 2.40, be approved; and

(F) in respect of support for parish and town councils under the Council Tax Support Scheme, the Director of Finance and Support Services be authorised to advise parish and town councils that, as part of the budget process, the District Council would be considering support in 2014/15 of 50% of 2013/14 levels on the basis of no support in the year after.

The meeting closed at 7.46 pm

Chairman

Date

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 9 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH, HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

THE EAST HERTS HOMELESS REVIEW and STRATEGY 2013 - 2018

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- **To present to The Executive and recommend for adoption, following internal and external consultation, the Council's new Homeless Review and Strategy 2013-18.**

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:	
(A)	the East Herts Homeless Review and Strategy 2013-2018 be adopted.

1.0 Background

1.1 Under the Homelessness Act 2002 all local authorities are required to carry out a homeless review and to develop and publish a strategy based on the review every five years. East Herts published its first Homeless Strategy in July 2003, it's second in 2008 and is therefore due to publish the next review and strategy before the end of 2013.

2.0 Report

2.1 The Homeless Act 2002 places stronger duties on local authorities to assist homeless and potentially homeless people. One of the key aims of the Act is to ensure that housing authorities take a comprehensive and strategic approach to managing and preventing all forms of homelessness in their district.

- 2.2 The Council's last Homeless Strategy was adopted and published in July 2008 and the Council and its partners have made significant progress on providing and improving services to those people that are homeless or potentially homeless.
- 2.3 The draft Homeless Review and Strategy 2013-2018 (Strategy) was considered and commented on at Community Scrutiny on 24th September and at Executive on 1st October 2013. The draft Strategy was agreed by both Committees for officers to begin the process of consultation with external partners and stakeholders. The external consultation was in three stages:
- The Strategy was placed on the Council's website for a period of four weeks
 - The draft Strategy was sent to our significant external partners and they were asked to comment
 - Officers held a partnership meeting on 5th November 2013 with our partner Registered Providers, CAB, YMCA and Herts County Council to discuss the draft Strategy.
- 2.4 The process of consultation has now been completed. The draft Strategy was welcomed and agreed by our partners and there were no significant recommended changes. The four Strategic Themes, around which the Action Plan was developed, were agreed as relevant to East Herts and an action plan has been developed by officers. A copy of the Strategy and Action Plan is at **Essential Reference Paper B and Essential Reference Paper C** respectively.
- 2.5 Once the Strategy has been adopted progress against the action plan and performance information will be reported to Community Scrutiny annually. In addition the Action Plan will be monitored with our external partners at the Housing Partnership meetings that will be held three times a year. This will allow the Council to monitor progress on the Action Plan, internally and externally, agree the completion of actions and also discuss additional actions that maybe required across the life of the Strategy.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p>People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.</p> <p>Prosperity This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic and social opportunities.</p>
Consultation:	<p><i>Internally at Community Scrutiny on 24/9/2013 and Executive on 1/10/2013.</i></p> <p><i>Externally on the Council's website for four weeks, by emailing copies of the draft Strategy to external partners and stakeholders and at the Council's Housing Partnership meeting on 5/11/2013.</i></p>
Legal:	<p><i>There is a legal duty to publish a Homeless Review and Strategy every 5 years.</i></p>
Financial:	<p><i>None</i></p>
Human Resource:	<p><i>None</i></p>
Risk Management:	<p><i>None</i></p>

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East Herts Council's

Homeless Review and Strategy

2013-18

8/11/2013

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Foreword

By Councillor Linda Haysey, Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support.

At East Herts we recognise how important it is that everyone has a decent settled home and the devastating impact the lack of a home can have on every part of a person's life. Homelessness is a harmful and risky lifestyle and it is linked to wider social and health issues.

The development of our new Homelessness Strategy comes at a time of great change in housing, welfare and social policy.

Our Homelessness Strategy is part of a suite of integrated housing documents and its main objective is to meet housing needs and prevent homelessness. It is evidence based and has been developed in consultation with stakeholders. It sets out the causes of homelessness, wider housing needs, where we are now and considers the challenges and opportunities that will come forward in the next five years.

The strategy also outlines some significant achievements that we have been able to make since our last Homelessness Strategy was published.

The Council cannot tackle homelessness on its own and joint working is fundamental to the prevention of homelessness. It is recognised that the success of this Strategy depends on the skills, knowledge and expertise of a wide range of partner agencies from the public, Registered Providers (RPs), voluntary and private sectors. This Strategy has been developed with the assistance of our partner agencies. The Council would like to thank everyone who gave their time and contributed to this Strategy.

1. Introduction

The overall purpose of the Homeless Strategy (Strategy) is to ensure that as a Council we address homelessness strategically by ensuring suitable accommodation, support and advice is available and accessible to all client groups and to encourage a multi-agency approach to preventing homelessness.

East Herts Council has a statutory duty to address the needs of homeless households. This includes the provision of advice, prevention of homelessness and provision of alternative accommodation.

The key outcomes that the Council wants to achieve for it's residents are:

- Preventing homelessness, wherever possible
- Providing skilled help at the point of homelessness
- Providing an accessible, modern and effective Housing Options response
- Developing effective partnerships, to respond successfully to housing need and homelessness.

Being homeless is epitomised by the rough sleeper who is living on the streets, but this group of people forms a relatively small proportion of all homeless households. Many homeless households are "hidden" as they may have access to some form of shelter some of the time, but lack a stable, long term, settled home. For others, there are frequent moves from one temporary accommodation or shelter to another (e.g. emergency accommodation, refuges, friend's homes, 'sofa surfing') – people with no settled home.

What have we achieved since the 2008-2013 Strategy?

The Council is pleased to report on a number of really important successes as a result of the previous Homelessness Strategy which was published in 2008. These include:

- A comprehensive review of the Allocations Policy to take advantage of the freedoms offered by the Localism Act. This has enabled us to re-think the priority awards that are made to homeless households and to ensure that the Council takes the opportunities presented by the Localism Act.
- Minimal use of B&B, and only in an absolute emergency. This is against the picture of rising homelessness both nationally and locally.
- Re-development of our temporary accommodation into 11 units of self-contained, high quality accommodation.
- Increased efficiencies from development of an online housing register application process.
- Significant numbers of homelessness preventions achieved by a small dedicated team.
- Introduction of effective and integrated triage, meaning that good housing advice is provided on drop-in at the council offices, followed by case working those that threatened are with homelessness at both our Hertford and Bishop's Stortford offices.

- Extension of our debt and money advice service in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Bringing Empty Homes back to use through Place Scheme Rent and Bond Deposit Scheme.
- In partnership with the County Council and Aldwyck Housing Association the development, in Hertford, of a 24 x 1 bed supported accommodation for young people from the ages of 16-25 including 4 mother and baby flats.
- Working in partnership with Herts Credit Savers to develop a more robust Rent Deposit Scheme to assist residents in housing need to access accommodation in the private sector.

2. National policy context

Since our last strategy, the national policy and financial context has changed dramatically. The environment in which we need to deliver homelessness prevention is now very challenging, partly as a result of the economic downturn post 2008 and partly as a result of government reforms to a range of key policies relating to welfare and housing.

a) Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. The Localism Act lets councils decide:

- the types and lengths of tenancy that can be offered in social housing by introducing the fixed term tenancy which can be used instead of life time tenancies,
- how duties under the relevant Homelessness Act can be discharged, in particular the use of the private rented sector to discharge a Homelessness Duty where suitable,
- how to manage their housing registers by enabling councils to establish their own qualification criteria for who can be registered and therefore offered social housing.

b) Welfare Reform

The Government states that the aim of its welfare reform programme is to reduce the budget deficit, slow down growing benefit expenditure, increase fairness, increase work incentives and end benefit dependency. From April 2011 to date, the following changes have been introduced:

- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) calculated using 30th percentile of rents in the area. This means rents were previously calculated on the median (50th percentile) of rents in Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA). From April 2011 this changed to be calculated on 30th percentile of the BRMA. This will only be uprated by CPI from April 2013.
- Removal of 5-bedroom LHA rate. This was effective from April 2011 on new claims and changes of address.
- Introduction of caps for 1 to 4 bedroom rates. The national weekly caps currently stand at
 - £250 one bedroom
 - £290 two bedroom

- £340 three bedroom
 - £400 four bedroom
- Single people under 35 have, as from January 2012, only been able to claim LHA at shared accommodation rates. This was previously the rate allowed for under 25 year olds.
- From April 2013, property size restrictions for working-age people in social housing came into effect, bringing the same rules in that apply to private sector lettings. This requires under-occupiers of social housing properties to pay a charge for each bedroom in excess of their needs, taken as a reduction in benefit payable. This has affected over 700 households in social housing in East Herts.
- The introduction of the overall benefits cap, from July 2013 in East Herts, of £26,000 per annum for families.

Other significant changes that will come into force as a result of the reform to the welfare system include:

- Increase in non-dependant deduction charges (phased in between 2011 to 2014)
- Moving towards Universal Credit (2013 to 2017)

c) Supporting People

The Supporting People programme began on 1 April 2003, bringing together seven housing-related funding streams from across central government. The Supporting People provides funding for housing related-support services for vulnerable adults, including homeless people. Most hostels, supported housing projects and floating support services for homeless people receive funding from Supporting People.

From 2010 the government made it a wholly decentralised programme, administered through 152 top-tier authorities (Herts County Council for East Herts), who have complete discretion over where to direct their funds to best meet local needs.

d) Government Strategy

Tackling homelessness is a key priority outlined in the Government's Housing Strategy, 'Laying the Foundations, A Housing Strategy for England' (2011). The national strategy outlines the Government's commitment to homelessness prevention, meeting the needs of the vulnerable, managing the consequences of those made homeless and addressing rough sleeping.

In August 2012 CLG published "Making every contact count: A joint approach to tackling homelessness" with a view to ensuring wider responsibility for preventing homelessness. The document sets out 10 challenges for Local Authorities which are designed to ensure that homelessness prevention and support to vulnerable households is as effective as possible.

e) Public Health

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 contains various changes to the National Health Service, including the transfer of the majority of public health functions from Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to local authorities. Public health is about helping people to stay healthy and avoiding ill health which improved housing can alleviate.

3. Local strategic links and policy context

Key documents have been taken into account in the development of this Strategy to ensure consistency across the Council and with our partners in other agencies. All the East Herts documents can be accessed from the Council's website at www.eastherts.gov.uk or by contacting the Strategic Housing Service on 01279 655261.

a) East Herts' Corporate Vision

This Homeless Strategy reflects the Council's Corporate vision:

To improve the quality of people's lives and preserve all that is best in East Herts.

The Council has developed six corporate priorities that it intends to achieve with its partners. The priority most relevant to this strategy is:

Promoting prosperity and well being: providing access and opportunities.

Priority: Enhance the quality of life, health and well being of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.

The Council's Service Plans are the mechanism by which each service in the Council contributes to the Corporate Priorities.

b) Housing Strategy 2013-2016

The East Herts Housing Strategy has identified the following three strategic priorities:

1. **Maximise the delivery of a range of new affordable homes, whilst ensuring the best use of existing housing.** There is a significant affordability problem in the District. This is a result of many factors but predominantly due to high prices in comparison to income levels. This in turn is placing greater pressure on the existing affordable housing in the District. There is simply not enough affordable housing to meet the increasing need of the District's residents.
2. **Meeting the needs of a growing elderly population.** East Herts has an ageing population and it is projected that two thirds of the population growth anticipated in East Herts between 2006 and 2021 will be people aged over 65 years. This will have a significant impact on the provision of both housing and services, with accessibility and the suitability of houses being key factors
3. **Meeting the needs of vulnerable people and stronger communities.** Strong communities require effective approaches in terms of policies to promote inclusiveness, assist the vulnerable, increase safety and the perception of safety, and in ensuring the built environment and public space meet people's needs and aspirations. The County Council has specific duties with regard to vulnerable adults and children. However as one of their key strategic partners, we seek to work with them to develop future priorities for all the people in our local communities whether that be by directly providing accommodation or services, enabling or 'donating' an asset.

The Homelessness Strategy will complement and be consistent with the East Herts Housing Strategy and although the Homelessness Strategy will operate as a stand-alone document, both policies share a number of key objectives.

c) Tenancy Strategy

The Localism Act required Councils to develop and publish a Tenancy Strategy by January 2013. The strategy is to guide Registered Providers of social housing in the relevant area in formulating policies relating to:

- (a) the kinds of tenancies they grant,
- (b) the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind,
- (c) where they grant tenancies for a term, the lengths of the terms, and
- (d) the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.

Registered Providers are obliged to have 'due regard to' the strategy when developing their own tenancy policies. In East Herts, Registered Providers are currently looking at fixed / flexible tenancies lasting usually no more than 5 years.

d) East Herts Housing Register and Allocations policy

In May 2013 the Council implemented a new Allocations Policy which we believe provides a fairer and more transparent way of letting local social housing, which again is focused on mitigating the impact of welfare reform (particularly the bedroom subsidy) and promoting social inclusion.

4. Review of homelessness in East Herts

The first contact with the Council, for the majority of households in housing need, is a Housing Options interview with the emphasis on preventing homelessness and saving, if appropriate, the current home. Where prevention of homelessness is not possible, the emphasis is on providing the most effective and appropriate homeless service.

a) Homelessness

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002 place statutory duties on local housing authorities to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Authorities must consider all applications from people seeking accommodation or assistance in obtaining accommodation. A main homelessness duty (see below) is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group.

Where a main duty is owed, the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and his or her household until a settled home becomes available for them. Where households are found to be intentionally homeless or not in priority need, the authority must make an assessment of their housing needs and provide advice and assistance to help them find accommodation for themselves.

Where the applicant is found to be intentionally homeless but falls in a priority need category the authority must also ensure that accommodation is available for long enough to give the applicant a reasonable opportunity to find a home.

The table below shows the number of homelessness presentations and acceptances over the last 3 years for East Herts.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Homeless applications	93	99	79
Homeless Acceptances	39	40	35
Percentage of acceptances against applications	42%	40%	44%

One of the ways that central government measures homelessness levels is looking at homeless acceptances per 1,000 head of population. The figure for Hertfordshire for 2012/13 was 2.40 acceptances per thousand population. Data for East Herts shows:

Year	Per 1000 head of pop _n
2011/12	0.71
2012/13	0.59

The main causes of homelessness locally, in order, are:

Cause of homelessness	Number during 2012/13	Percentage
Termination of assured shorthold tenancy	14	40%
Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	5	14%
Non violent relationship breakdown	4	11%
Mortgage/rent arrears	3	9%
<i>Other reasons</i>	9	26%

As at the 31st March 2013, there were a total of 12 households in temporary accommodation. The breakdown of this as is follows:

Type of accommodation	Number
Bed & breakfast	0
Hostel inc women's refuge	7
Housing association stock	5
Private lease scheme	3
Other	12

b) Housing Advice

The Council's Housing Options approach is prevention focussed and that relies heavily on the residents of East Herts being able to access timely, high quality advice

and assistance to help them resolve their housing problems well before their situation reaches crisis point. The provision of advice, by the Council, is from both our Hertford and Bishop's Stortford offices by booked appointments and also via a drop-in service provided on a Monday in Hertford and Friday in Bishop's Stortford. In addition a number of our partner agencies provide advice across the district for example East Herts has a CAB in Hertford, Bishop's Stortford and Buntingford.

In 2012/13 the Council prevented homelessness for 276 households via advice and assistance. This was done through various initiatives including maximising benefits income, liaising with landlords, providing accommodation through our Housing Register or the provision of small loans to access the private sector.

In addition the Council funds a CAB Debt Advice worker who works from each of our offices for a total of 16 hours each week. This service sees applicants with priority debt issues. The majority of the work involves liaising with creditors, making payment arrangements for priority debts and maximising income for clients.

c) Housing Register

The Council is part of HomeOption, which provides our housing register and choice based lettings service for 5 local authorities – Broxbourne, Chelmsford, Uttlesford, Brentwood and East Herts. There are currently over 3,400 households registered for accommodation in the East Herts area. This can be broken down by bedroom requirements, as follows:

Bedrooms required	Number of applicants
One	2,021
Two	1,015
Three	322
Four or more	80
Total	3,438

Each year the Council has a number of lets available through nomination arrangements with housing associations. The number of lets over the last three years are:

673 lets during 2012/13
588 lets during 2011/12
468 lets during 2010/11

d) Rough Sleepers

The Communities and Local Government office has issued guidance that says Local Authorities should use local intelligence from partner agencies about the extent of rough sleeping in its area. Where this indicates that there are more than 10 rough sleepers in an area on any one night then they should carry out a full official count. The Council has monitored annually, since 2004, the number of rough sleepers in one particular week in October. The last count was October 2012 and four rough sleepers were identified in one night in one week. They were all single people aged 35 or less and were not in priority need for re-housing under current homeless legislation. The Council recognises that there are not many housing options for this client group other

than the private sector and has therefore consistently targeted its Rent Deposit Scheme at non-priority homeless people to prevent rough sleeping.

5. Likely future levels of homelessness

It is likely that the current and future national welfare benefit changes will have an impact on lower income households. Welfare spending is planned to reduce and there are a number of concerns for the future that arise from this; some are being seen already, such as:

- Single room rate extension to the under 35s,
- Difficulty in accessing private rented sector accommodation because of high demand, including demand from people who might have been expecting to access the owner occupation market.

Other concerns are from the likely impact of Universal Credit – due to come in October 2013. For those who rent privately, there is a concern that they may not be able to effectively set aside the rent element from their benefit each month and pay landlords rent due on time. This could lead to increased court action and increased threat of homelessness.

There are a number of other issues that will impact on the workloads of those working locally to tackle homelessness:

- Home ownership being increasingly out of reach for future generations and this will lead to increased demand for social / affordable housing,
- Increasing demands on the rented sector,
- Interest rates are low now but any upward changes will severely impact on owner-occupiers and could impact on buy to let landlords - who may either sell or seek higher rent levels - which could put the properties out of reach for those in receipt of Local Housing Allowance (LHA).

There is a concern that there will be increasing numbers of households making approaches for housing advice, looking to access more affordable housing locally and ultimately an increase in numbers of people threatened with homelessness. The Council needs to respond to this challenge, and the Homelessness Strategy sets out our plans for doing this.

With an expensive private rented market in East Herts there are key concerns around affordability especially in light of welfare changes including the cap on total benefits. The introduction of the affordable rent model has also seen a reduction in the affordable housing grant available from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) with a greater emphasis on housing associations delivering sites using their own resources and borrowing money secured against income from the Affordable Rent model. These changes are likely to have implications for many of our residents. Raising public awareness and helping people to prepare for these changes will be essential in order to prevent homelessness occurring.

6. Homeless provision locally

There are a range of services in place to assist those who are threatened with homelessness. Some of these can be accessed directly by the clients, others are on a referral basis from one of the client facing agencies. The main sources of advice and assistance are:

a) East Herts Housing Options Service

This is the statutory service provided by the council, providing free housing advice, homelessness prevention casework and assessment and provision under the homelessness legislation. The service is primarily based at the council offices in Hertford and also Bishop's Stortford.

A drop-in service is provided Monday mornings in Hertford and Friday mornings in Bishop's Stortford. Other than this the Housing Options staff can be accessed by telephone or via an appointment service. These interviews are used to prevent homelessness, work with clients to discuss other housing options and, where necessary to take formal homelessness applications and make enquiries into homelessness.

b) Citizens Advice Bureau

The CAB has offices in Hertford, Bishop's Stortford and Buntingford in the district. They provide advice and assistance to clients.

c) Herts Young Homeless

This group works with young people aged 16 to 25 who are threatened with homelessness. Staff from the group provide the first point of access to advice services, and carry out needs assessments. The group also has the ability to refer to social services where necessary. The focus of the work is prevention of homelessness, but also to ensure the Council's duty towards young people who are homeless is properly carried out.

7. Strategic themes

Being homeless is a harmful and risky lifestyle. It is linked to wider social and health issues. Anyone can become homeless but we can identify some of those at risk based on past history in East Herts:

- young people leaving care,
- people suffering from domestic violence,
- those with a mental health or substance misuse problem,
- those from troubled families,
- people on low incomes and those who are in debt.

The aim of the homelessness review has been to produce a picture of homelessness demand in East Herts and also of the provision of services and actual accommodation for homeless households. By doing this, we are able to identify areas that need to be tackled by the Homelessness Strategy.

As the national and local policy changes, which they are bound to over the five year life of this Strategy, the Council will continue to adapt and take opportunities as they arise.

The key strategic themes for the 2013-18 Homelessness Strategy for East Herts Council are:

1. Prevent Homelessness through early intervention and targeted Housing Advice, including mitigating the impact of welfare reform, so that the risk of homelessness is reduced.

Whilst we have, over recent years, significantly reduced statutory homelessness in East Herts through prevention initiatives, demand for services is expected to increase as a result of welfare benefit reform. It is important to continue to review and improve existing support available to people who are at risk of becoming homeless.

What is happening already?

Wherever possible the Housing Options Team works with a household to prevent homelessness by providing direct advice and support or, where needed by liaising with appropriate external support agencies. The team gives advice on housing options, housing rights, applying for affordable housing, accessing the private rented sector, debt and welfare benefits advice and support and information on advocacy agencies that are available.

- **Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advice Worker:** The Council funds a specialist money advice worker to work within the Housing Options Team for sixteen hours a week.
- **Homeless Prevention Fund:** The Council's Housing Options Officers have access to a fund that they can use to prevent homelessness. They have used this fund to pay for landlord renewal fees or to pay off small arrears thereby enabling a tenancy to be renewed or sustained.
- **Crash Pad and Mediation Service:** The Council has access to a crash pad mediation service for young people provided by the Herts Young Homeless Group (HYHG). The service provides emergency accommodation for young people with a host family whilst mediation is carried out to try to resolve the situation such that the young person can, if appropriate, return back home.
- **Home Visits:** In cases of homelessness the Housing Options Officers, where possible, carry out home visits, especially with family evictions, to ensure that both parties are clear about what homelessness actually means. In this way we can sometimes prevent homelessness. However if the breakdown cannot be reconciled we can negotiate and provide assistance for a planned move so preventing a crisis situation.

What we want to do

We want to continue to develop a range of Housing Options that are homeless prevention focussed. To do this we will continue to monitor the causes of homelessness within East Herts, monitor the effectiveness of our current options and research best practice to develop new options that are appropriate.

We want to improve communication with our residents about the services we and our partners provide, by marketing and the production of additional advice leaflets and online services, to ensure everyone in East Herts can access timely, high quality

advice and assistance to help them resolve housing problems well before their housing problems reach crisis point.

We are continually looking to improve local services and are interested in what the CLG sponsored “gold Standard” can contribute in doing this. The Gold Standard is a CLG sponsored programme, focusing on a 10 step continuous improvement approach that starts with the pledge for local authorities to “strive for continuous improvement in front line housing services” and culminates in an application for the Gold Standard Challenge. The standard itself is based around the report from the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness – “Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to the Prevention of Homelessness”. The Standard itself is set out in Appendix 1.

2. Increase the role of the private rented sector for those in housing need, with better sustained tenancies.

The Council recognises the increased demand for appropriate, affordable housing to meet local need, but also acknowledges homelessness in the future will be driven by the continuing changing economic climate and public expenditure changes. Welfare reforms in the private rented sector along with the requirement to meet the housing needs of other priority groups and the understanding that homelessness cannot be an assumed route into a social tenancy for life, means that the private rented sector must be developed as a solution for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

There are households that are either homeless or in housing need but the Council does not have a statutory duty to them or they have a low priority on the Council’s Housing Needs Register for example young single households or couples. With high house prices and high private sector rents these households often struggle to find suitable accommodation and are often effectively hidden homeless.

What is happening already?

- The Councils Rent Deposit scheme has proved to be an effective and popular Housing Option that allows households to access the private rented sector where they would not financially be able to do so. The rent deposit has allowed people to choose where they want to live thereby maintaining family or schooling networks. In 2011/12 we assisted 41 households with finding accommodation in the private rented sector. The deposit is in the form of a grant and so is recyclable to enable the Council to assist others. In August 2103 the Council set up a partnership agreement with Herts Credit Savers to administer interest free loans for the Council’s Rent Deposit Scheme.

What we want to do

We want to be able to use the private rented market more effectively to help those in housing need to choose where they want to live in the district and meet their housing need quickly and effectively. The private rented market in East Herts is characterised by high rent levels and high demand. The Council recognises the role of the private sector, particularly with homeless non-priority households and also in its ability to provide a choice of where to live for homeless households. The Council’s Rent Deposit Scheme is very successful but we need to ensure that we are maximising the recycling of the grant money to maximise the number of households that can use the scheme and also monitor the number and reason why tenancies fail.

The Council is also concerned about the high level of homeless acceptances resulting from the loss of assured shorthold tenancies. If we are to use the private rented sector to meet housing need we need to ensure that the tenancies can be sustained and provide a long term solution to housing need.

3. Increase the supply of appropriate, good quality affordable housing including the provision of supported accommodation.

Essential to tackling homelessness is the supply of accommodation. The Council is working with partners to provide more supported accommodation in the district whether that be via dedicated accommodation or accommodation in the general social housing stock. We are also keen to work with the County Council and other partners regarding provision of support to ensure tenancies continue and are successfully renewed.

Preventing homelessness can have a huge influence on a vulnerable person's life chances. Good housing and support means that they are more likely to enter training, get a job, have a better standard of health and be able to take advantage of opportunities that they are offered.

What is happening already?

- The Council's threshold at which housing developers in East Herts have to provide affordable housing has been set as up to 40%. The Council regularly achieves this target on eligible sites and in 2011/12 it achieved 132 new affordable homes and in 2012/13 it achieved 182.
- Houses in Multiple Occupation are sought after, particularly by young, single, mobile people or those on benefit under the age of 35, as they provide more affordable accommodation. The Environmental Health unit takes a proactive approach to identify such properties and bring them up to standard, in consultation with the landlords, as well as investigating complaints from tenants.
- YMCA: The YMCA in Bishop's Stortford provides supported accommodation for 18-30 year olds for up to two years. The Council provides annually five units of general needs accommodation for young people who are coming to the end of their successful stay at the YMCA.
- The Council is working in partnership with Aldwyck Housing Association to provide 24 x1 bed accommodation for young people between the ages of 16 and 25 in Hertford. The first residents will be moving into the scheme in September 2013.

What we want to do

We want to continue to work proactively with developers and RPs to develop appropriate and affordable general needs housing in East Herts. We also want to work with the County Council and other partners to support vulnerable client groups, whether that is through accommodation based services or floating support. We will be working with the County Council on their review of Mental Health Services provision across the County. East Herts has been identified as an area in the County with significantly less accommodation and services than other parts of the Country for residents with mental health issues.

4. Continue to develop and strengthen partnership working to maximise the benefits to homeless households

Homelessness is complex; both the reasons for homelessness and the solutions. There are links to health, education, offending, income and relationships to name a few. Therefore any work to prevent homelessness or improve the services to homeless households will involve a partnership approach across a number of organisations.

What is happening already?

- The Housing Options Service plays a key role in many partnership arrangements including:
 - Community Safety Partnerships including MAPPA (Multi-Agency Protection Panel)
 - Hertfordshire Supporting People Programme Development Group
 - Herts Heads of Housing and Herts Strategy and Development Group
 - Hertfordshire Homeless Officer Group
 - Hertfordshire Mental Health Services
 - MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

These groups are useful for ensuring best practice, bench marking our services and ensuring good networking to maximise the benefits of the work that we all do.

- Young Persons Joint Housing Protocol: All ten local authorities in Hertfordshire, the County Council and Herts Young Homeless have developed and all signed up to a joint working protocol. The protocol is aimed at the 16 to 25 age group and explicitly defines the roles and responsibilities for each agency when a young person is either threatened with homelessness or is homeless. The protocol is currently being reviewed by Herts County Council and the ten districts to ensure it is up to date and relevant. There will also be a need, for East Herts, to ensure that there is a relevant link to the new Young Person project in Hertford.
- Homeless Prevention and Support Services: The Council part-funds Herts Young Homeless the successful education project on homelessness for young people in schools across the borough.

What we want to do

We do work in partnership with colleagues in other departments and other agencies, but we recognise that there is scope to achieve more in this area. We will review the partnerships we have. We will work to develop joint protocols, where appropriate, to ensure partners are aware of the expectations and roles they and the Council have to play in preventing homelessness. Key to this will be making sure that every contact partners make with vulnerable people and families really counts.

We are also keen to ensure that partners are involved in the delivery and the monitoring of this Strategy and will establish a forum to enable effective review to take place.

A Delivery Plan for the Homeless Strategy will be developed around these four themes once consultation has been undertaken with our partners.

8. Resources

The Homelessness Strategy is based on the assumption that all actions and improvements will be delivered within the existing resources. The Council's in-house service consists of a team of 13 staff including a service manager. This team will have responsibility for developing, delivering and monitoring the Homelessness Strategy.

Partnership working will bring in additional physical resources. There are a range of agencies working in East Herts that provide general advice through to specialised housing and debt advice.

The Council receives an annual Homelessness Grant from Central Government to assist in implementing the Council's Homelessness Strategy and addressing homelessness issues. The amount available to the Housing Options Service for 2013/14 is £50,000. This funding is unlikely to continue after the next Government spending review in March 2015. This primarily funds the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme, through the provision of interest free loans, for households in housing need, to enable them to access private rented accommodation. The Council is working with Herts Credit Savers to ensure we maximise recovery of the loans to enable the scheme to be self-financing in future years.

For private rented tenancies the Council receives Discretionary Housing Benefit payments which can be used to support households affected by Local Housing Allowance changes. Where appropriate the Council will use Discretionary Housing Payments to help prevent vulnerable households in the private rented sector from becoming homeless.

9. Monitoring and taking the strategy forward

Progress against the action plan and performance information will be reported as follows:

- Annually to the Council's Community Scrutiny Committee

10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Gold Standard: The 10 Local Challenges

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. To actively work in partnership with the voluntary sector and other local authority partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. To offer a Housing Options and prevention service to all clients including written advice
4. To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each housing partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord.
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a positive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 into bed and breakfast
10. To not place any families in bed and breakfast unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks

Appendix 2

Glossary

Affordable Rent means rented housing let by a Registered Provider of social housing to households who are eligible for Social Rented housing at a rent of no more than 80% of the Local Market Rent, including service charges where applicable, and upon the approved Financial Terms at a fixed term tenancy for a period not less than that recommended by the social housing regulator currently the Tenant Services Authority (or its successor body) and with regard to any advice set out in the local Strategic Tenancy Policy adopted by the Council

Benefit Cap is a maximum allowance on the total amount of benefit a household is entitled to receive under the proposed new universal credit system to be introduced in April 2013 if they are not in receipt of certain exempt benefits such as Disability Living

Allowance. At the time of publication of this document the benefit cap for single persons is £350 per week and for a family £500 per week.

Social Rent means housing let at a periodical rent due at intervals of a month or less without any fine deposit or premium which is let at or below Target Rent and is let on the Registered Provider's standard form of letting as an Assured Tenancy and upon the approved Financial Terms

Conversion is when a property is let at different terms and conditions to those it previously had i.e.: changed from a social rented property to an affordable rented property.

Fixed term tenancies are a new type of tenancy introduced under the Localism Act 2012 available for registered providers to use from the date of inception of the Act that has a specified term of not less than 5 years or 2 years in exceptional circumstances. Fixed term tenancies can be used for Affordable Rent or Social Rent properties.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) includes any successor body or agent exercising statutory powers for the provision of financial assistance to registered providers for the provision of Affordable Housing

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the maximum amount of Housing Benefit payable by number of bedrooms in a property in a Local Authority Area. It is updated annually and is calculated using the 30th percentile of market rent for each property size in that local authority area.

Mutual Exchange is a facility that enables a tenant to exchange their property and tenancy with another of their own Registered Provider's tenants or with a tenant of a different Registered Provider.

Registered providers is the term used for housing associations or other private sector developers, local Councils etc who have registered to provide social housing with the Homes & Communities Agency.

Universal Credit is a new approach to welfare to be introduced under the Government's welfare reforms in 2013. It will be an integrated benefit in place of income support, income-based job seekers allowance, income related employment and support allowance, housing benefit, child tax credit and working tax credit. Households in receipt of universal credit and not in receipt of specific exempt benefits will be subject to the benefit cap defined above.

Appendix 3: **Action Plan**

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Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2013 - 2018

Strategic Theme One: Prevent Homelessness through early intervention and targeted Housing Advice, including mitigating the impact of welfare reform, so that the risk of homelessness is reduced

	Actions	Target Actions	Outcomes	Key Agency & Partners	Resources	Comments
1.	Maintain good quality housing options advice, casework and other interventions through the Council's Housing Options Team	Years 1-5 – Ongoing training of staff and monitoring of outcomes and number of preventions.	Prevention of homelessness Low numbers in temporary accommodation	East Herts Council	Staff time and training	Maintain successful housing options approach Understanding peoples needs Value for Money
2.	Continue to fund the Schools Intervention Project run by Herts Homeless Group. Currently project run on a year by year agreement.	Years 1 – Monitor number of presentations to schools completed and feedback from Schools	Prevention of homelessness among young people. Awareness of the reality and impact of homeless for young people.	East Herts Council Herts Young Homeless	£5,000 annually	Preventing homelessness amongst young people Partnership working

Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2013 - 2018

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	Actions	Target Actions	Outcomes	Key Agency & Partners	Resources	Comments
3.	Monitor Impact of Welfare Reform Changes	Years 1-5 – Monitor whether the welfare reform changes result in an increase in rent arrears/ homelessness and review whether able to prevent homelessness e.g. discretionary housing payments, transfers and Homeswapper	Clear picture of impact of the welfare changes Ability to target resources such as discretionary housing payments, welfare benefit advice, downsizing advice, vacant housing association homes to those most in need.	East Herts Council, RPs, CAB	Staff time, Discretionary Housing Payments	
4.	Continue to use the homelessness budget flexibly to help prevent homelessness e.g. spend to save payments, paying rent in advance, payments for landlord fees etc	Years 1-5 – Monitor the homelessness budget to ensure that it is spent in the areas that deliver most value for money and meets the Council's statutory homelessness duties	Prevention of homelessness and minimising the upheaval of moving for customers	East Herts Council	East Herts Homeless Budget Government Homeless prevention grant	Value for Money Contributes towards Gold Standard priorities of not placing 16-17 year olds in B&B and not placing families in B&B longer than 6 weeks

Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2013 - 2018

Strategic Theme Two: Increase the role of the private rented sector for those in housing need, with better sustained tenancies

	Actions	Target Actions	Outcomes	Key Agency & Partners	Resources	Comments
5.	Enhance East Herts' Rent deposit scheme for landlords	Years 1-5 – Develop the role with the credit union, Herts Savers and liaise with landlords to promote the Council's rent deposit scheme.	More landlords offering to accept referrals of customers from the Council Maintaining low temporary accommodation numbers	East Herts Council Herts Savers Private landlords/letting agents	Staff time Fee to Herts Savers depending on number of successful placements	Value for Money – spend to save approach
6.	Develop and agree a policy to use of additional powers from the Localism Act 2011 to discharge homelessness duties in the private sector where appropriate	Year 1 - Develop Policy Year 1 - Amend procedures and paperwork and review outcome of cases assisted in this way Year 2- 5 - Monitor and review outcomes	Strengthens prevention approach. Helps when negotiating with potentially homeless clients who see homelessness as a route to social housing Helps keep numbers in temporary accommodation to a minimum	East Herts Council Private landlords/letting agents	Staff time and costs of deposit, rent in advance etc	Builds on success of homeless prevention approach

Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2013 - 2018

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	Actions	Target Actions	Outcomes	Key Agency & Partners	Resources	Comments
7.	Maintain the housing support service provided to vulnerable people by the Housing Options Support Officer	Year 1-5 - Ongoing support to clients placed in private sector accommodation and homeless prevention units and providing specialist housing options advice to vulnerable customers approaching the Council as homeless.	Targeted advice and support to vulnerable clients Reduction in repeat homelessness	East Herts Council	Staff time.	Prevents repeat homelessness

Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2013 - 2018

Strategic Theme Three: Increase the supply of appropriate, good quality affordable housing including the provision of supported accommodation.

	Actions	Target Actions	Outcomes	Key Agency & Partners	Resources	Comments
8.	Support and enable development of more affordable and supported housing developed by housing associations	<p>Year 1-2 - Contribute to the production of a Housing Needs Survey (action in the Housing Strategy)</p> <p>Year 1- 5 - Work with Housing Associations Developers and Homes and Communities Agency to maximise opportunities for new affordable homes in of the right size and location</p> <p>Year 1 – 5 - Ongoing liaison with agencies / housing associations in regard to addressing gaps in provision for special needs groups – e.g. learning disabilities, complex needs, mental health etc</p>	<p>Better knowledge of the type, size and location of affordable housing needed across the District</p> <p>Provision of more affordable housing</p>	<p>East Herts Council</p> <p>Housing Associations</p> <p>Town and Parish Council's</p> <p>Homes and Communities Agency</p> <p>Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>Private landlords/letting agents</p>	<p>Housing needs Survey approx £40,000</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>Funding from HCA and private lending to housing associations</p> <p>Commuted sums</p>	Value for Money – spend to save approach

Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2013 - 2018

	Actions	Target Actions	Outcomes	Key Agency & Partners	Resources	Comments
9.	Maximise use of existing stock by addressing under occupation	<p>Year 1 - Continue to discuss and identify with Housing Associations measures that will further reduce under occupation</p> <p>Years 2-5 - Monitor registered providers introduction of flexible tenancies in their housing stock</p>	<p>Increased number of family sized properties available to let</p> <p>Older tenants moved to accommodation more suitable to their needs meaning less expenditure on disabled adaptations</p> <p>Ability to require tenants to move to smaller accommodation or to make their own accommodation arrangements at end of flexible tenancy if their circumstances have significantly changed</p>	<p>East Herts Council</p> <p>Registered Providers</p>	Staff time	<p>Maximise use of stock</p> <p>Affordable Housing</p> <p>Value for Money</p>

Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2013 - 2018

Strategic Theme Four: Continue to develop and strengthen partnership working to maximise the benefits to homeless households

	Actions	Target Actions	Outcomes	Key Agency & Partners	Resources	Comments
10.	Maintain Housing Service representation and participation at multi agency meetings e.g. Herts Heads of Housing and Homeless Managers Meetings, CBL meetings, Herts County Council Supporting People MARAC, MAPPA, Social Services case conferences, Housing Association Forum.	Year 1 – 5 -Ongoing and sustained attendance by the most appropriate officers.	<p>Raised awareness of housing best practice elsewhere in the County</p> <p>Economies of scale on jointly commissioned projects / initiatives</p> <p>Information sharing</p> <p>Prevention of Homelessness and effective joint working</p>	<p>East Herts Council</p> <p>Hertfordshire Supporting People</p> <p>Hertfordshire Boroughs/Districts</p> <p>Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>Housing Associations</p>	Staff time	<p>Prevention of Homelessness</p> <p>Value for Money</p> <p>Partnership working</p>

Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2013 - 2018

	Actions	Target Actions	Outcomes	Key Agency & Partners	Resources	Comments
11.	Continue to provide funding to East Herts CAB for the provision of specialist Debt Advice from within the Housing Options service through a three year Service Level Agreement.	Year 1- 3 Regular monitoring of service level agreement	Independent advice in regard to housing, welfare benefits and Debt Advice etc	East Herts Council Registered Provide East Herts CAB	£17,500 per annum	Value for Money spend to save
12.	With other Hertfordshire Borough & District Councils agree revised 16-17 year old protocol with Herts Social Services.	Year 1 – agree revised protocol Years 1-5 – Monitor effectiveness of the joint protocol	Prevention of homelessness for 16-17 year olds Effective joint working	East Herts Council Hertfordshire County Council All Councils/Boroughs in Hertfordshire	Staff time	Prevention of homelessness in 16/17 year olds. Establishes and clarifies responsibilities between Districts and County.

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26 NOVEMBER 2013

EXECUTIVE – 9 DECEMBER 2013

COUNCIL – 11 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2014/15

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To propose arrangements which will enable the Council to implement a local Council Tax Support scheme (CTS), from April 2014.
- To present financial and equality impacts of the recommended CTS scheme for East Herts residents.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY:</u> that	
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(A)	Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee consider the forecasted financial implications arising from the recommended scheme for the Council Tax reduction scheme (CTS) with effect from 1 April 2014 and the risks and assumptions attached to these; and
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(B)	The Executive be advised of any recommendations for revisions to the scheme.
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<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> that	
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(A)	Executive consider the forecasted financial implications arising from the recommended scheme for the Council Tax reduction scheme (CTS) with effect from 1 April 2014 and the risks and assumptions attached to these; and
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(B)	That Executive consider the CTS Scheme proposed within this report and Council be advised of recommendations for
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	any revisions to the scheme.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> that	
(A)	Council approve the forecasted financial implications arising from the recommended scheme for the Council Tax reduction scheme (CTS) with effect from 1 April 2014 and the risks and assumptions attached to these
(B)	Council approve the proposed CTS Scheme.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Government made provision within the Local Government Finance Bill to replace the former national Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme from 1st April 2013 with localised schemes for Council Tax Reduction Schemes (CTS) devised by individual local authorities (LA's). The schemes are valid for one year and must be approved by Council before the end of January immediately preceding the financial year in which it is to take effect.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 The CTS scheme reduces the tax base and therefore the Council Tax collectable. This impacts EHC and its preceptors. To compensate Council's for the lost Council Tax revenue, government provides funding, but only at 90% of the cost of the former CTB expenditure, through the overall funding mechanism for the Council.
- 2.3 The Council and its preceptors have to bear the 10% shortfall, or devise a CTS scheme that delivers a 10% saving. The CTS scheme continues to be demand led, but with a fixed income from government. All risks of increasing caseloads and costs have to be borne by EHC and its preceptors.
- 2.4 In November 2012, The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) confirmed that Parishes would not be excluded from the changes in funding arrangements achieved through reducing the tax base. In 13/14 a separately identifiable grant was awarded to East Herts to mitigate the impact on Parish's and East Herts passed this on in full. At the Executive on 5th November 2013, the Leader asked officers to write to all Parish's to

indicate that they may receive funding at 50% of the level of the 13/14 funding in 14/15, but nothing in future years.

- 2.5 The Council Tax for a band D property in East Herts is made up as follows, with the addition of individual Parish precepts:

Authority	2013/14	(%)
	Council Tax	
Hertfordshire County Council	£1,118.83	78.56
East Herts Council	£157.54	11.06
Hertfordshire Police Authority	£147.82	10.38
Total	£1,424.19	100.00

- 2.6 LA's have a duty to run a local CTS scheme within their area that must contain the following:

- a) Pensioner claimants are protected from changes through the provision of a statutory scheme.

The protection for pensioner claimants will result in the 10% financial saving falling disproportionately on working-age claimants unless it can be met through other arrangements.

- b) Schemes must support work incentives.

The DCLG Policy Statement of Intent does not give a recommended approach to be taken, but indicates the scheme should not contain features which creates dis-incentives to find employment. The East Herts scheme complies with this statement.

- c) LAs must ensure that appropriate consideration has been given to support for other vulnerable groups, including those which may require protection under other statutory provisions including the Child Poverty Act 2010, the Disabled Persons Act 1986 and the Equality Act 2010, amongst others.

- 2.7 The DCLG has issued Policy Statements that address a range of issues including the following:

- a) Vulnerable People and Key Local Authority Duties;
 - b) Taking work incentives into account;
 - c) Information Sharing and Powers to Tackle Fraud.
- 2.8 The Local Government Finance Bill stated that a Billing Authority must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The recommended scheme has sought to address these requirements and is outlined within this report.
- 2.9 Under the Local Government Finance Bill, the Council must, in the following order, consult with major precepting authorities (i.e. Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Police Authority), and if making changes to a scheme, publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit, and consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.
- 2.10 The decision to agree the scheme is reserved for Full Council and cannot be delegated.
- 2.11 Once a local CTS scheme has been agreed by the Council, it cannot be revised for at least one financial year. A Billing Authority (EHC) must however consider whether to revise or replace its scheme with another one on an annual basis.
- 2.12 Any revision to a scheme must be made by the Council by the 31st January, immediately preceding the financial year in which it is to take effect and will require consultation with those affected. Additionally, consideration must be given to providing transitional protection where the support is to be reduced or removed.
- 3.0 Consultation
- 3.1 Consultation with major preceptors has been on the basis of the same scheme as was in operation for 2013/14. This is essentially the same as the old CTB scheme, but assessing entitlement for working age customers on 91.5% of their liability instead of 100%.
- 3.2 Details of the consultation are included in **Essential Reference Paper B (a) and (b)**:

4.0 The Proposed Scheme

The formal scheme document for East Herts can be found at the following link:

http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/3/d/East_Herts_Reduction_Scheme_Policy.pdf

- 4.1 This is the 13/14 version and as such is a final draft for 14/15, as Officers are still awaiting final amendments from the Government which are not available at the time of submission. The final version will be included with the Council report in January.
- 4.2 As the Section 13a scheme document referred to above is technical in nature, officers have created an 'easy read' guide to the scheme which is available to staff and the public via our website. The new guide is currently in draft for the same reasons identified above.
- 4.3 The CTS scheme complies with the Government's key principles of protecting Pensioner claimants from changes in their existing CTB award, supports work incentives, and was drafted with regard to appropriate consideration to vulnerable groups.
- 4.4 The manner in which this is achieved in relation to the DCLG policy Statement of Intent is set out below.

4.4.1 **Armed Forces Covenant –**

The Covenant sets out the relationship between the Nation, the State and the Armed Forces and recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to members of the Armed Forces and their families, and it establishes how they should expect to be treated. It exists to redress the disadvantages that the Armed Forces community faces in comparison to other citizens, and to recognise sacrifices made. In some cases this will require special consideration, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured and the bereaved.

In consideration of the above the recommended scheme reaffirms that in addition to war widow's, war widower's and war disablement pensions, guaranteed income payments (including survivor's guaranteed income payments under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme) be disregarded in full for working age

claimants thus ensuring that receipt of these incomes does not impact upon their Council Tax Support entitlement.

4.4.2 It is also important to note that under Government regulations for pensionable age claimants, which will apply to all LAs, only £10 per week can be disregarded from the receipt of the above pensions. EHC currently exercises its discretion within the current legislation whereby these pensions are disregarded in full, and proposes to continue this under the new arrangements.

4.4.3 **Child Poverty Act 2010** – The principles enshrined within the recommended CTS Scheme support the objectives of reducing and mitigating the effects of child poverty through the following means:

- a) Child Benefit shall be completely disregarded as a claimant's income thus ensuring that their entitlement to CTS is unaffected by the receipt of this income.
- b) Premiums and allowances shall be used to determine a claimant's basic living needs, with amounts being determined for each child and young person resident in the claimant's household.
- c) The provision of disregards for child care costs will be applied within the scheme, up to a maximum prescribed level of £175 per week for one child and £300 for two or more children, or such other amount to align the CTS scheme to the allowances within the Housing Benefit scheme.

4.4.4 **Incentivising Work** – The provision of extended payments for the first four weeks after a claimant commences work, will be applied where they meet certain prescribed requirements through the recommended scheme.

4.4.5 **Equalities Implications** – The Equality Act 2010 S149 sets out the public sector equality duty which requires the Council, when exercising its functions (including those as an employer) to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination (both direct and indirect discrimination), harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share that protected

characteristic.

4.4.6 A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Act as:

- a) age;
- b) disability;
- c) gender reassignment;
- d) pregnancy and maternity;
- e) race; (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- f) religion or belief;
- g) gender;
- h) sexual orientation;
- i) Marital status.

4.4.7 Marriage and civil partnership are also a protected characteristic for the purposes of the duty to eliminate discrimination.

4.4.8 Due regard must also be given to the need to take steps to meet the needs of such persons where those needs are different from persons who do not have that characteristic, and encourage those who have a protected characteristic to participate in public life. The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons include steps to take account of the persons' disabilities. Complying with the duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as that is allowed by the discrimination law.

4.4.9 Due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations must form an integral part of the decision making process. The Council must consider the effect that implementing a particular policy will have in relation to equality before making a decision.

4.4.10 There is no prescribed manner in which the equality duty must be exercised. However, the Council must have an adequate evidence base for its decision making. This can be achieved by gathering details and statistics on who use the facilities. A careful consideration of this assessment is one of the key ways in which the Council can show "due regard" to the relevant matters. Where it is apparent from the analysis of the information that the proposals would have an adverse effect on equality then adjustments should be made to avoid that effect (mitigation).

4.4.11 The duty on public authorities is to bring important objectives relating to discrimination into consideration when carrying out its functions. "Due regard" means the regard that is appropriate in all the particular circumstances in which the authority is carrying out its functions.

4.4.12 At the same time, the council must also pay regard to any countervailing factors, which it is proper and reasonable for them to consider. Budgetary pressures faced by the Council form part of the analysis shown in the equality impact assessment.

4.4.13 The proposed scheme will impact on approximately 3750 existing working age claimants.

4.4.14 The schemes equalities impact assessment has been reviewed and in summary, the main issues and conclusions reached through the review assessment were as follows:

- a) The proposed CTS Scheme will, like the scheme introduced for 13/14 have a negative impact on everyone receiving Council Tax Support, who is not of pensionable age, compared to the Council Tax Benefit scheme. Everyone who is affected will have a reduction in the financial help they received towards their Council Tax bills, when compared to the former Council Tax Benefit scheme. The 14/15 scheme will not reduce this further.
- b) This reduction applied a change in the rules of entitlement to financial support, which requires 8.5% of any Council Tax bill to be paid irrespective of the claimant's personal circumstances or ability to pay. This does not apply to pensioners, who are unaffected by the proposed scheme. The 14/15 proposed scheme retains this position.
- c) An assessment of the impact on claimants with protected characteristics shows that is no discrimination in terms of sexual orientation, gender reassignment or specific age groups.
- d) With reference to race, gender, religion and belief, marital status and pregnancy and maternity, the Council does not hold sufficient information about claimants with these

characteristics, in order to make a thorough assessment of the impact on them of the proposed scheme.

- e) Claimants who are disabled, are carers, are pregnant or have children aged under five, have obvious restrictions on their ability to work and increase their income. The proposed scheme does not address these claimants' different levels of ability to pay an increase in their Council Tax Bill. As a result, the requirement on these groups to pay 8.5% of their Council Tax, before CTS is awarded, is likely to have a disproportionate negative impact on them.
- f) The Council recognises its duty to consider the need to remove or minimise the disproportionate disadvantage certain groups of claimants with protected characteristics will experience, as a result of the proposed scheme. However, given the financial pressure placed on the Council by central Government cuts in the funding available to pay CTS, and the wider government funding reductions for local government there is no acceptable alternative option but to reduce the support to working age claimants.
- g) However, attempts have been made to reduce the impact on claimants by requiring them to pay the first 8.5% of their net Council Tax liability, rather than the 10% indicated by the cut in government funding.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The 13/14 CTS scheme was estimated to cost £6 550 000, which converted to 4402 band D equivalent properties. This is on target at the time of writing.
- 5.2 For 14/15 a 1% increase in spend on CTS has been estimated based on changes in caseload. This converts to 4442 band D equivalent properties.
- 5.3 The medium term financial plan (MTFP) agreed in September 2013, assumes a 0.5% increase in the tax base for 2014/15 over the 2013/14 base of 55084. This requires the tax base to grow to 55359.42.

- 5.4 The actual tax base which will be recommended for 14/15 will be 55468.63 after reductions for the proposed CTS scheme. This additional growth is attributable to a number of factors including new builds and changes in the levels of discounts granted. The assumptions used therefore mean that the scheme would still be affordable in its current form.
- 5.5 **Proposed Council Tax Support Scheme** – The proposed CTS scheme for 2014/15 as informed by the results of consultation and from the results of the equalities impact assessment can be summarised as follows:
- a) That the CTS scheme for all working age claimants will be based on 91.5% of their council tax liability.
 - b) All local discretions currently in place will continue e.g. war pension disregards;
 - c) All other aspects of the new Council Tax Support scheme to mirror the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme.
- 5.6 In recognition of the fact that the additional Council Tax liability is more difficult to collect, a collection rate of 98.65% has been assumed. This is the same as that used for 2013/14.
- 5.7 The Council will need to determine whether to revise its CTS scheme for 2015/16 based upon experience during 2014/15, including any changes in caseload and collection rates. The full impact of the first year of the scheme in 13/14 will also be available to inform decisions at that time.
- 6.0 Operational Implementation
- 6.1 Customers have struggled to adapt to the change in schemes from April 2013. Those who were previously in receipt of 100% Benefit have had to adjust to making regular payments of Council Tax. Other customers have experienced increases in their Council tax liability.
- 6.2 This has had a significant impact on resources in the service. In proposing that the scheme remains the same for 14/15, it will enable customers to bed in the new arrangements, rather than having to adapt to further changes.

- 6.3 It will also reduce pressure and risk levels for training and software changes.
- 6.4 The intension is, in time to move away from a means tested benefit towards a discount scheme. This would make administration more efficient and far less complex and time consuming for the customer. Officers are keen to explore developments nationally in this area and will keep members informed of any developments. In the mean time minimising changes to the existing scheme is the most efficient alternative.

Background Papers

East Herts Council Tax Support Scheme (Current)

http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/3/d/East_Herts_Reduction_Scheme_Policy.pdf

The Local Government Finance Bill 2012

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/localgovernmentfinance/documents.html>

The Local Government Finance Act 2012

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/17/contents/enacted>

Statutory Instrument 2012 / 2885

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/2885/contents/made>

DCLG Statement of Intent

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6090/2176498.pdf

DCGL Policy document - Vulnerable People and Key Local Authority Duties

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6074/2148567.pdf

DCLG Policy Document – Taking work incentives into account

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6075/2148501.pdf

Policy Document – Information Sharing and Powers to Tackle Fraud

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6090/2176498.pdf

Child Poverty Act 2010

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/9/pdfs/ukpga_20100009_en.pdf

Disabled Persons Act 1986

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/33/pdfs/ukpga_19860033_en.pdf

Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1970/44/pdfs/ukpga_19700044_en.pdf

Equality Act 2010, section 149

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

Armed Forces Covenant

http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/4E9E2014-5CE6-43F2-AE28-B6C5FA90B68F/0/Armed_Forces_Covenant.pdf

National Assistance Act 1948

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1948/29/pdfs/ukpga_19480029_en.pdf

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS:

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives <i>(delete as appropriate)</i> :	<p>People</p> <p>This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.</p>
Consultation and Equality Impact:	<p>The detailed Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed CTS Scheme is set out in ERP D to this report</p>
Legal:	<p>Legal Implications</p> <p>The Local Government Finance (LGF) Act came into force on 31st October 2012.</p> <p>Details as to what was set out in the LGF Bill in relation to local authorities setting up Council Tax Support / Reduction schemes are set out below.</p> <p>Requirements of Council Tax Support scheme - The prescribed content of a CTS scheme was set out in section 9 of the Local Government Finance Bill and in clause 1 of Schedule 4 which inserts Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("LGFA 1992") and clause 2 of that proposed Schedule 1A. Under these provisions, a CTS scheme must state the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A scheme must state the classes of persons who are to be entitled to a reduction under the scheme; (2) A scheme must set out the reduction to which persons in each class are to be entitled (and different reductions may be set out for different classes); (3) A scheme must state the procedure by which a person may apply for a reduction under a scheme; (4) A scheme must state the procedure by which a person can make an appeal under section 16 of the LGF Act 1992 against any decision of the authority which affects (a) the person's entitled to a reduction under the scheme, or (b) the amount of any reduction to

	<p>which the person is entitled;</p> <p>(5) A scheme must state the procedure by which a person can apply to the authority for a reduction under section 13A (1) (b) of the LGF Act 1992.</p> <p>As for stating the classes of people who are to be entitled to a reduction under a scheme, classes may be determined by reference to the following:</p> <p>(1) The income of any person liable to pay council tax on the authority in respect of a dwelling;</p> <p>(2) The capital of any such person;</p> <p>(3) The income and capital of any other person who is a resident of the dwelling;</p> <p>(4) The number of dependants of any person within paragraph (2) or (3) above;</p> <p>(5) Whether the person has made an application for the reduction.</p> <p>As for stating the reduction to which persons in each class are to be entitled and if different reductions are set out for different classes, a reduction may include the following detail:</p> <p>(a) A discount calculated as a percentage of the amount which would be payable apart from the scheme;</p> <p>(b) A discount of an amount set out in the scheme or to be calculated in accordance with the scheme;</p> <p>(c) Expressed as an amount of council tax to be paid (lower than the amount which would be payable apart from the scheme) which is set out in the scheme or is to be calculated in accordance with it; or</p> <p>(d) The whole amount of Council Tax (so that the amount payable is nil).</p> <p>The LGF Act states that for each financial year, Councils must consider whether to revise its CTS scheme or replace it with another scheme and that such decisions need to be made by 31st January in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to take effect. If the Council does not make a CTS scheme by 31st January 2013, a default scheme will be imposed on the Council which will be effective</p>
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	from April 2013, the effect of which has been set out above in this report. Regulations on the working of the default scheme have been published.
Financial:	As included in the report
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	<p>Risks and assumptions of the recommended scheme</p> <p>The following risks and assumptions have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Scheme Deficit Forecasts - The level of deficit cannot be determined with accuracy, as the Government will not be issuing final funding allocations until the end of the year. b) Caseload Forecasts - Actual future caseload and expenditure growth cannot be determined with precise accuracy although estimates based on the profiles of current expenditure and caseload has been applied to the financial modelling. c) Collection Rate Forecasts - The actual Council Tax collection rate for the claimants affected by the changes cannot be predicted with accuracy as many have not been required to pay Council Tax previously, and are also on low incomes d) Increased Administration Costs - The impact of the recommended scheme on costs of Council Tax collection have not been included within the deficit modelling as they are subject to agreement with Revenues & Benefits Partnership. These discussions will be finalised once a decision on the final scheme has been made by the Council. e) Collection Fund - Diminution of anticipated Council Tax receipts could result in a Collection Fund deficit position at the end of a financial year, particularly as precept payments at present have to be paid to the

	<p>County Council and Police Authority at an agreed monthly rate, irrespective of Council Tax sums collected.</p> <p>f) Bad Debt Provision - A potential risk arising from the recommended changes is a drop in Council Tax collection rates and hence an increase in bad debt provision. Reductions to budgeted collection rates also affect the level at which the Council Tax base set, this in turn is used to determine the Band D Council Tax level.</p> <p>g) Discretionary Discounts - The use of Section 13A discounts under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 may increase as a consequence of the recommended changes and the wider welfare reforms and will need to be met by the General Fund.</p>
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Your contact: Adele Taylor
Direct Dial: 01992 531406
Our ref: AT/GF
Date: 12th November
2013

Dear James

Consultation on proposals for a 2014/15 Council Tax Support Scheme

I am writing to ask for your comments on the Council's proposals for a 2014/15 Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS)

Having reviewed the operation of the new CTS since it first came into operation on 1st April 2013, we have been able to confirm that the scheme is in line with our original financial forecasts and that there were no unintended impacts on claimants. Consequently the current proposals are to continue with the existing scheme, subject to technical changes needed to update any dependencies on Department of Work and Pensions rules.

This proposal will be considered by our Corporate Business Scrutiny committee on Tuesday 26th November and Executive on 9th December 2013, before final decision by full Council.

A copy of the scheme can be found through the following link:

http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/3/d/East_Herts_Reduction_Scheme_Policy.pdf

The arrangements for funding the proposed scheme will be the same as for 2013/14.

I would be grateful if you could let me know your response to these proposals no later than 6th December 2013.

Yours sincerely

Adele Taylor
Director of Finance and Support Services

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Your contact: Adele Taylor
Direct Dial: 01992 531406
Our ref: AT/GF
Date: 12th November
2013

Dear Sarah

Consultation on proposals for a 2014/15 Council Tax Support Scheme

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Yours sincerely

Adele Taylor
Director of Finance and Support Services

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1 Identify the aims of the policy/service/function and how it is implemented.			
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
1.1	What is the aim, objective or purpose of the policy/service/function?	The Council has a statutory duty to adopt a Council Tax Support Scheme under the Local Government Finance Act 2012.	The Council has a statutory duty to adopt a Council Tax Support Scheme under the Local Government Finance Act 2012.
1.2	What outcomes do you want to achieve with this policy/service/function and for whom?	The Government abolished Council Tax Benefit from 1 st April 2013. It was replaced by a statutory requirement for all Council Tax billing authorities to develop their own Council Tax Support Scheme based on local priorities.	It is for the Council to decide whether to find the required savings by making conditions of entitlement to Council Tax reductions more stringent requiring everyone (except those of pensionable age) to pay at least 8.5% of their Council Tax bill.
1.3	Who defines or defined the policy/service/function?	As a result of changes from Central Government East Herts Council will develop and implement its own Council Tax Support Scheme based on local priorities.	East Herts Council will develop and implement its own Council Tax Support Scheme based on local priorities.
1.4	Who implements the policy/service/function?	East Herts Council as the Council Tax billing authority.	Not applicable
1.5	What factors or forces are at play that could contribute or detract from the outcomes identified earlier?	Changes in legislation.	Not applicable
1.6	Taking protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation), is there anything in the policy/service/function that could discriminate or disadvantage any of these groups?	Age The proposed scheme reduces the amount of support given to people on low income when compared with the previous national Council Tax Benefit scheme, and are not of pensionable age. The proposed scheme has no impact on claimants of pensionable age as the level of support for claimants of pensionable age is unchanged.	No further action required.

		<p>Disability The proposed scheme will reduce the amount of support given to people on low incomes compared to the previous national Council Tax Benefit, but will make no further reduction compared to the 2013/14 CTS scheme. Some people are unable to work because of illness or disability, have limited ability to work because of illness or disability and have limited ability to work because they are carers. The proposed scheme will have a negative impact on these groups who cannot work or have limited capacity for employment due to their disabilities.</p> <p>Gender The proposed scheme will reduce the amount of support given to working age claimants on low incomes when compared to the previous national Council Tax Benefit scheme irrespective of gender, but will make no further reduction compared to the 2013/14 CTS scheme. No information is held about the sexuality of claimants so the impact on transgendered and transsexual has not been considered.</p> <p>Pregnancy/Maternity The proposed scheme will reduce the amount of support given to working age claimants on low incomes compared to the previous national Council Tax Benefit scheme, but will make no further reduction compared to the 2013/14 CTS</p>	<p>Se 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.</p> <p>No information is held about the sexuality of claimants so the impact on transgendered and transsexual has not been considered.</p> <p>See 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3</p>
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		<p>scheme. . The proposed scheme will have a negative impact on this group who either cannot work or have restricted capacity for employment due to parenting responsibilities.</p> <p>Marriage/Civil Partnership The proposed scheme will reduce the amount of support given to working age claimants on low incomes compared to the previous national Council Tax Benefit scheme, but will make no further reduction compared to the 2013/14 CTS scheme, irrespective of marriage or civil partnership status.</p> <p>Race The proposed scheme will reduce the amount of support given to working age claimants on low incomes compared to the previous national Council Tax Benefit scheme, but will make no further reduction compared to the 2013/14 CTS scheme, irrespective of race and ethnicity.</p> <p>Religion/Belief No information is held about religion and beliefs so the impact has not been considered.</p> <p>Sexual Orientation No information is held about sexual orientation so the impact has not been considered.</p>	<p>No further action required.</p> <p>No further action required.</p> <p>No information is held about religion and beliefs so the impact has not been considered.</p> <p>No information is held about sexual orientation so the impact has not been considered.</p>
2	Consideration of available data, research and information		
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
2.1	What do you already know about who uses this	The scheme will directly affect approximately	As no detrimental changes are

	policy/service/function?	3750 households in East Herts who currently get CTS and are not of pensionable age.	proposed to the scheme for 14/15, consultation has been limited to the major preceptors only, as required..
2.2	What additional information is needed to ensure that all protected characteristic group's needs are taken into account?	Feedback from customers would be considered.	No further action required
3	Formal consultation		
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
3.1	Who do we need to consult with?	If there is no deterioration in the scheme, consultation is limited to the major preceptors..	Consultation with the major preceptors..
3.2	What method/form of consultation can be used?	The form of consultation is not specified.	Discussion and a formal notification of intention will be issued to the major preceptors.
4	Assessment of impact		
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
4.1	Have you identified any differential impact and does this adversely affect any protected characteristic groups in the community?	The Council will continue to support pensioners but for those who have restricted scope for finding employment or increasing earnings from employment they will have less ability to find the means to pay increased Council Tax.	See 4.2
4.2	If there is an adverse impact can it be avoided, can we make changes, can we lessen it etc?	The Council will not reduce support for working age claimants further than the 8.5% reduction sought by government. It will be fair to all working age claimants. It will not adjust those factors which provide a higher level of support for vulnerable groups such as families with a member who has a disability.	See 4.3
4.3	If there is nothing you can do, can the reasons be fairly justified?	As East Herts Council is committed to not increasing the council tax, the rules for working age claimants have to change.	As East Herts Council is committed to not increasing the council tax, the rules for working age claimants have to change.

5	Consideration of the effect of proposed changes on other groups.		
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
5.1	Do any of the changes in relation to the adverse impact have a further adverse affect on any other protected characteristic group?	It will not adjust those factors which provide a higher level of support for vulnerable groups such as families with a member who has a disability.	It will not adjust those factors which provide a higher level of support for vulnerable groups such as families with a member who has a disability.
INTERNAL PROCESSES FOR THE ORGANISATION			
6	Making a decision in the light of data, alternatives and consultations		
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
6.1	The organisations decision making process	The Council will take sufficient time to evaluate and consider responses to consultation on the proposed scheme before agreeing its final proposals by 31 st January 2014.	The Council will take sufficient time to evaluate and consider responses to the consultation on the proposed scheme before agreeing its final proposals by 31 st January 2014.
7	Monitor in the future and publication of results of such monitoring		
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
7.1	What have we found out in completing this EqIA? What can we learn for the future?	It ensures that decisions taken by East Herts Council are made in a fair and transparent way and demonstrates our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty – Section 149 Equality Act 2010.	No further action required.
8	Publication of results of the impact assessment Date 1 November 2013 Lead Officer Su Tarran Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service.		

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 9 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

PUCKERIDGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

WARD(S) AFFECTED: Puckeridge

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To enable Members to consider the Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> That	
(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal be supported;
(B)	authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary; and
(C)	the Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal be supported for adoption.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:	
(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed; and
(B)	the Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

1.0 Background.

1.1 East Herts has a rich environmental heritage which includes 42 Conservation Areas. The East Herts Local Plan commits the Council to review its Conservation Areas, a requirement which is also set out in national legislation.

1.2 The review of Puckeridge's Conservation Area is the fourth in a series of reviews undertaken in 2012/2013. These reviews can now be presented for Members consideration. In each case a report will be presented when a public consultation exercise has been undertaken in relation to each individual settlement.

1.3 Each document identifies the special character of the respective Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detract from the identified character. Existing boundaries will be reviewed and, where appropriate, practical enhancement proposals will be suggested.

1.4 Once Members have considered each Appraisal, and the document has been adopted by the Council, they will become a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications.

2.0 Puckeridge's Conservation Area Appraisal

2.1 Puckeridge's Conservation Area was first designated in 1968. The Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal was completed in 2013. There was a period of public consultation between September and October 2013. A public exhibition and meeting was held on 19th September 2013 at which about 20 members of the public were in attendance. Responses were received from a couple of local residents and other points were raised at the public meeting. The Parish Council provided comments in relation to the management plan. The headline issues are set out in the following paragraphs:

2.2 *General content of Appraisal:* The Appraisal identifies the key environmental features and the manner in which their quality can be maintained. In relation to Puckeridge the most relevant ones are: Listed Buildings including structures in their curtilages; non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection; other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection and important open land and spaces.

- 2.3 *Listed buildings and structures in their curtilages:* These are protected by legislation and have been identified in the Appraisal.
- 2.4 *Non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection:* A small number have been identified that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and these should be retained through the planning process.
- 2.5 *Other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection:* A number have been identified and include railings and tombstones. These are important to the rural qualities and character of Puckeridge. Protection could formally be achieved through the introduction of an Article 4 Direction. Prior to considering such a course of action, the Council would need to establish ownership and discuss the matter further with respective owners.
- 2.6 *Important open land and spaces:* The Appraisal has identified a number of such important open spaces that materially contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area that should be protected through the planning process.
- 2.7 *Enhancement proposals to deal with detracting elements:* A number have been identified and include the visual impact discordant signage has on the conservation area. It is accepted that such improvements will often only be carried out with the co-operation of owners and other local bodies and organisations. However the District Council may have a role to play in some instances, for example by offering technical advice; by determining applications and where appropriate offering grant assistance.
- 3.0 Consultation Feedback
- 3.1 Comments received through the consultation process are set out in the table included as **Essential Reference Paper B** arranged in the subject order set out above.
- 3.2 **Essential Reference Paper C** is a copy of the Puckeridge Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan as it appeared at the consultation draft stage. No changes are proposed as a result of consultation feedback. This also includes the maps.
- 3.3 In summary it is recommended that the Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be adopted and be used in the process of determining planning applications.

4.0 Implications/ Consultations Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper A**

Background Papers

Notes of the public meeting and letters submitted in response to consultation.

Contact Member: Cllr Mike Carver – Executive member for Strategic Planning and Transport
mike.carver@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and Building Control, Ext 1407
Kevin.steptoe@eastherts.gov.uk

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives	<p><i>Place</i></p> <p>This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p><i>Prosperity</i></p> <p>This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	<i>Community consultation has been undertaken as set out in the report</i>
Legal:	<i>Preparation of the Appraisal fulfils statutory requirements.</i>
Financial:	<p><i>Costs associated with the preparation of the Appraisal are met from within existing staffing and operational budgets.</i></p> <p><i>The Appraisal suggests works and actions which could be undertaken to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation Area and remove detracting elements. The Council is not committed to undertaking these further actions. There will be potential revenue and capital costs associated with doing so – which can be further assessed on reaching a decision whether to undertake further action.</i></p>
Human Resource:	<i>No additional staffing implications</i>
Risk Management:	<i>No significant risk issues</i>

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Essential Reference Paper B

Issue	Representations made	Officer comment
Enhancement proposals to deal with detracting elements	A respondent notes, in relation to paragraph 4.8, that not all the street lights are in keeping with the historic environment.	The officers note that not all street lights are in keeping with the historic environment, however they recognise that the traditionally style ones are distinctive features within the conservation area.
Other minor comments	<p>The Parish Council note that through construction works the fence along Mently Lane may be lost.</p> <p>One respondent commented that they were please to have the document and the opportunity to discuss it with John Bosworth and council officers. The proposals are sensible.</p>	The officers note this concern.

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PUCKERIDGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

2013



Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk
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East Herts District Council
Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EQ

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This Appraisal has been produced by Officers of East Hertfordshire District Council to assess the current condition of the Puckeridge Conservation Area, to identify where improvements can be made and to advise on any boundary changes that are appropriate. The document is in draft form and will be subject to public consultation and agreement by District Council Members.

1. Introduction.

1.1. The historic environment cannot be replaced and is a resource that is both fragile and finite. Particularly in an age when society and its needs change with rapidity, the various historic and architectural elements of Conservation Areas can be perceived to interact in a complex manner and create a 'unique sense of place' that is appreciated by those lucky enough to reside in such special places and the many interested persons who appreciate and visit them.

1.2. East Hertfordshire District has a particularly rich and vibrant built heritage, featuring 42 Conservation Areas and approximately 4,000 fine listed buildings displaying a variety of styles representative of the best of architectural and historic designs from many centuries. Generally and very importantly the clear distinction between built form and open countryside has been maintained.

1.3. The District is situated in an economically buoyant region where an attractive environment, employment opportunities and excellent transport links, road, rail and air, make it a popular destination to live and work. In addition to London a short commuting distance away, the District is influenced by other factors beyond its administrative area, such as Stansted Airport and the towns of Harlow and Stevenage. With such dynamics it is inevitable that the historic environment will be subject to pressures which emphasize the need to protect it.

1.4. The East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review, adopted in April 2007, recognises these facts and committed the Council to review its Conservation Areas and their boundaries. The production of this document is part of this process.

1.5. Conservation Areas are environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. In addition to the individual qualities of the buildings

themselves, there are other factors such as the relationships of the buildings with each other, the quality of the spaces between them and the vistas and views that unite or disrupt them. The relationship with adjoining areas and landscape, the quality of trees, boundary treatments, advertisements, road signage, street furniture and hard surfaces, are also important features which can add to or detract from the Conservation Area.

1.6. This Appraisal recognises the importance of these factors and will consider them carefully. Once approved this document will be regarded as a 'material consideration' when determining planning applications. The document also puts forward simple and practical management proposals that would improve the character of the Conservation Area and which are capable of being implemented as and when resources permit.

1.7. The recommendations concerning non-listed buildings and structures are normally formed by the field workers observations made from the public realm and seldom involve internal inspection or an assessment of their structural condition. Therefore recommendations contained in this Appraisal might be subject to reconsideration through the planning application process, where that is necessary, and which would involve the submission of additional information. Similar considerations may apply to estimating dates of buildings.

1.8. This Conservation Appraisal will:

- Identify the special character of Puckeridge;
- Identify elements that should be retained or enhanced;
- Identify detracting elements;
- Review the existing boundary;
- Put forward practical enhancement proposals;

1.9. The document will be prepared in partnership with the local community and the District Council wishes to involve the Parish Council and to the members of the local community through the consultation process that will follow. The Council acknowledges the content of the Standon and Puckeridge Village Study undertaken by the local Amenities Society on behalf of the Parish Council in 1994.

1.10. Acknowledgement is also recorded to Hertfordshire County Council whose archeological records were of considerable assistance.

1.11. This Appraisal is written in three parts: Part A - Legal and Policy Framework. Part B - Appraisal; Part C - Management Proposals.

PART A - LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

2. Legal and Policy framework.

2.1. The legal background for designating a Conservation Area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This states that the Council shall from time to time designate Conservation Areas, which are defined as being *'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance'*. The same section of the Act also requires that Councils undertake periodic reviews.

2.2. Section 71 of the Act requires Councils to *'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement'* of Conservation Areas and hold a public meeting to consider them.

2.3. Within Conservation Areas there are additional planning controls and if these are to be supported it is important that the designated area accords with the statutory definition and is not devalued by including land or buildings that lack special interest.

2.4. One of the most important additional planning controls that apply to Conservation Areas is set out at section 74 of the Act which states that *'a building in a conservation area shall not be demolished without the consent of the appropriate authority'*. This requirement is known as 'Conservation Area Consent' (CAC)* and is subject to certain exceptions. For example it does not apply to Listed Buildings which are protected by their own legislation but may be relevant to other non listed buildings in the Conservation Area above a specified threshold size if these are of sufficient merit to warrant identification and protection. Looking for and identifying such buildings is therefore a priority of this Appraisal. Another exception relates to certain ecclesiastical buildings which are not subject to local authority listed building and conservation area administration provided an equivalent approved system of control is operated by the church authority. This is known as the 'ecclesiastical exemption'. Importantly in such circumstances, church authorities still need to obtain any necessary planning permissions from the Council.

* Since October 2013 the need to obtain CAC has been replaced by a requirement to obtain planning permission

2.5. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (as amended), defines the range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required (known as permitted development or PD) and this range is more restricted in Conservation Areas. For example the Order currently requires that the addition of dormer windows to roof slopes, various types of cladding, satellite dishes fronting a highway and a reduced size of extensions, all require planning permission in a Conservation Area whereas they would not require permission beyond.

2.6. However, even within Conservation Areas there are many other minor developments that do not require planning permission. So as to provide further protection the law allows Councils' to introduce additional controls if appropriate. Examples of such controls can include some developments fronting a highway or open space, such as an external porch, the painting of a house or the demolition of some gates, fences or walls. The removal of important architectural features that are important to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area or individual buildings within it such as distinctive porches, windows or walls or railings to non-listed properties can be subject to a more detailed assessment and if appropriate made subject to protection by a legal process known as an 'Article 4 Direction'. The use of such Directions can only be made in justified circumstances where a clear assessment of each Conservation Area has been made. In conducting this Appraisal, consideration will be given as to whether or not such additional controls are necessary.

2.7. Works to Trees. Another additional planning control relates to trees located within Conservation Areas. Setting aside various exceptions principally relating to size and condition, any proposal to fell or carry out works to trees has to be 'notified' to the Council. The Council may then decide make the tree/s subject to a Tree Preservation Order. This Appraisal diagrammatically identifies only the most significant trees or groups of trees that make a particularly important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Other trees not specifically identified may still be suitable for statutory protection.

2.8. Some hedges may be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. This legislation is extremely complicated and only applies in certain situations that are determined by the location of the hedge, its age and or its historical importance, the wildlife it supports and its number of woody species.

2.9. National Planning Policy Framework. Published in March 2012, this document replaces previous advice, including PPS 5, Planning for the Historic Environment. The principle emphasis of the new framework is to promote sustainable development. Economic, social and environmental roles should not be considered in isolation because they are mutually dependent and positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment should be sought, including replacing poor design with better design. Whilst architectural styles should not be imposed it is considered proper to reinforce local distinctiveness.

2.10. In relation to the historic environment the new National Planning Policy Framework advises as follows:

- **There should be a positive strategy in the Local Plan for the conservation of the historic environment and up-to-date evidence used to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make.**
- **Conservation Areas. Such areas must justify such a status by virtue of being of *'special architectural or historic interest'*.**
- **Heritage assets. A Heritage asset is defined as *'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listings)'*.**
- **Considerable weight should be given to conserving such heritage assets and the more important they are the greater the weight. For example the effect of a development proposal on a non- designated heritage asset should be taken into account and a balanced judgment reached. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II Listed Building should be exceptional whilst harm to heritage assets of higher status, e.g. a grade I or II* Listed Building should be wholly exceptional.**
- **Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that preserve such elements should be approved.**
- **The use of Article 4 Directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations *'where***

this is necessary to protect local amenity or the well being of the area...'

- **Green Areas.** Such areas of particular importance can properly be identified for special protection as Local Green Spaces in selected situations.

2.11. East Hertfordshire's environmental initiatives and Local Plan Policies. East Hertfordshire is committed to protecting Conservation Areas and implementing policies which preserve and enhance them; to support their preservation through the publication of design and technical advice and to be pro-active by offering grants and administering an Historic Buildings Grant Service. With regard to the latter, grants are awarded on a first come first served basis in relation to listed buildings and other unlisted buildings of architectural or historic interest. The maximum grant will not normally exceed £1,000.

2.12. In respect of the above the Council has produced a number of leaflets and guidance notes that are available on request. Further details are provided in Appendix 1.

2.13. The Council also has a 'Buildings at Risk Register', originally produced in 2006 and updated in 2012/13. In relation to Standon Parish there are several buildings entered on the Register as being 'at risk' although there are none currently located in the Puckeridge Conservation Area. Grant assistance not exceeding £10,000 may be available for works that lead to such buildings' long term security. The milestone near no.16 High Street is in need of attention.

2.14. The East Herts Local Plan was adopted by the Council in 2007. The 'saved' policies set out in the plan remain in force and are relevant in relation to Conservation Area and Historic Building considerations. The Local Plan and its policies can be viewed on the Council's website or a copy can be obtained from the Council (contact details are set out in section 7)

2.15. In accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is in the process of preparing a planning policy document which will replace the 2007 Local Plan. This will be known as the East Herts District Plan (DP). Once adopted the DP will contain the relevant Council planning policies.

2.16. Puckeridge Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 and most recently in 2000.

Part B - APPRAISAL

3. Origins and historic development.

3.1. Late Iron Age pottery was found in a ditch running parallel to Ermine Street near the former PH, the Buffalo's Head and also at other locations.

3.2. Puckeridge itself was situated on Ermine Street, a Roman Road of importance between London and York. At a point in open countryside, a short distance to the west of the White Hart PH, Ermine Street was joined by another Roman Road, Stane Street, which connected to Colchester and also by another road striking out in a north easterly direction towards the important Roman settlement in the Great Chesterford area. Roman roads linked military and administrative centres and were not necessarily originally built to facilitate trade. Some were engineered versions of earlier routes becoming links between local towns where minor settlements grew up alongside them. Roman forts are not known in Hertfordshire as they were not needed. Puckeridge receives a mention in The Oxford History of England's 'Roman Britain' published in 1981. This reports the presence of a rectangular cemetery enclosure marked by a ditch and bank that contained *'60 cremations apparently associated with a Roman settlement abandoned about AD 80 which had succeeded an Iron Age site. Most of the burials had three or more pots and a pair of hob nailed boots, some had glass containers or metal fitted wooden caskets'*. The presence of these hobnailed boots may have been part of a funerary practice.

3.3. The Scheduled Ancient Monument description of the site to the immediate north of the Conservation Area (of which the triangle of land north of the White Hart PH forms part) identified, following excavations in 1969, the presence of Roman walls and 4th century coins together with pre Roman occupation and burials.

3.4. Hertfordshire County Council records describe that an archaeological trench cut through the Roman road of Ermine Street established it was 20 feet wide and 2 feet 6 inches thick, with ditches containing late Iron Age/ early Roman platters and storage jars, Samian and Castor ware, a coin of Tetricus, two bronze pins, a

piece of sheet bronze, and a scrap of leather. Occupation north of the road included pits and signs of timber buildings. The site is dated 50 AD to 410AD.

3.5. Puckeridge Conservation Area as largely seen today consists of buildings dating from the 16th century with approximately 30% of the listed buildings in the Conservation Area dating from this period with a further 25% from the 17th century.

3.6. The map of 1874 shows a rural settlement, very similar in extent to the existing Conservation Area and completely separated from Standon. Whilst Station Road connecting the two communities existed at this time, this area was open countryside, south of which was an isolated building annotated *School (Boys & Girls)*. The latter is now a residence but has a prominent plaque describing its former use. Land between High Street and Station Road (Poor's Land) and land north of Station Road (Fisher's Mead) was owned by Standon Charity. Poor's land was generally owned by a charity, the proceeds of which benefited the poor of the Parish. The same map shows a brickfield and limekiln to the south of Mentley Lane East. By this time the Congregation Chapel and burial ground in the south of the village had been built, adjacent to a School for Boys and Girls on the site of the existing Primary School.

3.7. Little had changed by 1897 although the map of that date identifies the presence of a brewery on land between High Street and Tollsworth Road.



Picture 1 - High Street, early 20th century (reproduced courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives and Records).

3.8. The map dating from 1920 shows an Iron Foundry east of the High Street in the general area of nos. 25-31 and also shows that development had commenced along Station Road with the construction of housing and Century Hall (still in existence). By this time allotments were established between High Street and Station Road.

3.9. Mapping dating from 1963 shows the presence of a garage on what is now Cannon's Court and a Caravan Park on what is now Tollsworth Way.

3.10. Kelly's Post Office Directory of Hertfordshire dated 1874 lists the following trades for Puckeridge: blacksmith, iron founder, builder, market gardener, watch maker, grocer, surgeon, 2 grocer/drapers, horse clipper, wheelwright, brewer, draper/shoemaker, builder/brick maker, plumber/painter, cooper, veterinary surgeon, harness maker, butcher, shoemaker, grocer and tailor, 2 beer retailers, carpenter and builder and 2 bakers. Public Houses listed at this time were the Chequers, Crown and Falcon, Buffalo's Head, White Hart, Woolpack, Anchor and Rising Sun. In common with other rural communities of the time this range of trades displays a considerable degree of local inter dependence and self sufficiency.

3.11. The Place Names of Hertfordshire published by Cambridge University Press refer to the following ancient names: Pucherugge (1294); Pukerugg (1305); Pokerigge (1310) and Puckeridge Barres (1680). Some believe the current name derives from 'puca' and 'hrycg' – 'Goblin Ridge' but according to other sources more likely from a late Saxon word translated as 'Deer Enclosure'.

3.12. An interesting connection relates to Samuel Pepys whose diary entry of 9 October 1662 reads *'We got to Ware before night and so I resolved to ride on to Puckeridge, which we did, though the way was bad, and the evening dark before we got thither...'*

3.13. During World War II the village shared its name with HMS Puckeridge, a destroyer sunk in the Mediterranean, following which large sums of money were raised locally to provide further destroyers for the war effort.

3.14. The existing Conservation Area boundary is shown at Plan 1, being a map dating from 1874.



Picture 2 - Looking south towards the Buffalo's Head PH, circa 1910 (reproduced courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives and Records).

4. General Designations and Criteria used to identify Important Features.

4.1. There is a significant Scheduled Ancient Monument principally to the north and east of the Conservation Area. A small part of the scheduled site lies within the Conservation Area itself, being the triangle of unused land immediately to the north of the White Hart PH. The track (referred to by signage as a Gated Road) forms the eastern boundary of this triangle and is excluded from the designation. Scheduled Ancient Monuments are protected by law as sites of national importance where ground disturbance cannot take place without consent.

4.2. Areas of Archaeological Significance. Nearly the entirety of the Puckeridge Conservation Area is so designated; the exceptions being two areas at the southern extremity. Not all archeological sites are of equal importance and the Council will decide a course of action that may vary from recording any remains prior to development or protecting it from development, when determining planning applications.

4.3. Listed buildings. Individually listed buildings have been identified, plotted and some very briefly described. Full descriptions can be obtained on line at English Heritage's web site or Heritage Gateway. Such listed buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilages of listed buildings, if they pre-date 1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings. There are a small number of such walls that are important to Puckeridge's visual, architectural and historic heritage.

4.4. Non-listed buildings of quality and worthy of protection from demolition. There are a number of such non-listed buildings and structures that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area and these have been separately identified. The basic questions asked in identifying such buildings/structures are:

- (a) Is the non listed building/structure of sufficient architectural or historic interest whose general external form and appearance remains largely unaltered?
- (b) Does the building contain a sufficient level of external original features and materials?
- (c) Has the building retained its original scale without large inappropriate modern extensions that destroy the visual appearance particularly in respect of the front elevation?
- (d) Is the building/ structure visually important in the street scene?

4.5. Wildlife site. Within the Conservation Area there is a Wildlife Site south of Mentley Lane East that is described in the Detailed Character Analysis below. The Local Plan describes Wildlife Sites as being '*discreet areas of land considered to be of significance for their wildlife features...*' For information there is also another Wildlife Site beyond the northern boundary of the Conservation Area but this is not described in this Appraisal, being beyond the area of study.

4.6. Trees and Hedgerows. The basic criteria for identifying important trees and hedgerows are:-

- (a) They are in good condition;

- (b) They are visible at least in part from public view points.**
- (c) They make a significant contribution to the street scene or other publicly accessible areas.**

4.7. Several open spaces of quality that contribute to the visual importance of the Conservation Area where development would be inappropriate have been identified. The basic question asked in identifying such areas is:

(a) the open space or gap an important landscape feature contributing to the general spatial quality and visual importance of the Conservation Area? Private open spaces forming an important setting for an historic asset and unkempt spaces that have the potential to be enhanced are candidates for selection subject to complying with the principle question.

4.8. Other distinctive features that are unprotected make an important visual or historic contribution are noted. There are unprotected architectural features associated with unlisted buildings which add to Puckeridge's character. The traditionally styled street lamps are in keeping with the historic environment.

4.9. Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions in justified circumstances. It may be appropriate to introduce such measures on a selective basis, subject to further consideration and notification. .

4.10. Article 4 Directions – general criteria in relation to features associated with selected non listed properties.

- In relation to chimneys, these need to be in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property, prominent in the street scene and complete with chimney pots. . Exceptionally particularly important chimney stacks without pots may be selected.**
- In relation to selected windows, these need to be on front or side elevations, fronting and visible from the street/s, contemporary with the age of the property and where the majority of windows of respective elevations retain their original characteristics and have not been replaced by modern glazing units.**
- In relation to walls or railings, those selected need to be below the prescribed heights (1m fronting a highway**

including a footpath or bridleway, water course or open space or 2m elsewhere) that require prior consent for their demolition, be prominent in the street scene and make a positive architectural or historic contribution to its visual appearance.

- In relation to other features, these may include good quality architectural detailing to non-listed buildings, constructed of wood, metal or other materials.
- It may also be appropriate to introduce Article 4 Directions to retain quality buildings below the prescribed threshold where consent for demolition in Conservation Areas is not required.

4.11. Any features that detract from the character of the area or which are in poor repair have been identified.

4.12. Important views are identified.

4.13. In suggesting any revisions to the Conservation Area boundary, consideration has been given as to whether or not the land or buildings in question form part of an area of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be conserved.

5. General character and setting of Puckeridge.

5.1. The existing Conservation Area is long and linear being composed of the High Street and extended in the north by the continuation of Buntingford Road. Both southern and northern ends enjoy proximity to the open countryside as opposed the central section of High Street which is hemmed in by the A10 road and modern development at Lunardi Court, Tollsworth Way and Huntsman Close to the west and Station Road and Park Lane to the east. Within this latter area there is some 19th century development but its scattered nature and the manner in which it is dominated by modern development excludes consideration of extending the Conservation Area into this location.

5.2. In terms of its wider setting, the Council has produced a Landscape Character Assessment (2007) as a Supplementary Planning Document. Puckeridge Conservation Area is situated between the Upper Rib valley area to the east and the Puckeridge Parklands to the west. The latter area contains three parklands including that around St Edmunds College. Notwithstanding the proximity of surrounding 20th century development, Puckeridge

Conservation Area is clearly defined and visually separate and distinctive.

5.3. There are about 175 Listed Buildings in the Parish as a whole including Standon, 15 of which are Grade II*. There is only one Grade I being St Mary's church in Standon.

5.4. Nearly 40 of the above total are concentrated in Puckeridge High Street and its northern extension, Buntingford Road. One of these is listed Grade II* namely 54 - 60 High Street that dates from the 16th century. Buildings from the 16th-19th centuries are represented. Approximately 35% date from the 18th century; 30% from the 16th century, 25% from the 17th century and 10% from the 19th century.

5.5. As frequently is the case many properties were altered at a later date in the 18th and 19th centuries and some of these are described below.

5.6. As set out below, this Appraisal identifies several other buildings and other items of quality that contribute to the settlements high quality.

5.7. Trees in the grounds of the former Congregational Church, hedgerows defining the playing fields of St Thomas Primary School, trees south of Mentley Lane East and trees and hedgerows north of the White Hart Inn add to the quality of the Conservation Area in these locations. Elsewhere the streetscape is very urban in character with an absence of trees and vegetation.

6. Detailed Character Analysis.

6.1. *General overview.* The central and northern parts of the Conservation Area are of high quality with continuous groupings of Listed Buildings on both sides of the High Street. Their varied heights, use of traditional materials, irregular roofscape surmounted by distinctive chimneys provide an urban streetscape of considerable quality and variety. An important feature of some of the residential buildings is a number of distinctive windows at ground floor, previously used for shopping display. These are important in terms of their previous historical use and existing visual quality. A traffic management scheme introduced into the High Street consists of bollards to protect property and chicanes to reduce speed. There would seem to be a wide spectrum of local opinion as to its effectiveness. However it is not too visually disruptive. Modern 20th century development opposite Huntsman

Close could have been more sympathetically designed as some dormers detract. Nevertheless the use of materials and varied roofline is pleasing here although the opportunity to provide chimneys was lost.

6.2. The northern end of the Conservation Area is enhanced by a triangular area of unused open land with quality trees and hedgerows that is part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

6.3. The southern section of the Conservation Area south of Tollsworth Way junction with High Street is of lesser quality where the character of a number of unlisted 19th century properties have unfortunately been eroded by alterations and additions to a degree that they cannot be classified as qualifying as being buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. Modern infill north of the former Buffalo's Head PH is successful and does not detract. Small design details such as the provision of chimneys (which critically could have been more robust) and railings to front are pleasing. The former Buffalo's Head and the former Congregational Church and its burial ground are of historical importance and add to the visual quality of the Conservation Area in this location. On balance it is considered appropriate that this southern area remains within the Conservation Area.

6.4. *Scheduled Ancient Monument.* Reference has previously been made to the important later Iron Age and Roman site lies principally to the north and east of Puckeridge, although a part, north of the White Hart, is within the Conservation Area.

6.5. *Archaeological sites.* Nearly all of the Conservation Area is so designated. Data available from Hertfordshire County Council identifies many such sites relate to early buildings, some descriptions of which appear below in the paragraphs relating to individually Listed Buildings. In addition other sites have revealed late Iron Age pottery whilst there is the site of a 19th century Lime Kiln south of Mentley Lane East, shown on mapping from 1874 (see Plan 1).

6.6. *Individually Listed buildings.* There are nearly 40 Listed Buildings concentrated in Puckeridge High Street and its northern extension, Buntingford Road. The key characteristics of these important buildings are their varied age and architectural qualities that display a high density urban streetscape with a prominent roofscape and varied use of materials and historical associations.

6.7. One listed Grade II* building, namely 54 - 60 High Street, dates from the 16th century and may have been a former Guildhall. It has

been re-fronted and Gothicised in the late 19th century. The frame is exposed with 19th century herringbone brick infill; it has a steeply sloping old red tiled roof and tall brick chimneys rebuilt in 1900. The Listed Building description accurately describes it as a '*long picturesque irregular building stepping up a hill...*'



Picture 3 – 54-60 High Street, 16th century or earlier, re-fronted in 19th century.

6.7. Another 16th century or earlier Grade II Listed building is no. 24 High Street that was probably a large open hall house in origin. This building was formerly the Old George Inn.

6.8. No. 19, Thorpe House, Grade II, also dates from the 16th century and was probably also an open hall house originally. It was re-fronted in the 19th century and incorporates a 19th century shop front.

6.9. No.6 High Street, Grade II, by contrast dates from the 18th century fronted in red brick and distinctive old red tiled Gambrel roof.

6.10. Its neighbour, no.4 High Street, Grade II, known as Everett Hall adds further variety with its grey brick front, parapet and panel detailing and dates from the mid 19th century.

6.11. Of considerable local interest is a milestone, listed Grade II, erected circa 1742 for the Wadesmill Turnpike Trust. A cast iron

front plate possibly to a design of McAdam contains an inscription identifying distances to London Ware and Buntingford. The whole is sunk to about half its total height in the pavement.



Picture 4 – Milestone near no. 16 High Street.

6.12. Two buildings within the curtilages of Listed Buildings add to the local quality of the street scene. These are single storey weather boarded buildings, one with slate roof and the other tiled, respectively to the rear of no. 30 and no. 40 High Street.

6.13. The condition of the listed milestone is a matter of concern and expert advice needs to be obtained regarding its future. A useful first step in this respect would be to contact the County Council and English Heritage and seek their advice on how similar problems elsewhere may have been resolved.

6.14. *Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution.* The following buildings have been identified. Nos. 11 -15 Buntingford Road is a group of three cottages dating from the late 19th/early 20th century. 2 storey brick construction

with slate roofs and 2 no. prominent chimney stacks. 3 no. bay windows to front with slate canopies above and some decorative wooden detailing and supporting brackets. . An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features, including chimneys, may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 5 - Nos. 11-15 Buntingford Road, late 19th/early 20th century, non listed properties of quality.

6.15. Nos. 42 - 44 High Street, Puckeridge General Store dates from the late 19th/early 20th century. Shop front to ground floor with stone and marble pillar detailing and canopy above. Original vertical sliding sash windows to first and second floors with distinctive stone detailing. Of brick construction with slate roof, 2 no. chimneys and decorative ridge tiles. Attractive tiled floor to central entrance doors. A tall three storey distinctive building, prominent in the street scene. The features described above need to be retained through normal development control. Note the property currently appears to be vacant.

6.16. No. 35 High Street (also known as Old Bank House) and no. 2 Station Road. Late 19th century 2 storey brick buildings with a number of good quality vertical sliding sash windows, including one bay window with slate roof above. Another window to the High

Street elevation with semi circular detailing. The appearance is spoilt by replacement tiles to hipped roof. However this latter detracting feature is outweighed by the buildings general pleasing elevations and proportions in this prominent location. Appears on map dating from 1874 as the Rising Sun PH. . An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features, including windows, may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.17. Nos. 37 – 41 High Street. Group of simple 2 storey 19th century cottages, constructed in red brick with slate roof, 2 no. chimneys and a number of good quality vertically sliding sash windows widows. These buildings are successful because of their simplicity and general unaltered appearance. . An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features, including chimneys and selected windows, may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 6- Nos. 37 – 41 High Street, 19th century non listed properties of quality.

6.18. Puckeridge Evangelical Congregational Chapel. A tall 19th century yellow brick building with central panel to front elevation and tall entrance doorway approached by flight of steps with decorative window detailing above. The roof is slate. Windows are currently boarded up for security purposes so the building would no longer appear to be in active use. Its simple design located on

its elevated position and small but well maintained graveyard with interesting grouping of gravestones from the 19th and 20th centuries add to visual quality of the local street scene and is of importance in the historical context of development of the village. Conditional approval to residential use has been granted.

6.19. The former Buffalo's Head is a two storey rendered building with slate roof, decorative ridge tiles and 2 no. chimneys that are prominent in the street scene. Windows are modern and detract. Nevertheless the overall scale and mass makes it a pleasing introduction to the village at this approach location. Its previous use as a PH adds historical interest. . An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features, notably the chimneys, may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.20. *Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution.* The following walls add to the character of the Conservation Area – Flint wall with brick piers, probably 19th century in origin, 2.5 – 3.00 m in height located to south of Mentley Lane East. Protected from demolition without prior consent virtue of its height and being within the curtilage of a Listed Building.

6.21. Similarly protected is another flint and brick wall about 2 m in height and within the curtilage of a Listed Building at the junction of High Street and Tollsworth Way.

6.22. Throughout the village there are a number of 20th century street lamps that are in keeping with the quality of the Conservation Area. These are maintained by the County Council.

6.23. *Important open land, open spaces and gaps.* There are four such areas of particular importance that contribute to the general special quality and visual importance of the Conservation Area.

6.24. Triangle of land north of the White Hart Inn. This area represents an environment of high quality in which mature trees and native hedgerows combine with landform to make an important natural asset different in character to the open nature of the countryside that surrounds it. Some modest amounts of rubbish have been dumped that detract. A metalled path, referred to by notice as a 'gated road', defines the eastern boundary. It is well used by pedestrians but does not appear to be one that is formally identified as a public footpath. The area forms part of the larger Scheduled Ancient Monument site to the north and east.



Picture 7 – ‘Gated Road’ north east of White Hart PH.

6.25. Land south of Mentley Lane East. This grassland is open in character within which are situated freestanding thorn and fruit trees that add to its general environmental qualities. Land to the north of Mentley Lane East has been identified for future housing and when such development occurs, the visual importance of this parcel of open land to the south will be increased. The site is also a site of wildlife importance (see below).

6.26. The burial ground associated with the Puckeridge Evangelical Congregational Chapel. This burial ground is a small area of tranquil open space and is of particular interest because of its interesting tombstones and traditional mature graveyard trees.

6.27. Playing Fields associated with the Primary School. These are important open spaces at the edge of the Conservation Area performing an important role in providing playing fields and defining the edges of built development in this part of the village.

6.28. *Wildlife site.* The open grassland south of Metley Lane East is a designated Wildlife Site. Its importance is that the former Lime Kiln and environs is important for Protected Species. Brown Long Eared bats, Daubenton’s Bat, Natterer’s Bat and Whiskered Bat have been recorded. Officers from Hertfordshire Biological

Records Centre advise that ‘this *Wildlife Site is very important for bats.*’

6.29. *Particularly important trees and hedgerows.* Hedgerows on both the northern and southern extremities of the Conservation Area are particularly important, a fact reflected in the manner in which the Conservation Area boundary has been drawn.

6.30. *Important views.* Looking both north and south along the High Street provides important views of the high quality historic built environment. Looking from the gated road that forms the boundary to land previously described , provides attractive views of a fragmented natural environment with extensive tree and hedge cover and an adjacent open agricultural landscape.

6.31. *Elements out of character out of Conservation Area.* Within the Conservation Area the following detract: 2 no. utility poles, one being outside 37-41 High Street and the other adjacent to the Crown and Falcon PH; rubbish within and signage associated with the triangle of land referred to at above; prominent advertisement signage to the garage on Buntingford Road and temporary signage associated with the White Hart PH.



Picture 8 – Redundant signage, entrance to ‘Gated Road’.

6.32. *Opportunities to secure improvements.* Protect and retain through the planning process all Listed Buildings and properties identified as being important within the curtilages of Listed Buildings, unlisted properties, other distinctive features, trees, open spaces and views that have been identified as contributing to the quality of the area; explore with Herts County Council and English Heritage the best means of improving the Milestone in the High Street and seek to reduce the impact of the detracting elements set out above through negotiation.

6.33. *Suggested boundary changes.* There are none.

PART C – MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

7. Management Proposals.

7.1. *Conservation Area Boundary.* No revisions are proposed.

7.2. General Planning Control and Good Practice within the Conservation Area. All 'saved' planning policies are contained in the East Herts Local Plan Second Review adopted in April 2007. It is against this document and the National Planning Policy Framework that the District Council will process applications.

7.3. Applicants considering submitting any application should carefully consider the relevant policies and if necessary contact Council Officers to seek pre-application advice. For further details including advice on Planning Applications, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Landscaping, and other general administrative advice please contact the Planning Department for assistance.

Telephone no. 01279 655261

E-mail planning@eastherts.gov.uk

Or write to E.H.D.C. Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

7.4. Applicants may also wish to refer to one of the several Guidance Notes referred to in Appendix 1 below.

7.5. Planning Control - Potential need to undertake an Archeological Evaluation. Within areas designated as being a Scheduled Ancient Monument or within the Area of Archaeological Significance the contents of Policies BH1, BH2 and BH3 are particularly relevant. English Heritage's Guide for Owners and Occupiers states that if a person wishes to carry out any works that will affect a scheduled monument '*whether above or below ground, you must apply to the Secretary of State for prior written permission.*' Applicants are strongly recommended to contact the regional English Heritage office for early discussions. The local contact details are English Heritage 24 Brooklands Avenue Cambridge CB2 2BU. Telephone 01223 582700. E-mail: eastofengland@english-heritage.org.uk

7.6. Listed Building Control and Good Practice. Those buildings that are individually listed are identified. Other pre 1948 buildings, structures or walls within the curtilage of a Listed Building are similarly protected in law. Two such curtilage buildings of quality are single storey weather boarded outbuildings, one with slate roof and the other tiled, respectively to the rear of no. 30 and no. 40 High Street.

7.7. Listed Buildings are the most significant factor in contributing to the quality of Puckeridge's built environment. It is essential that

their architectural detailing is not eroded nor their other qualities and settings compromised. Of particular importance is the varied roofscape.

7.8. The Appraisal has identified the mile stone near no.16 High Street as needing attention. The Council will discuss the matter with the County Council initially and seek advice from English Heritage as to how best initiate such repairs and secure its future.

7.9. Planning Control – Other Unlisted Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution. Within the Conservation Area several unlisted buildings have been identified. These are: 11-15 Buntingford Road; 42-44 High Street, Puckeridge General Store; 35 High Street; 2 Station Road; 37-41 High Street; the Puckeridge Evangelical Congregational Chapel and the former Buffalo's Head PH. Any proposal involving the demolition of these buildings is unlikely to be approved.

7.10. Proposed Article 4 Directions. There are some distinctive features that are integral to some of the unlisted buildings identified above that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including selected chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing. In some situation protection may exist through existing planning controls but in other cases additional protection could only be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via and Article 4 Direction. The latter legislation is complex. Should the Council consider such a course of action appropriate there would be a process of notifying the affected owners separately at a later date. This would be associated with further detailed consideration and possible refinement.

7.11. Planning Control – Other Unlisted distinctive features that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution. The Appraisal identifies other distinctive features including walls that make a positive contribution to Puckeridge's character. The latter walls are protected virtue of being within the curtilages of Listed Buildings or because they exceed the specified heights relevant to Conservation Areas. Any proposal involving the demolition of these walls is also unlikely to be approved.

7.12. There are other relatively modern distinctive features including decorative street lamps at various locations in the High Street. Their ongoing maintenance and care is the responsibility of the County Council.

7.13 Planning control - Wildlife Site within the Conservation Area. The high importance of this site has been noted. Any development that adversely affects wildlife species occupying the site will not normally be permitted and would require clear justification. Proposals will be considered against Policies ENV 14 and ENV 16.

7.14. Planning Control – Important open land, open spaces and gaps. This Appraisal has identified the following important spaces: triangle of land north of the White Hart Inn; land south of Mentley Lane East; the burial ground associated with the Puckeridge Evangelical Congregational Chapel and Playing Fields associated with the Primary School. These represent open spaces and other landscape features within the Conservation Area that materially contribute to its character or appearance and will be protected.

7.15. Planning Control – Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Only the most significant trees are shown diagrammatically. Subject to certain exceptions all trees in a Conservation Area are afforded protection and a person wanting to carry out works has to notify the Council. Trees that have not been identified may still be considered suitable for protection by Tree Preservation Orders. Owners are advised to make regular inspections to check the health of trees in the interests of amenity and Health and Safety. As previously advised some hedges may be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

7.16. Planning Control –Important views. The most important views within and out of the Conservation area are diagrammatically shown. Policy BH6 is particularly relevant.

7.17. Enhancement Proposals. The Appraisal has identified a number of elements that detract that are summarised in the Table below together with a proposed course of action. Within the staff and financial resources available, Council Officers will be pro-active and provide assistance. It must be recognized that such improvements will frequently only be achieved with the owners co-operation.

Detracting element	Location	Proposed Action.
Utility poles	Near 37- 41 High Street and adjacent to Crown and Falcon PH.	Discuss options for removal/ improvements with utility company.
Tipped rubbish	Triangle of land north of White	Seek to remove in co-operation with owners.

	Hart PH	
Signage and entrance gate	Triangle of land north of White Hart PH	Seek to rationalize/remove signs and repaint gate.
Signage	Repair Garage, Buntingford Road	Discuss potential of reducing impact with owners.
Signage	White Hart PH	Discuss potential of reducing impact with owners.
Other actions		
Secure long term future of Milestone near no. 16 High Street. Discuss with the County Council and seek preliminary advice from English Heritage.		

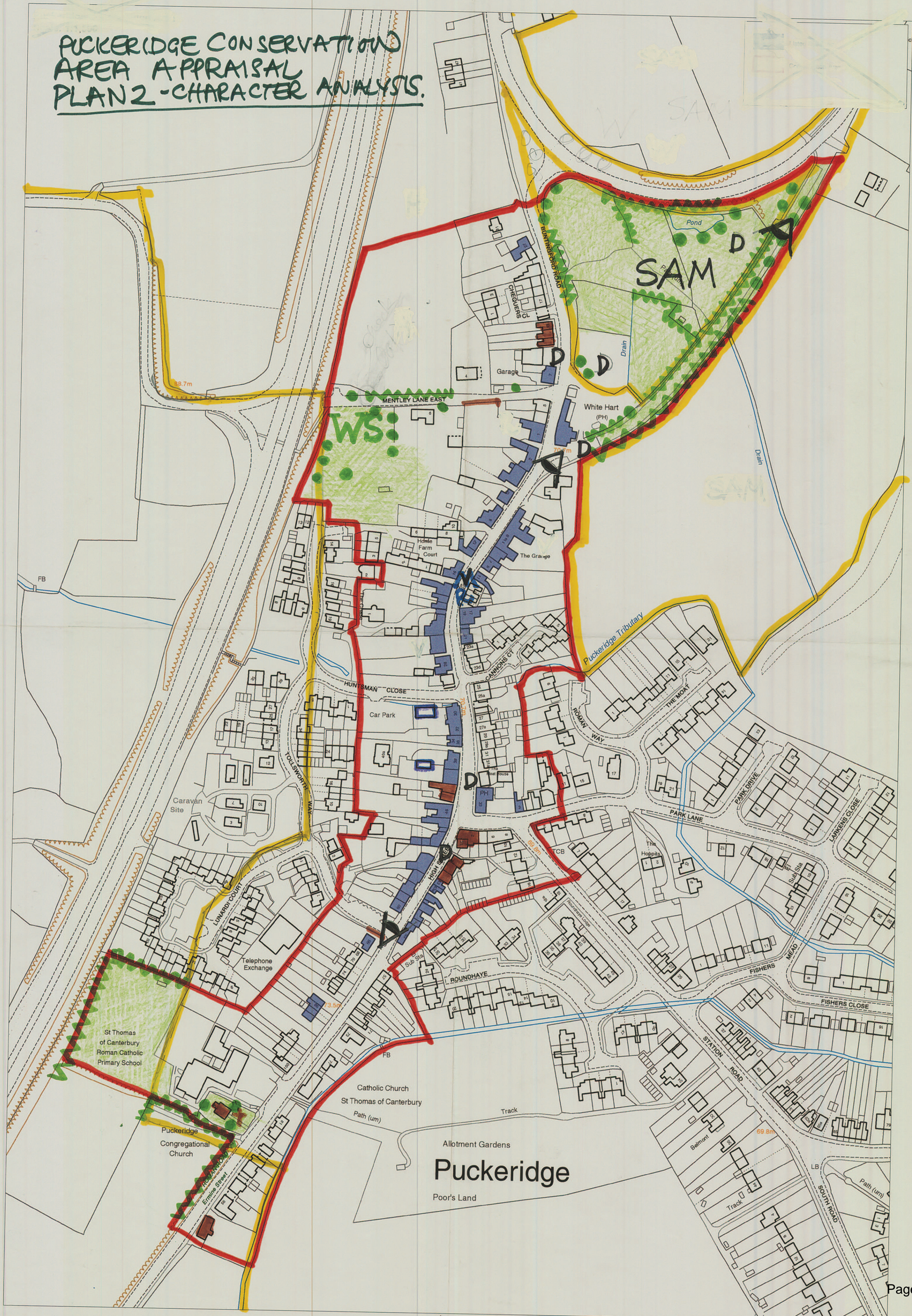
7.18. The features identified in paragraphs 7.1 – 7. 17 are shown on Plan 3.

Appendix 1. Guidance notes produced by East Hertfordshire District Council. The following represent useful technical information and can be obtained via the details provided above.

- 1. Brick Repointing and Repair.**
- 2. Conservation Areas.**
- 3. Cleaning Historic Brickwork.**
- 4. Farm Buildings.**
- 5. Flint and Flint Wall Repair.**
- 6. Hard Landscaping in Historic Areas.**
- 7. Listed Buildings.**
- 8. Rainwater Goods and Lead.**
- 9. Shopfronts.**

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PUCKERIDGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL PLAN 2 - CHARACTER ANALYSIS.



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CHARACTER ANALYSIS KEY

EXISTING CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY



SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS



AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE



INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES



OTHER INDIVIDUALLY LISTED FEATURES

Milestone Marker



LISTED BUILDINGS 'AT RISK' OR OTHER LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES IN NEED OF REPAIR / REFURBISHMENT



IMPORTANT BUILDINGS IN THE CURTILAGES OF LISTED BUILDINGS



UNLISTED BUILDINGS THAT MAKE AN IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC CONTRIBUTION



OTHER DISTINCTIVE FEATURES THAT MAKE AN IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC CONTRIBUTION

Walls/railings

Tombstones



IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES



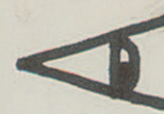
GENERAL LOCATION OF IMPORTANT TREES/HEDGEROWS



WILDLIFE SITES



IMPORTANT VIEWS



DETRACTING ELEMENTS



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PUCKERIDGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL PLAN 3 - MANAGEMENT PLAN



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MANAGEMENT PLAN KEY

All Local Plan Policies and Government planning policies set out in the 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPP) apply as appropriate

REVISED CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY: Local Policies BH5-BH6 particularly apply



SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE: Local Policies BH1-BH3 particularly apply



INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES: NPP policies apply



OTHER INDIVIDUALLY LISTED FEATURES: NPP policies apply

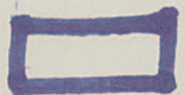
Milestone Marker



LISTED BUILDINGS 'AT RISK' OR OTHER LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES IN NEED OF REPAIR/ REFURBISHMENT



IMPORTANT BUILDINGS IN THE CURTILAGES OF LISTED BUILDINGS: NPP policies apply

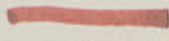


UNLISTED BUILDINGS TO BE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION



OTHER DISTINCTIVE FEATURES TO BE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION WITHIN PARAMETERS OF EXISTING LEGISLATION: (includes features within the curtilage of Listed Buildings and walls/railings above the specified heights)

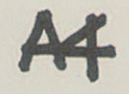
Walls/railings



Tombstones



SELECTED FEATURES ON UNLISTED BUILDINGS WHERE ADDITIONAL CONTROLS ARE PROPOSED SUBJECT TO FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND NOTIFICATION (by Article 4 Direction)



IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES TO BE PROTECTED



GENERAL LOCATION OF IMPORTANT TREES/HEDGEROWS TO BE PROTECTED WITHIN PARAMETERS OF LEGISLATION



WILDLIFE SITES TO BE PROTECTED: Local policies Env 14 and Env 16 particularly apply



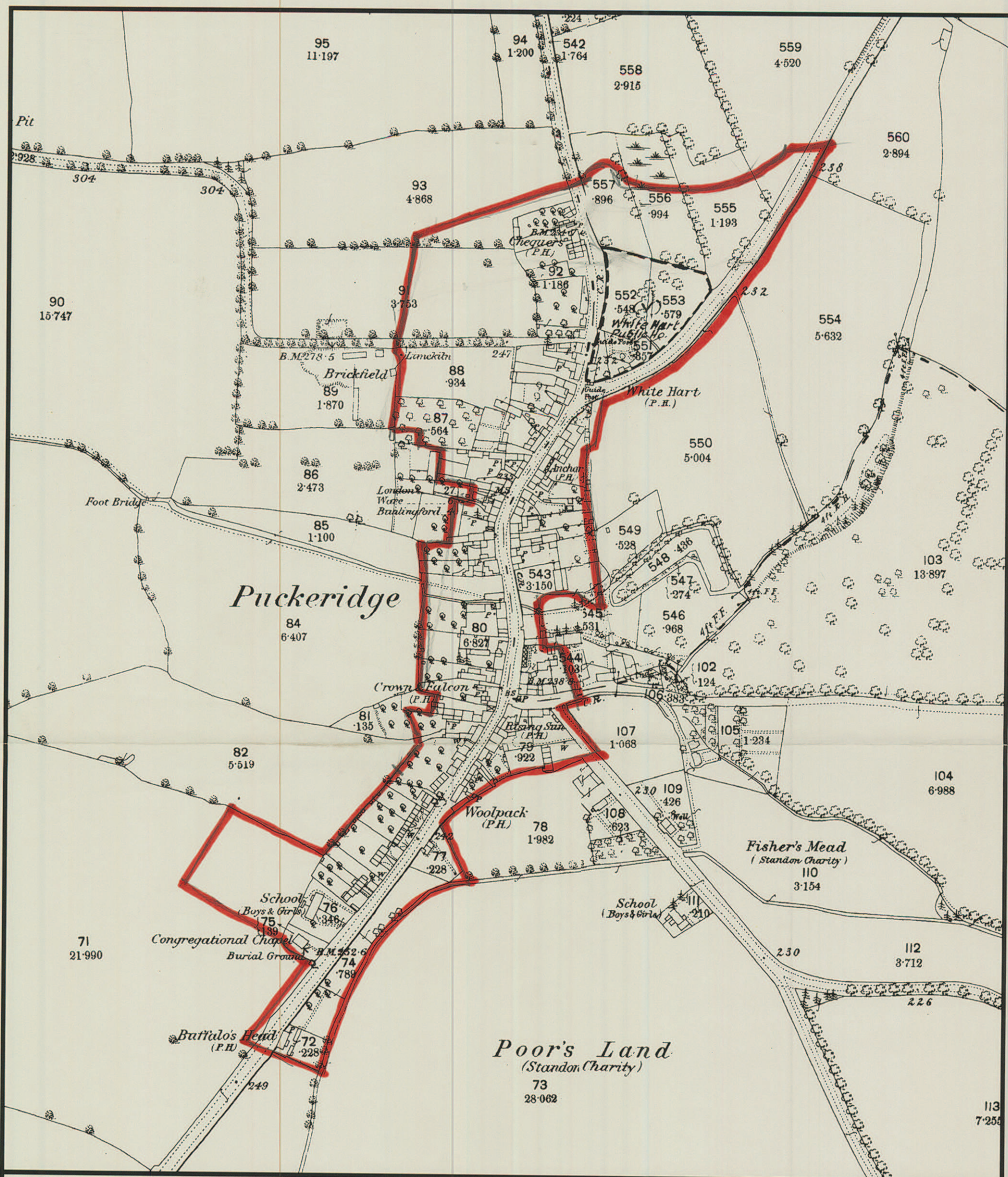
SELECTED IMPORTANT VIEWS TO BE PROTECTED



PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS



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Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal.

Plan 1.

Existing Conservation Area boundary approximately plotted on Map dating from 1874.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 9 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

STANDON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

WARD(S) AFFECTED: Thundridge & Standon

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To enable Members to consider the Standon Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> That	
(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Standon Conservation Area Appraisal be supported;
(B)	authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary; and
(C)	the Standon Conservation Area Appraisal be supported for adoption.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:	
(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Standon Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed; and
(B)	the Standon Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

1.0 Background.

- 1.1 East Herts has a rich environmental heritage which includes 42 Conservation Areas. The East Herts Local Plan commits the Council to review its Conservation Areas, a requirement which is also set out in national legislation.
- 1.2 The review of Standon's Conservation Area is the third in a series of reviews undertaken in 2012/2013. These reviews can now be presented for Members consideration. In each case a report will be presented when a public consultation exercise has been undertaken in relation to each individual settlement.
- 1.3 Each document identifies the special character of the respective Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detract from the identified character. Existing boundaries will be reviewed and, where appropriate, practical enhancement proposals will be suggested.
- 1.4 Once Members have considered each Appraisal, and the document has been adopted by the Council, they will become a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications.

2.0 Standon's Conservation Area Appraisal

- 2.1 Standon's Conservation Area was first designated in 1968. The Standon Conservation Area Appraisal was completed in 2013. There was a period of public consultation between September and October 2013. A public exhibition and meeting was held on 19th September 2013 at which about 20 members of the public were in attendance. Responses were received from a couple of local residents and other points were raised at the public meeting. The Parish Council provided comments on the document as well as providing local information. The headline issues are set out in the following paragraphs:
- 2.2 *General content of Appraisal:* The Appraisal sets out a revision to the Conservation Area boundary to exclude land and properties west of the River Rib and south of Paper Mill Lane. It identifies the key environmental features and the manner in which their quality can be maintained. In relation to Standon the most relevant ones are: Listed Buildings including structures in their curtilages; non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection; other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection and

important open land and spaces.

- 2.3 *Listed buildings and structures in their curtilages:* These are protected by legislation and have been identified in the Appraisal.
- 2.4 *Non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection:* A small number have been identified that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and these should be retained through the planning process.
- 2.5 *Other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection:* A number have been identified and include railings, tombstones and Standon Puddingstone. These are important to the rural qualities and character of Standon. Protection could formally be achieved through the introduction of an Article 4 Direction. Prior to considering such a course of action, the Council would need to establish ownership and discuss the matter further with respective owners.
- 2.6 *Important open land and spaces:* The Appraisal has identified a number of such important open spaces that materially contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area that should be protected through the planning process.
- 2.7 *Enhancement proposals to deal with detracting elements:* A number have been identified and include the visual impact the industrial estate has on the conservation area and traditional farm buildings which are in need of repair. It is accepted that such improvements will often only be carried out with the co-operation of owners and other local bodies and organisations. However the District Council may have a role to play in some instances, for example by offering technical advice; by determining applications and where appropriate offering grant assistance.

3.0 Consultation Feedback

- 3.1 Standon Parish Council have provided comments, as have some local residents. Comments received through the consultation process are set out in the table included as **Essential Reference Paper B** arranged in the subject order set out above.
- 3.2 **Essential Reference Paper C** is a copy of the Standon Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan as it appeared at the consultation draft stage with track changes to show how the

final document will appear. This also includes the maps.

- 3.3 In summary it is recommended that the Standon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be adopted and be used in the process of determining planning applications.
- 4.0 Implications/ Consultations Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper A**

Background Papers

Notes of the public meeting and letters submitted in response to consultation.

Contact Member: Cllr Mike Carver – Executive member for Strategic Planning and Transport
mike.carver@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and Building Control, ext 1407
Kevin.steptoe@eastherts.gov.uk

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives	<p>Place This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	<i>Community consultation has been undertaken as set out in the report</i>
Legal:	<i>Preparation of the Appraisal fulfils statutory requirements.</i>
Financial:	<p><i>Costs associated with the preparation of the Appraisal are met from within existing staffing and operational budgets.</i></p> <p><i>The Appraisal suggests works and actions which could be undertaken to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation Area and remove detracting elements. The Council is not committed to undertaking these further actions. There will be potential revenue and capital costs associated with doing so – which can be further assessed on reaching a decision whether to undertake further action.</i></p>
Human Resource:	<i>No additional staffing implications</i>
Risk Management:	<i>No significant risk issues</i>

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Essential Reference Paper B

Issue	Representations made	Officer comment
Changes to the Conservation Area Boundary	<p>The changes to the boundary have been objected to by the majority of the respondents, including Standon Parish Council. The reasons for maintaining the current boundary include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The current area encompasses the space constantly used by the local residents. 2. It acts as an extra barrier against development 3. The Industrial area contributes to the vibrancy and diversity of village life, demonstrating the mixture of different uses buildings have within the conservation area. 4. The new boundary does not take into account the amenity the space provides for local walkers. 5. Keeping the railway bridge in the conservation area as it is the last remaining component of the railway. <p>The owner of Oakford has no objection to their front garden and drive being included within the conservation area. Another respondent goes further, suggesting that this building is included within the boundary.</p>	<p>The officers recognise the contribution the land to be removed makes to the interpretation of Standon as a village, however the land does not comply with the criteria set out for inclusion within a conservation area; Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that Conservation Areas are defined as being 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance'. The industrial estate is considered not to be an area of special architectural or historical interest. The other areas form part of the open countryside and therefore their inclusion does not adhere to criteria for inclusion. The railway bridge is recognised as having historic interest, however as it is largely hidden from view and not visually prominent on the street scene its removal from the conservation area is considered to be acceptable. To conclude, officers continue to hold the view that the proposed boundary is the most appropriate.</p> <p>Presently the officers do not consider the building to contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p>

	The Parish Council agree to the inclusion of the house on Stortford Road into the conservation area and subsequently the extended boundary.	
Enhancement proposals to deal with detracting elements	<p>A respondent notes that large bushes and trees within Half Acres have overgrown into the Ford, restricting the view of it.</p> <p>Respondent notes that the Northern side of Stortford Road, where it is recognised that there are important trees or hedgerows, is untidy and could be improved.</p>	<p>As this building is situated within the parcel of land to be removed from the conservation area, there are no enhancement proposals.</p> <p>Officers support any solution which sees the area improved.</p>
Other minor comments	<p>Two respondents suggest that the row of four cottages on the High Street, between the Red House and The Star pub be considered as <i>unlisted buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution</i>.</p> <p>The respondents support the recognition of numbers 6 and 7 The Alms Houses as unlisted buildings which make an important contribution to the area.</p>	Officers do not consider these altered mid-20th century properties to have sufficient architectural qualities or historic significance to be specially identified.



STANDON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

2013



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This Appraisal has been produced by Officers of East Hertfordshire District Council to assess the current condition of the Standon Conservation Area, to identify where improvements can be made and to advise on any boundary changes that are appropriate. The document is in draft form and will be subject to public consultation and agreement by District Council Members.

1. Introduction.

1.1. The historic environment cannot be replaced and is a resource that is both fragile and finite. Particularly in an age when society and its needs change with rapidity, the various historic and architectural elements of Conservation Areas can be perceived to interact in a complex manner and create a 'unique sense of place' that is appreciated by those lucky enough to reside in such special places and by the many interested persons who appreciate and visit them.

1.2. East Hertfordshire District has a particularly rich and vibrant built heritage, featuring 42 Conservation Areas and approximately 4,000 fine listed buildings displaying a variety of styles representative of the best of architectural and historic designs from many centuries. Generally and very importantly the clear distinction between built form and open countryside has been maintained.

1.3. The District is situated in an economically buoyant region where an attractive environment, employment opportunities and excellent transport links, road rail and air, make it a popular destination to live and work. In addition to London a short commuting distance away, the District is influenced by other factors beyond its administrative area, such as Stansted Airport and the towns of Harlow and Stevenage. With such dynamics it is inevitable that the historic environment will be subject to pressures which emphasize the need to protect it.

1.4. The East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review, adopted in April 2007, recognise these facts and committed the Council to review its Conservation Areas and their boundaries. The production of this document is part of this process.

1.5. Conservation Areas are environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. In addition to the individual qualities of the buildings themselves, there are other factors such as the relationships of the

buildings with each other, the quality of the spaces between them and the vistas and views that unite or disrupt them. The relationship with adjoining areas and landscape, the quality of trees, boundary treatments, advertisements, road signage, street furniture and hard surfaces, are also important features which can add to or detract from the Conservation Area.

1.6. This Appraisal recognises the importance of these factors and will consider them carefully. Once approved it will be regarded as a 'material consideration' when determining planning applications. The document also puts forward simple and practical management proposals that would improve the character of the Conservation Area and which are capable of being implemented as and when resources permit.

1.7. The recommendations concerning non-listed buildings and structures are normally formed by the field workers observations made from the public realm and seldom involve internal inspection or an assessment of their structural condition. Therefore recommendations contained in this Appraisal might be subject to reconsideration through the planning application process, where that is necessary, and which would involve the submission of additional information. Similar considerations may apply to estimating dates of buildings.

1.8. This Conservation Appraisal will:

- Identify the special character of Standon;
- Identify elements that should be retained or enhanced;
- Identify detracting elements;
- Review the existing boundary;
- Put forward practical enhancement proposals;

1.9. The document will be prepared in partnership with the local community and the District Council wishes to involve the Parish Council and to the members of the local community through the consultation process that will follow. The Council acknowledges the content of the Standon and Puckeridge Village Study undertaken by the local Amenities Society on behalf of the Parish Council in 1994.

1.10. Acknowledgement and thanks are recorded to Hertfordshire County Council who, in conjunction with English Heritage, prepared an archeological survey of Standon (one of a series of 25)

upon which much of the historical background contained in this appraisal, is based.

1.11. This Appraisal is written in three parts: Part A - Legal and Policy Framework. Part B - Appraisal; Part C - Management Proposals.

PART A - LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

2. Legal and Policy framework.

2.1. The legal background for designating a Conservation Area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This states that the Council shall from time to time designate Conservation Areas, which are defined as being *'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance'*. The same section of the Act also requires that Councils undertake periodic reviews.

2.2. Section 71 of the Act requires Councils to *'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement'* of Conservation Areas and hold a public meeting to consider them.

2.3. Within Conservation Areas there are additional planning controls and if these are to be supported it is important that the designated area accords with the statutory definition and is not devalued by including land or buildings that lack special interest.

2.4. One of the most important additional planning controls that apply to Conservation Areas is set out at section 74 of the Act which states that *'a building in a conservation area shall not be demolished without the consent of the appropriate authority'*. This requirement is known as 'Conservation Area Consent' (CAC)* and is subject to certain exceptions. For example it does not apply to Listed Buildings which are protected by their own legislation but may be relevant to other non listed buildings in the Conservation Area above a specified threshold size if these are of sufficient merit

* Since October 2013 the need to obtain CAC has been replaced by a requirement to obtain planning permission

to warrant identification and protection. Looking for and identifying such buildings is therefore a priority of this Appraisal. Another exception relates to certain ecclesiastical buildings which are not subject to local authority listed building and conservation area administration provided an equivalent approved system of control is operated by the church authority. This is known as the 'ecclesiastical exemption'. Importantly in such circumstances, church authorities still need to obtain any necessary planning permissions from the Council.

2.5. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (as amended), defines the range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required (known as permitted development or PD) and this range is more restricted in Conservation Areas. For example the Order currently requires that the addition of dormer windows to roof slopes, various types of cladding, satellite dishes fronting a highway and a reduced size of extensions, all require planning permission in a Conservation Area whereas they would not require permission beyond.

2.6. However, even within Conservation Areas there are many other minor developments that do not require planning permission. So as to provide further protection the law allows Councils' to introduce additional controls if appropriate. Examples of such controls can include some developments fronting a highway or open space, such as an external porch, the painting of a house or the demolition of some gates, fences or walls. The removal of important architectural features that are important to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area or individual buildings within it such as distinctive porches, windows or walls or railings to non-listed properties can be subject to a more detailed assessment and if appropriate made subject to protection by a legal process known as an 'Article 4 Direction'. The use of such Directions can only be made in justified circumstances and a clear assessment of each Conservation Area considerably assists in this respect. In conducting this Appraisal, consideration will be given as to whether or not such additional controls are necessary.

2.7. Works to Trees. Another additional planning control relates to trees located within Conservation Areas. Setting aside various exceptions principally relating to size and condition, any proposal to fell or carry out works to trees has to be 'notified' to the Council within 6 weeks of the works. The Council may then decide make the tree/s subject to a Tree Preservation Order. This Appraisal diagrammatically identifies only the most significant trees or

groups of trees that make a particularly important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Other trees not specifically identified may still be suitable for statutory protection.

2.8. Some hedges may be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. This legislation is extremely complicated and only applies in certain situations that are determined by the location of the hedge, its age and or its historical importance, the wildlife it supports and its number of woody species.

2.9. National Planning Policy Framework. Published in March 2012, this document replaces previous advice, including PPS 5, Planning for the Historic Environment. The principle emphasis of the new framework is to promote sustainable development. Economic, social and environmental roles should not be considered in isolation because they are mutually dependent and positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment should be sought, including replacing poor design with better design. Whilst architectural styles should not be imposed it is considered proper to reinforce local distinctiveness.

2.10. In relation to the historic environment the new National Planning Policy Framework advises as follows:

- There should be a positive strategy in the Local Plan for the conservation of the historic environment and up-to-date evidence used to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make.
- Conservation Areas. Such areas must justify such a status by virtue of being of '*special architectural or historic interest*'.
- Heritage assets. A Heritage asset is defined as '*a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listings)*'.
- Considerable weight should be given to conserving such heritage assets and the more important they are the greater the weight. For example the effect of a development proposal on a non- designated heritage asset should be taken into account and a balanced judgment reached. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II Listed Building should be exceptional

whilst harm to heritage assets of higher status, e.g. a grade I or II* Listed Building should be wholly exceptional.

- Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that preserve such elements should be approved.
- The use of Article 4 Directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations *'where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the well being of the area...'*
- Green Areas. Such areas of particular importance can properly be identified for special protection as Local Green Spaces in selected situations.

2.11. East Hertfordshire's environmental initiatives and Local Plan Policies. East Hertfordshire is committed to protecting Conservation Areas and implementing policies which preserve and enhance them; to support their preservation through the publication of design and technical advice and to be pro-active by offering grants and administering an Historic Buildings Grant Service. With regard to the latter grants are awarded on a first come first served basis in relation to listed buildings and other unlisted buildings of architectural or historic interest. The maximum grant will not normally exceed £1,000.

2.12. In respect of the above the Council has produced a number of leaflets and guidance notes that are available on request. Further details are provided in Appendix 1.

2.13. The Council also has a 'Buildings at Risk Register', originally produced in 2006 and updated in 2012/13. In relation to Standon Parish there are several buildings entered on the Register as being 'at risk' although there are none located in the Standon Conservation Area. Grant assistance not exceeding £10,000 may be available for works that lead to such buildings' long term security.

2.14. The East Herts Local Plan was adopted by the Council in 2007. The 'saved' policies set out in the plan remain in force and are relevant in relation to Conservation Area and Historic Building considerations. The Local Plan and its policies can be viewed on the Council's website or a copy can be obtained from the Council (contact details are set out in section 7)

2.15. In accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is in the process of preparing a planning policy document which will replace the 2007 Local Plan. This will be known as the East Herts District Plan (DP). Once adopted the DP will contain the relevant Council planning policies.

2.16. Standon Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 and most recently in 2000.

Part B - APPRAISAL

3. Origins and historic development.

3.1. The County Archeologist advises that Standon was part of the late Iron Age and Roman landscape. Two Roman coins, one of Carausius and another of Tetricus were found in the garden of a Mill End Cottage in the late 19th century. Tetricus was Emperor of the Gallic Empire, 271-274 AD whilst Carausius declared himself Emperor of Britain, minting his own coins and giving birth to a brief period in antiquity known as the Carausian Revolt, 286-296 AD.

3.2. During restoration of St. Mary's church in the 19th century earlier foundations were revealed suggesting the presence of a previous Saxon church.

3.3. Domesday Book refers to the manorial holding as being Standone and its first reference to being a medieval borough dates to the mid 13th century. At the time of the Domesday survey in 1086 it was the fourth largest town in Hertfordshire. At this time Standone is recorded as having a priest, 5 mills, about 6 acres of vineyard and extensive woodlands. This comparative wealth and prosperity and success as a market town continued through the Medieval period until the 14th century, at which time, nearby settlements such as Buntingford, better located on Ermine Street, grew rapidly. To such a degree in fact that Edward III was petitioned by the Lord of Standon Manor to revoke Buntingford Market, an action that proved only partly successful. Standon Market had lapsed about the mid 17th century as had a subsequent market and fairs by the early 18th century.

3.4. Standon as we see it today, consisted earlier and in part of properties or 'burgages' in which the merchant or burgess lived.

The market was held in Standon High Street and the Fair Ground on the current playing fields/open space to the east of the High Street. The size of the church is an indication of local wealth and prosperity and the nearby Knights Court may have been a hospice of the Knights Hospitallers or may have held a manorial courthouse to grant leases of the Manor.

3.5. Most listed buildings date from the 17th century or earlier. As can be observed buildings of this period and also from the 18th century were frequently altered or renovated or refaced in the 19th century. During the 17th and 18th centuries, agriculture predominated although some industry was present and by way of example the water mill on Paper Mill Lane was manufacturing paper during the early 18th century.

3.6. Agriculture still predominated in the 19th century but other industry in the form of a flour mill (Standon New Mill) was built in 1901 and was connected to the Old Mill on the other side of the River Rib. The railway was constructed in 1863 as part of the Great Eastern network, being the Stanstead Abbots to Buntingford branch line.

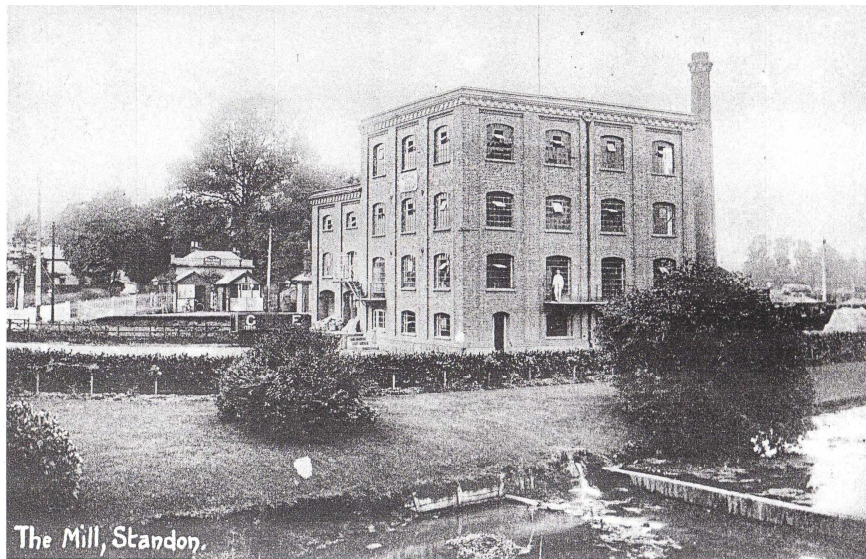
3.7. The map dating from 1874 indicates that the general configuration of the High Street, Paper Mill Lane and the River Rib has changed very little. Interesting features noted on this map include the railway line and station; a Windmill to the south of Hadham Road, opposite the Almshouses; a school for Boys and Girls at Knights Court; the Paper Mill at Paper Mill Lane; a Corn Mill at Mill End; a brewery at Mill End ; a large building called The Vicarage opposite New Street Farm on New Street (now Kents Lane) and a Smithy on the High Street.



Picture 1 – High Street, probably early 20th century (reproduced courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives and Records).

3.8. A later map dating from 1887 shows the above features with the exception of the brewery at Mill End by which time there was a new Smithy on the High Street /Stortford Road junction. Other new features at this date include an Institute (now the existing Village Hall); Mission Hall to rear of the former Falcon Inn (now Falcon House) and housing fronting the south of Stortford Road.

3.9. Very few changes had occurred during the period to 1920 with the exception of construction of Standon New Mill by which time the map of this date no longer refers to the Institute, Mission Hall nor Smithy.



Picture 2 – Standon Mill, early 20th century; note Standon Railway Station and platform beyond.

3.10. Mapping from 1938 shows Southfield Cottages and cinema off Station Road and Green Leys Cottages on Hadham Road whilst the map from 1963 shows Town Farm Crescent, Vicarage Close and the Factory site between dismantled railway and River Rib, had been built. By this time the cinema site had been redeveloped for industry.

3.11. Kelly's Post Office Directory of Hertfordshire 1874 describes Standon as being '*an extensive village having a station on the Buntingford Branch Railway...*' Trades listed include 5 beer retailers, hay and straw dealer, grocer, 2 wheelwrights, grocer/draper, carpenter, 3 blacksmiths, shopkeeper, furniture broker, butcher, brick maker, shoemaker, miller and brewer, baker and butcher. The public houses referred to are the Waggon and Horses, Feathers, Star, Railway Tavern, Falcon, Nags Head, Lamb and Flag, Old Bell, Fox and Hounds (ColliersEnd) and Bay Horse (Old Hall Green). Clearly 19th century Standon was a busy self contained village, generally reflecting the norm of rural settlements at this time.

3.12. The Place Names of Hertfordshire published by Cambridge University Press refer to the following ancient names: Standune, 944; Standone, 1086 and Stondon, 1440. Believed to derive from 'stan' and 'dun', these words can be translated as 'stony hill'.

3.13. An interesting historical connection relates to the Listed Building known as Douro House. This property takes its name from the Douro River on the Iberian Peninsular, scene of a victory in May 1809 by the Duke of Wellington, a local Standon landowner. A local source notes that Douro Farm was bought by the Duke of Wellington with the prize money he received from the Battle of Waterloo.

3.14. Another military connection relates to a Thomas Quin who was Commandant of the 3rd Punjab Infantry during the 19th century and whose gravestone is located in the churchyard.

3.15. The existing Conservation Area boundary is shown on Plan 1, a map dating from 1874.

4. General Designations and criteria used to identify Important Features.

4.1. There are no designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Conservation Area.

4.2. Areas of Archaeological Significance. Nearly the entirety of Standon's Conservation Area east of the former Railway line is so designated. Not all archeological sites are of equal importance and the Council will decide a course of action that may vary from recording any remains prior to development or protecting it from development, when determining planning applications.

4.3. Listed buildings. Individually listed buildings have been identified, plotted and some very briefly described, such abbreviated descriptions being based on the Dept. of Environment list. Full descriptions can be obtained on line at English Heritage's web site or Heritage Gateway. Such Listed Buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilages of listed buildings, if they pre-date 1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings. There are a number of such walls that are important to Standon's visual, architectural and historic heritage.

4.4. Non-listed buildings of quality and worthy of protection from demolition. There are also other non-listed buildings and structures that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area and these have been separately identified. The basic questions asked in identifying such buildings/structures are:

- (a) Is the non listed building/structure of sufficient architectural or historic interest whose general external form and appearance remains largely unaltered?
- (b) Does the building contain a sufficient level of external original features and materials?
- (c) Has the building retained its original scale without large inappropriate modern extensions that destroy the visual appearance particularly in respect of the front elevation?
- (d) Is the building/ structure visually important in the street scene?

4.5. Trees and Hedgerows. The basic criteria for identifying important trees and hedgerows are:-

- (a) They are in good condition;
- (b) They are visible at least in part from public view points.
- (c) They make a significant contribution to the street scene or other publicly accessible areas.

4.6. Open spaces or gaps of quality that contribute to the visual importance of the Conservation Area where development would be inappropriate have been identified. The basic question asked in identifying such areas is:

- (a) the open space or gap an important landscape feature contributing to the general spatial quality and visual importance of the Conservation Area? Private open spaces forming an important setting for an historic asset and unkempt spaces that have the potential to be enhanced are candidates for selection subject to complying with the principle question.

4.7. Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution are noted. Of importance in this respect are several 19th century cast iron pumps. There are also a number of other features that are unprotected which add to Standon's character.

4.8. Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions in justified circumstances. It may

be appropriate to introduce such measures on a selective basis subject to further consideration and notification.

4.9. Article 4 - criteria for selection in relation to features associated with selected non listed properties.

In relation to chimneys, these need to be in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property, prominent in the street scene and complete with chimney pots. Exceptionally particularly important chimney stacks without pots may be selected.

In relation to selected windows, these need to be on front or side elevations, fronting and visible from the street/s, contemporary with the age of the property and where the majority of windows of respective elevations retain their original characteristics and have not been replaced by modern glazing units.

- In relation to walls or railings, those selected need to be below the prescribed heights (1m fronting a highway including a footpath or bridleway, water course or open space or 2m elsewhere) that require prior consent for their demolition, be prominent in the street scene and make a positive architectural or historic contribution to its visual appearance.
- In relation to other features, these may include good quality architectural detailing to non-listed buildings, constructed of wood, metal or other materials.
- It may also be appropriate to introduce Article 4 Directions to retain quality buildings below the prescribed threshold where consent for demolition in Conservation Areas is not required.

4.10. Features that detract from the character of the area or which are in poor repair have been identified. The large industrial estate between the former railway line and the River Rib detracts.

4.11. Important views are identified. The most important is the view of the church and the varied roofline of the High Street when viewed from Paper Mill Lane, a popular route for walkers. Another is of the 19th century chimney at Mill End.



Picture 3 – View of Church and High Street from River Rib.

4.12. In suggesting any revisions to the Conservation Area boundary consideration has been given as to whether or not the land or buildings in question form part of an area of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be conserved. The extent of the Conservation Area can include open land that has historical associations with the built form. This may particularly be the case if such open land is environmentally important and visually forms part of the Conservation Area's setting and is distinct from open farmland

5. General Character and Setting of Standon.

5.1. In terms of its wider setting, the Council has produced a Landscape Character Assessment (2007) as a Supplementary pLAnning Document. Standon Conservation Area is situated in the Upper Rib Valley where the river meanders along the valley bottom and is a feature of this part of the settlement. The main A120 road rises steeply from the junction of High Street in both easterly and westerly directions.

5.2. Whilst the general character of the whole Parish has changed significantly elsewhere with the influx of 20th century development,

Standon's existing Conservation Area has retained its historic identity with the exception of the commercial area between the River Rib and the former railway line. The latter industry and associated activities and signage, whilst important to local employment provision, detract from the character of the area. Due to its location and existing screening, its detrimental impact is localized.

5.3. Throughout the Conservation Area trees in groups or as individual specimens add to its quality. Elsewhere part of Standon's charm is the River Rib and the pasture land to its east, over which important views of the church and historic roofline can be seen.

5.4. There are about 175 Listed Buildings in the Parish as a whole including Puckeridge, 15 of which are Grade II* and one, St Mary's church in Standon, being Grade I.

5.5. About 40 of this total are concentrated in Standon's designated Conservation Area. Here all centuries between the 14th and 20th are represented except the 19th, although during this latter period some of the earlier properties were altered or added to. An obvious example of where this has occurred relates to Knights Court, a manorial courthouse dating from the 16th century whose front elevation has been infilled with 19th century red herringbone brickwork. The Church dates from the 14th century whilst the telephone kiosk designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott is the sole representative of the 20th century. Buildings from the 17th century dominate with nearly 60% dating from this period (or as the Listed Building description cautiously and frequently adds '*...or earlier*'). Nearly 30% date from the 18th century. All are grade II except Knights Court and 59 High Street that are grade II* and the church which, as previously noted, is Grade I.

Comment [RM1]: Standon House

5.6. As set out below this Appraisal identifies other buildings and structures of quality that are not individually listed.

5.7. In summary the existing designated Conservation Area is visually rich in quality buildings and landscape features apart from the industrial complex referred to above. However parts of it relate more to the open countryside beyond whilst quality 19th century housing to the south of Stortford Road and currently beyond the Conservation Area could justifiably claim to be considered as part of it.

5.8. The existing Conservation Area is clearly defined and separated from the modern development to the north and is composed of three main identity areas:-

5.9. Area A - consists of the very attractive and historic High Street bounded by the River Rib in the west and includes the western part of Paper Mill Lane and the eastern section of Hadham Road, The latter two roads, different in name only, effectively form a physical continuation of the High Street. Land south of Paper Mill Lane relates more to the open countryside than to the built environment.

5.10. Area B – Consists of Mill End, north of Stortford Road and including the converted Flour Mill, is an area of mixed land uses that the Village Study describes as being an *‘interesting reminder of the days when workers lived...in the shadow of their work place’*.

5.11. Area C – Consists of agricultural land and associated buildings, south of Kents Lane extending to Paper Mill Lane and including the industrial complex between the River Rib and the old railway line. The agricultural land in this area relates more to the open countryside than to the built environment.

5.12. There is a fourth area - Area D. This is currently adjacent to but beyond the existing Conservation Area boundary and consists of quality late 19th century housing to the south of Stortford Road.

6. Detailed Character Analysis.

6.1. Area A - High Street bounded by River Rib to west, including western part of Paper Mill Lane and eastern part of Hadham Road.

6.2. *General overview.* The High Street, Paper Mill Lane and Hadham Road meet at the focal historic centre of Standon where the church, its tower and graveyard dominate the local scene. The considerable width of the High Street together with its several small green swards flanked by high quality Listed Buildings generally dating from the 17th century or earlier, provides an historic environment of the highest quality. Several later 20th century buildings detract to a modest degree.

6.3. Paper Mill Lane provides access to Paper Mill House and is a narrow country lane well used by the village for walking and accessing the open countryside including the open arable land to the south of the lane. Pasture land to the north of the lane fulfills a

different landscape function acting as an important setting for the Conservation Area, particularly the Church and nearby buildings.

6.4. Archeological sites. The entirety of the High Street and its junction with Paper Mill Lane and Hadham Road is so designated. As previously indicated earlier foundations to the church may suggest the presence of a previous Saxon church. The size of the present church dating from the 13th century is a reflection of the wealth of the medieval settlement. The archeological data available from Hertfordshire County Council indicates that the Medieval Borough extended from Stortford Road to Hadham Road with a number of the ancient 'burgage' plot boundaries reflecting present day boundaries of some of the 17th century Listed Buildings. In short the area is of considerable archeological importance.

6.5. Individually Listed Buildings. In total there are approximately 30 individually listed buildings within this area, of which 22 are in the High Street, 5 in Hadham Road and 2 at the junction of Paper Mill Lane. Of particular importance is the group clustered around the church. The latter with its detached tower, described as being 'unique in the County', is listed Grade I. Close by is the Grade II* Knights Court, possibly a manorial courthouse dating from the 16th century or earlier with its steep tiled roof and continuous jetty on north side facing the churchyard. Also in this general area is 59 High Street, an impressive Grade II* Queen Anne House overlooking the Market Place of the former Borough. The remaining buildings generally date from the 17th century with some having been re-modeled at later dates. In this respect Church End Cottages which date from this period have been 'Gothicized' during the 19th century and form a particularly attractive picturesque group.

Comment [RM2]: Standon House



Picture 4 - Knights Court dating from 16th century, re-fronted in 19th century.

6.6. Some Listed Buildings also date from the 18th century and include farm buildings at the Paper Mill Lane entrance to the village, whose different materials and function are important elements in the local scene, particularly in their composition of views of the church. The Almshouses, 1- 5 Hadham Road are single storey with 5 no. prominent chimneys and tiled roof and are said to have once formed outbuildings to Standon Workhouse which fell into disuse after the Poor Law Act of 1834.

6.7. The whole grouping with its steeply sloping roofs and many prominent chimneys and juxtapositions of heights and materials provides a townscape of the highest quality that must be protected.

6.8. A group of listed farm buildings on the north side of Paper Mill Lane appear to be generally weather tight except for a rear eastern section in poorer condition with an asbestos roof. The latter who benefit significantly by installation of a new roof constructed of appropriate materials.

6.9 Building in the curtilage of a Listed Building An agricultural building fronting Paper Mill Lane, north side on the road frontage and close to rear extension of Douro House. From the late 19th century, of brick construction with simple geometric brick detailing, this building is protected by virtue of being of being pre 1948 and in the curtilage of a Listed Building.

6.10. Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. The following buildings have been identified.

6.11. Nos. 6-7 Hadham Road, north side. This late 20th century building erected in 1997 is a single storey bungalow constructed of brick weatherboarding and tiled roof with central chimney, albeit false. An unassuming modern building that is a good example of an appropriate infill development whose simplicity merges and is subservient to the qualities of adjacent Listed Buildings.

Comment [RM3]: Alms Houses

6.12. No. 6 Knights Court, Hadham Road, north side. A 19th century former school building described by the Listed Building description for adjoining Knights Court as being a 'C19 extension for Girls school not of special interest'. Although not considered worthy of listing at the time, the mass and scale and detailing such as its brick construction with decorative banding, tiled roof and prominent chimney, makes this building important in the street scene, despite later 20th century windows and sky light. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features, notably the prominent chimney, may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.13. Nos. 1-3 Rose Cottages, Hadham Road, south side. Group of 3 cottages constructed of gault brick with horizontal brick detailing and slate roof; 2 no chimneys. Also eroded plaque dated 1885 (?) Despite a more recent extension to no.3 and window replacements, this late 19th century group adds historic and architectural diversity to the street scene. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features, notably the prominent chimney, may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.14. Omega, Hadham Road, south side. Brick to ground floor, plaster to first floor. Recessed entrance with simple keystone detailing. Vertical sliding sash windows contemporary with buildings construction, probably in the early 20th century. Slate roof with tall central chimney. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features, including chimney and selected windows, may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.15. Village Hall, Hadham Road, south side. Late 19th century single storey institutional building constructed of gault brick with horizontal red brick detailing and red brick arch to central window with slate roof. Central plaque inscribed Workmans Institute 1886. Despite replacement windows and flat roof extension to rear, it is an interesting building of local historic interest. The building was

presented to the village in memory of **a** local persons killed in the Great War.

6.16. The Red House, High Street, west side. Late 19th century 2 storey building constructed of brick with steeply sloping tiled roof and prominent chimney and decorative bargeboard detailing. Vertical sliding sash windows. Despite later flat roof extension to rear, the height, scale and mass of the building, particularly its roof and chimney to front, adds to the character and diversity of the Conservation Area in this location. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.17. Group of properties including shops, the Post Office through to no. 22 High Street, west side. These properties date from the late 19th/early 20th century. Their varied height together with several chimneys and miscellaneous detailing such as decorative ridge tiles, scalloped hanging tiles to dormers, mixture of roofing materials, some original windows and other good quality features make for a particularly interesting group that adds considerably to the architectural qualities and diversity of this part of the High Street. . An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features relating to single dwelling houses may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 5 – Group of interesting non-listed properties, High Street, worthy of protection and retention.

6.18. Nos.15-19 High Street, east side. 19th century 2 storey gault brick group of cottages with slate roof and 3 no. distinctive decorative chimneys with original pots. Date plaque inscribed E Knight 1891. Some original windows remain. Despite other window replacements and other alterations, enough of historic and simple architectural qualities remain to warrant inclusion. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for chimney features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.19. No. 4 Stortford Road, south side, adjacent to Falcon House. Late 19th century distinctive gault brick property with red brick banding, quoins and window surrounds. Roof of slate with 2 no. decorative chimneys. Hertfordshire County archeological records advise that this house was purpose built for a blacksmith whose workshop was on the east side. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for chimney features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.20. Grafton House (accessed from Grafton Place), Stortford Road, south side. Late 19th century 2 storey house of gault brick construction with decorative red brick banding. The mass of the building and its hipped slate roof and distinctive chimney with slate hipped outbuilding to front is an important feature on this part of Stortford Road. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for chimney features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.21. Westwood's shop, corner of High Street and Kents Lane. A late 19th century brick building, painted white with pyramidal slate roof and distinctive chimney to Kents Lane elevation. Despite signage and later windows that detract, the mass of this building is important in the street scene, particularly when viewed from Mill End.

6.22. *Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution.* A particularly interesting and unusual feature is the 'Standon Puddingstone' on the small green that defines the junction of High Street/Hadham Road/Paper Mill Lane. According to local information this previously formed part of the church wall.

6.23. The following walls add to the character of this part of the Conservation Area - Boundary wall to front of Rose Cottages less than 1m in height, sensitively restored in part, brick and flint with rounded capping stones. Currently unprotected from demolition.

6.24. Boundary wall of brick between former school and Almshouses of height varying between about 1.5 – 3 m. Also brick and brick and flint wall to front of varying height less than 1 m. Also low brick wall less than 1m in height, fronting 6 Knights Court, partly rebuilt with rounded capping stones. Some not protected from demolition.

6.25. Boundary wall to church yard about 1.3 m in height of brick with brick capping, sensitively repaired in places and in good condition.

6.26. Boundary wall to Paper Mill Lane, about 2m in height, simple design, probably 19th century. Also wall attached to rear of same complex of agricultural buildings, approximately 2.5 m in height with rounded capping stones. Protected from demolition without consent virtue of height and being attached to a Listed Building.

6.27. Front boundary wall, Grafton House, of brick with rounded capping stones in excess of 1 m in height, thus protected from demolition without consent.

6.28. Of some interest are 2 no. bases to what are interpreted as being earlier metal street lamps manufactured by Adams Ltd of York. One is close to Rose End Cottage, the other near the Playing Field. Of lesser interest are 5 no. ornate metal street lamps believed to be relatively modern but which are in keeping with the Conservation area. The proper choice of such street furniture is important.

Comment [RM4]: Stench pipes from the sewers below

6.29. *Important open land, open spaces and gaps.* As previously mentioned open pasture land to the north of Paper Mill Lane acts as an important setting for this part of the Conservation Area of which it forms part. Between gaps in the hedgerows there are important views of the church and the village.

6.30. The Green containing the Standon Puddingstone is a small but important open space surrounded by simple metal railing within which there is an oak tree planted in 1911 to commemorate the Coronation of George V. It is well cared for and maintained.

6.31. The graveyard at St Mary's together with its extension is an extensive open space feature containing numerous gravestones of interest. Together with its traditional churchyard trees to boundary wall and avenue within the churchyard, it is an open space feature of considerably quality. The graveyard and its extension are well cared for and maintained.

6.32. On the eastern side of the High street there are 5 small areas of neatly cut grass swards whose visual function is to set off a fine group of listed buildings. The key to their success in the street scene is their simplicity and it is important to avoid the temptation to plant or add any decorative clutter.

6.33. The Playing Field is a strong and important feature in the street scene, particularly its well maintained hedge of native species fronting the High Street. Within its clearly defined area there are several maturing trees and strong boundaries to rear and to the southern side.

6.34. In summary these 5 open spaces all add significantly to the quality of the Conservation Area and all perform different landscape functions. It is very important that the care and attention

currently afforded to them continues and that their simple and traditional qualities are not compromised.

6.35. *Particularly important trees and hedgerows.* Worthy of specific mention are hedgerows to pasture land both sides of Paper Mill Lane, the hedgerow defining the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area, running at right angles to Hadham Road and the hedgerows defining the edges of the High Street Playing Fields. The trees in the churchyard make a very important contribution to the quality of the Conservation Area as do trees alongside the River Rib which provide screening to the industrial complex located to the west of the river.

6.36. *Important views.* As previously indicated the view of the church and village from Paper Mill Lane is particularly important and should be maintained, a quality reflected at local level as it is shown as being important in the locally produced Standon and Puckeridge Village Study.

6.37. *Elements out of character with the Conservation Area.* The industrial complex discussed later is not a significant detraction when viewed from the High Street or Paper Mill Lane because it is only partly visible from a few selected view points. Within Area A there are several mid/late 20th century infill developments that could have been designed more sensitively in relation to nearby historic buildings, in terms of scale and detail.

6.38. *Opportunities to secure improvements.* Retain through the planning process all those listed properties and unlisted properties, other distinctive features, trees, open spaces and views that have been identified as contributing to the quality of the area. Seek to negotiate repairs to agricultural barns in complex at entrance to village at Paper Mill Farm, including replacement of asbestos roof to barn at rear.

Comment [RM5]: Douro Farm

6.39. *Suggested boundary changes.* Remove land to south of Paper Mill Lane because it clearly forms part of the open countryside whilst at the same time retaining the frontage hedge within the Conservation Area. Removal of this area will not lead to any increased pressures for inappropriate development.

6.40. Area B - Mill End, including converted Flour Mill.

6.41. *General overview.* Mill End, north of Stortford Road is an area of mixed land uses and buildings of varying qualities that is

dominated in part by the height and mass of the former flour mill now very pleasingly converted to residential use and elsewhere by a chimney about 30 m in height, formerly associated with milling activities. The access road is narrow and the existing work units give rise to congested parking on occasions.

6.42. *Archeological sites.* Most of the area is designated as being of archaeological significance. As previously noted Roman coins have been found here. Otherwise much of the archeology is 19th century. In this respect Hertfordshire County records describe the steam Corn Mill, as having been built by Chapman Brothers in 1901 and connected to the Old Mill, powered by water and steam, on the other side of the river.

6.43. *Individually Listed Buildings.* The 5 Listed buildings in this area principally date from the 17th and 18th centuries except Town Farmhouse on the corner of Stortford Road which is an important late medieval Hall House with floor and chimney inserted at later date in the 16th century. Old Mill House in a Regency style dates from about 1800 and has an interesting glass roof conservatory to front. Storage barns on the western side of the road date from the 18th century were previously identified as being 'At Risk'. but in the intervening period since the original report was prepared, repair works have been carried out. A group of cottages to the east date from the 17th century.

6.44. *Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution.* The following buildings have been identified.

6.45. The Granary, Mill End Farm, now a residence, has been recently restored and is converted 19th century agricultural barns whose simple architectural treatment and weather boarding is generally appropriate.

6.46. Nos. 1 and 2 Mill End are two storey cottages dating from the late 19th century and are of brick construction with slate roof, single chimney and vertical sliding sash windows. Despite modern side extension to no. 1, this small group retains sufficient of its essential integrity and adds to the quality and variety of the street scene.

6.47. Standon Mill. The former flour mill building fronting Kents Lane was in active industrial production until the mid 20th century. Four storey in height and built of gault brick, it dominates this part of the Conservation Area. A number of original features remain including some windows, and a large inscription to front elevation

reading 'Standon 1901 Flour Mills'. These should be retained through the normal planning process. The residential conversion has been sensitively executed and very well detailed, retaining its essential architectural features and historic associations.



Picture 6 – The sensitively converted Flour Mill.

6.48. A chimney of about 30m in height, formerly associated with milling is a dominant and important feature in the local landscape. Constructed of gault brick on square base to about 5m, thereafter

tapered, it appears to be in reasonable condition, having been recently repaired.



Picture 7- Distinctive chimney, Mill End.

6.49. Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution. There are two walls, the first being attached to the converted barns of The Granary, Mill End Farm that is of flint construction and about 1.7m in height. It is covered in ivy that needs careful removal. The second is a short length of wall about 1m in height, with rounded brick capping on the access to Old Mill House, a Listed Building. The walls are protected from demolition without prior consent by virtue of being adjacent to a footpath and within the curtilage of a Listed Building, respectively.

6.50. Important open land, open spaces and gaps. The River is an important landscape feature although not highly visible from the public domain.

6.51. Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Several trees, particularly those to the south of Old Mill House make a significant contribution to the quality of this part of the Conservation Area.

6.52. *Important views.* The view of the chimney when seen from Mill End is very important.

6.53. *Elements out of character with the Conservation Area.* An industrial advertisement sign on red background on former mill building detracts.

6.54. *Opportunities to secure improvements.* There are no real opportunities to secure meaningful visual improvements other than seek to negotiate a more sympathetic sign on the former mill building. This view is shared by the locally prepared Village Study.

6.55. *Suggested boundary changes.* None are proposed.

6.56. Area C – Agricultural land and associated buildings south of Kents Lane to Paper Mill Lane, including the industrial complex west of the River Rib.

6.57. *General overview.* The historic buildings to the frontage of Kents Lane are an important architectural entity in this part of the Conservation Area. However the large scale agricultural buildings to the rear that are dominant in the landscape, detract. The open pasture land extending to Paper Mill Lane forms part of the open countryside and is traversed by a well used public footpath from which the industrial area west of the River Rib can be seen through gaps in its boundary hedge.



Picture 8 – Large scale agricultural buildings dominate landscape and detract when viewed from public footpath; additional landscaping is suggested.

6.58. Archeological sites. The land around Paper Mill House and the industrial area is designated as being an area of archeological significance. Hertfordshire County records advise that this might be on the site of a late Saxon and medieval watermill. Paper manufacture had commenced by 1713. Archeological associations with the modern industrial complex are unknown.

6.59. Individually Listed Buildings. Paper Mill House dates from the 17th century. New Street House and farm office dates from the 18th century and is described as having been '*extended to a square plan after 1843 for Duke of Wellington*'. Close by is an 18th century granary whilst further east is New Street Cottage, previously two houses, dating from the 18th century or earlier.

6.60. Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. The following buildings have been identified.

6.61. The China Garden Restaurant dates from the late 19th century at which time it was called the Railway Tavern. Two storeys render and painted brickwork, slate roof and four chimneys. Windows to upper floors are vertical sliding sash types that should be retained through the planning process. Despite addition to rear, modern windows to ground floor and advertisement signs that detract, the mass and scale of the building is important in the street scene which together with its historical associations, make it a suitable candidate for protection from demolition.

6.62. New Street Farm Cottage, 19th century or earlier on the western edge of the Conservation area is two storeys, red brick English bond with tiled roof and 2 no. chimneys with decorative barge boarding to dormers and elevation to Kents Lane. A pleasantly detailed dwelling which together with the brick and flint wall linking it to New Street House and farm office to the east make it an important feature on this approach to Standon. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.63. Agricultural barn on road frontage to east of New Street House and farm office. This long single storey late 19th century agricultural barn, of red brick Flemish bond construction and with slate roof is an important and distinctive feature. It has been sensitively rebuilt in part following demolition by road accident. It

is protected by virtue of being of being pre 1948 and in the curtilage of a Listed Building.



Picture 9 – 19th century agricultural barn, important element in approach to village, sensitively rebuilt in part.

6.64. *Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution.* The following walls add to the character of this part of the Conservation Area - 19th century gault brick wall of Flemish bond in excess of 1m in height with quality capping stones by Doulton and Company. Protected from demolition without prior consent virtue of height and within curtilage of the Bell PH, a Listed Building.

6.65. Wall between New Street Farm Cottage and New Street House and farm office. Constructed of brick and flint up to about 2.5m in height, this wall is an important feature protected from demolition without consent, virtue of its height.

6.66. Brick wall of simple design approximately 1.5 m in height within curtilage of listed Building, New Street House and farm office.

6.67. *Important open land, open spaces and gaps.* The open land between the modern farm buildings to the rear of New Street House

and farm office and Paper Mill Lane is well used by pedestrians accessing the countryside in this location by a public footpath. As noted previously this area is an integral part of the open countryside.

6.68. *Particularly important trees and hedgerows.* Trees alongside the River Rib and those elsewhere that provide screening to the industrial area are very important in this respect.

6.69. *Important views.* Extensive views across the open countryside and towards the Church and High Street are particularly important.

6.70. *Elements out of character with the Conservation Area.* There are two principle detracting features namely the modern agricultural buildings and the industrial estate. In addition signage to the China Garden Restaurant and 'landscaped' area at the junction of Station Road/ Kents Lane have detrimental impacts.

6.71. The large scale agricultural buildings, some with wide shallow spans are prominent features that adversely dominate the open countryside in this location and whose disruptive presence could be reduced by additional planting on adjacent pasture land.

6.72. The industrial estate consists of a grouping of commercial buildings with associated parked vehicles, open storage of pallets and materials and disruptive signage at the Kents Lane entrance point. Designated Conservation Areas need to be of 'special architectural or historic interest...' and clearly this commercial estate cannot be so described. However it is not highly visible in the context of the Conservation Area as a whole and its most disruptive impact is at the entrance where untidy fencing, numbers of uncoordinated advertisement signs make a serious detrimental impact. Elsewhere the estate is most visible from the public footpath to the west where commercial premises and associated ancillary buildings and storage can be seen between gaps and beneath the canopy of its western boundary.

6.73. The Standon and Puckeridge Village Study produced by the local Amenities Society in the mid 1990's advises that its employment use should be maintained, that innovative employment schemes should be encouraged and that there should be no change of use to housing.

6.74. The site lies within Flood zone 3B which is restrictive in relation to any potential future redevelopment of the site. Additionally small employment sites such as this one provides an

essential part of the Districts portfolio of employment land in the rural areas.

6.75. For these reasons, retention of the site in its current commercial use area is regarded as important. This being the case, the adverse visual impact of the development can only be reduced by initiating some low key improvements to the entrance and co-ordinating the signage. In this respect the impact and metallic appearance of the security fencing could be improved by painting and landscaping. Additionally, under planting with shade tolerant native species to the western boundary and additional planting in the triangle of land fronting Kents lane would also assist.

6.76. *Opportunity to secure improvements.* It is suggested discussions take place with the landowner of the commercial area with a view of implementing comprehensive improvements to its entrance, undertake other improvements including a general tidy up and under planting of its western boundary. Additionally seek to reduce the impact of the large agricultural buildings to the rear of New Street House and farm office by additional landscaping; reduce the impact of signage to the China Garden Restaurant and improve the 'landscaped' area at the junction of Station Road/ Kents Lane.



Picture 10 – Entrance to Industrial estate seriously detracts and is in need of comprehensive improvement.

6.77. *Suggested boundary changes.* Remove open countryside to rear of New Street House and farm office and west of River Rib extending to south of Paper Mill House because this area clearly forms part of the open countryside. Also remove commercial buildings of the industrial estate as they are of not of '*special or historic interest*'. It is emphasized such removal will not lead to any increased pressures for inappropriate development.

6.78. Area D - Late 19th century housing south of Stortford Road.

6.79. *General overview.* This area is currently beyond the existing Conservation Area boundary and consists of detached and semi detached late 19th century housing units with unusual decorative features, most of which remain unaltered. Located to the south of Stortford Road this group is a prominent feature on this approach to the village.

6.80. *Archeological sites.* The *site* is not designated as being of archeological significance neither are there any individual archeological records prepared by Hertfordshire County Council.

6.81. *Individually Listed Buildings.* There are none.

6.82. *Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution.* Nos. 22-28 are late 19th century 2 storey detached properties constructed of gault brick with red brick quoins and central window surrounds. Nos. 26-28 have slate roofs whilst 22-24 have replacement tiled roofs. Prominent chimneys and decorative ridge tiles are a common feature. Other important features include decorative wooden carpentry detailing to bay windows on front elevations at both ground and first floors, decorative detailing to dormers and porches. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 11 – No. 26 Stortford Road, a 19th century detached property of quality with pleasing architectural features. It is proposed to incorporate nos. 22- 48 within an extended Conservation Area.

6.83. Nos. 30- 48 are 2 storey late 19th century semi detached properties constructed of red brick with yellow brick horizontal banding, quoins and arches to doorways. Slate roofs, prominent chimneys and decorative ridge tiles to all. Canopies extend above lower ground floor bay windows incorporating attractive porch detailing. Also decorative eaves detailing. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

6.84. *Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution.* Two no. decorative metal pumps to front located near nos. 24 – 26 and 40 – 42. These are original as their positions are shown on the historic map dating from 1897 and are possible candidates for being listed.



Picture 12 – One of 2 no. 19th century cast iron Pumps, Stortford Road, that are considered worthy of being ‘Listed’.

6.85. *Important open land, open spaces and gaps and particularly important trees and hedgerows.* There are none.

6.86. *Important views.* The properties are a prominent feature when viewed from Stortford Road.

6.87. *Detracting elements.* Although windows and doors to the properties are modern replacements, the scale and mass of the group with their distinctive dormers, porches and other

architectural detailing, most of which unusually remain intact, make this group a most attractive feature.

6.88. *Opportunities to secure improvements.* The whole group could be improved by erecting front boundaries of a co-ordinated design to replace the current mixture of railings fences and walls. However this could only be achieved by the co-operation of individual owners.

6.89. *Suggested boundary changes.* Incorporate nos. 22- 48 Stortford Road within Conservation Area.

6.90. *Summary overview for whole Conservation Area.* Standon Conservation Area is of a very high quality with a particularly rich and well documented history containing a wide range of Listed Buildings and other buildings and distinctive features of quality that should be preserved. In these respects the varied roofline and other spatial qualities of the High Street are worthy of particular note. The high quality of the built environment is enhanced by open spaces and trees, parts of which can be appreciated from selected important view points. The buildings and overall environment is generally well preserved and there are few opportunities to secure worthy improvements. In this respect the most necessary would be an improvement to the existing entrance of the industrial complex, whose poor quality is most noticeable and which seriously detracts. In terms of new development some mid/late 20th century residential infill could have been more sympathetically designed but on the other hand conversions of a later date, particularly Standon Mill have been particularly well executed. Some areas, including buildings of the industrial estate and other areas considered to form part of the open countryside should be excluded whilst late 19th century houses south of Stortford Road are recommended to be included within the Conservation Area.

PART C – MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

7. Management Proposals.

7.1. *Revised Conservation Area Boundary.* The revised boundary is shown on Plan 3 and includes the following amendments.

- (a) Include 22-48 Stortford Road within the Conservation Area.

- (b) Exclude countryside to south of Paper Mill Lane.
- (c) Exclude open countryside to rear of New Street House and farm office and west of River Rib extending to south of Paper Mill House. Also remove commercial buildings of the industrial estate as they are of not of '*special or historic interest*'. It is emphasized such removal will not lead to any increased pressures for inappropriate development.

7.2. General Planning Control and Good Practice within the Conservation Area. All planning policies are contained in the East Herts Local Plan Second Review adopted in April 2007. It is against this document and the National Planning Policy Framework that the District Council will process applications.

7.3. Applicants considering submitting any application should carefully consider the relevant policies and if necessary contact Council Officers to seek pre-application advice. For further details including advice on Planning Applications, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Landscaping, and other general administrative advice please contact the Planning Department for assistance.

Telephone no. 01279 655261

E-mail planning@eastherts.gov.uk

Or write to E.H.D.C. Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

7.4. Applicants may also wish to refer to one of the several Guidance Notes referred to in Appendix 1 below.

7.5. Planning Control - Potential need to Undertake an Archeological Evaluation. Within the sites designated as being an Area of Archaeological Significance the contents of Policies BH1, BH2 and BH3 are particularly relevant.

7.6. Listed Building Control and Good Practice. Those buildings that are individually listed are identified. Other pre 1948 buildings, structures or walls within the curtilage of a Listed Building are similarly protected in law. One such curtilage building of quality is the agricultural barn to street frontage east of New Street House and farm office.

7.7. Listed Buildings are the most significant factor in contributing to the quality of Standon's built environment. It is essential that

their architectural detailing is not eroded or their other qualities and settings not compromised. Of particular importance is the varied roofscape, particularly that in the High Street.

7.8. The Appraisal has shown, inter alia, listed barns at the Paper Mill entrance to the village as having been assessed as being in need of repair. In partnership with owners and within the limitations of existing staff and financial resources, the Council will seek a satisfactory solution that secures their long term future.

7.9. Planning Control – Other Unlisted Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution. Within the revised Conservation Area there are over 30 such unlisted buildings that have been identified. These are: on Hadham Road; nos. 6-7, no.6 Knight Court, nos.1-3 Rose Cottages, Omega and the Village Hall. On Paper Mill Lane an agricultural building fronting the road. On High Street; the Red House, group; Post office- no.22, Westwood's shop and nos.15-19. On Stortford Road; no.4, Grafton House and nos. 22-48. At Kents Lane; Standon Mill, the China Garden Restaurant and New Street Farm Cottage. At Mill End, nos.1-2, the dominant former industrial chimney and The Granary at Mill End Farm. Any proposal involving the demolition of these buildings is unlikely to be approved.

7.10. Proposed Article 4 Directions. There are some distinctive features that are integral to some of the unlisted buildings identified above that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including selected chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing. In some situation protection may exist through existing planning controls but in other cases additional protection could only be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via and Article 4 Direction. The latter legislation is complex. Should the Council consider such a course of action appropriate there would be a process of notifying the affected owners separately at a later date. This would be associated with further detailed consideration and possible refinement.

7.11. Planning Control – Other Unlisted distinctive features that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution. The appraisal identifies other distinctive features including walls that make a positive contribution to Standon's character. Most of the latter are protected virtue of being within the curtilages of Listed Buildings or because they exceed the specified heights relevant to Conservation Area legislation. Any proposal involving the demolition of these walls is unlikely to be approved.

7.12. However there are a small number of other walls that are unprotected. These include the front boundary wall to Rose Cottages and wall to front of 6 Knights Court, Hadham Road. These can only be protected in law by the introduction of an Article 4 Direction which is proposed subject to further consideration and notification.

7.13. There are other distinctive features including the Puddingstone on the small green opposite the church.

7.14. Two decorative cast iron 19th century pumps at Stortford Road within the area proposed to be included in the Conservation Area add to the character and history of this part of Standon. These are of sufficient quality to be considered for individual listing.

7.15. *Planning Control – Important open land, open spaces and gaps.* This Appraisal has identified the following important spaces: the churchyard and its extension; the small green opposite the church containing the Puddingstone; the 5 no. small greens on the east side of the High Street; the Playing Field off the High Street and pasture land fronting Paper Mill Lane.

7.16. These represent open spaces and other landscape features within the revised boundary to the Conservation Area that materially contribute to its character or appearance and will be protected.

7.17. The River Rib shown coloured blue is also an important feature.

7.18. *Planning Control – Particularly important trees and hedgerows.* Only the most significant trees are shown diagrammatically. Subject to certain exceptions all trees in a Conservation Area are afforded protection and a person wanting to carry out works has to notify the Council. Trees that have not been identified may still be considered suitable for protection by Tree Preservation Orders. Owners are advised to make regular inspections to check the health of trees in the interests of amenity and Health and Safety. As previously advised some hedges may be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

7.19. *Planning Control – Important views.* The most important views within and out of the Conservation area are diagrammatically shown. Policy BH6 is particularly relevant.

7.20. Enhancement Proposals. The Appraisal has identified a number of elements that detract that are summarised in the Table below together with a proposed course of action. Within the staff and financial resources available, Council Officers will be proactive and provide assistance. It must be recognized that such improvements will frequently only be achieved with the owners co-operation.

Detracting element	Location	Proposed Action.
Industrial estate	Kents Lane	Seek to negotiate general internal improvements to site, initiate comprehensive improvements to appearance of entrance and undertake additional planting, particularly to western boundary.
Traditional farm buildings.	Paper Mill Lane, entrance to village	Seek to initiate improvements and repairs with owners.
Modern farm buildings	Rear of New Street House and Farm office	Seek to negotiate planting to reduce impact of large modern farm buildings, particularly when viewed from footpath to south and east.
Signage	Mill Lane	Seek to negotiate less intrusive signage to former mill building.
	Kents Lane	Seek to negotiate less intrusive signage to China Garden restaurant.
'Landscaping'	Junction Station Road/ Kents Lane	Seek to negotiate improved solution with the County Council.
Other actions		
Consider making application to list 2 no. mid 19th century Pumps at Stortford Road.		

7.21. The features identified in above paragraphs are shown on Plan 3.

Appendix 1. Guidance notes produced by East Hertfordshire District Council. The following represent useful technical information and can be obtained via the details provided above.

- 1. Brick Repointing and Repair.**
- 2. Conservation Areas.**
- 3. Cleaning Historic Brickwork.**
- 4. Farm Buildings.**
- 5. Flint and Flint Wall Repair.**
- 6. Hard Landscaping in Historic Areas.**
- 7. Listed Buildings.**
- 8. Rainwater Goods and Lead.**
- 9. Shopfronts.**

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Standon Conservation Area Appraisal
Plan 2 - Character Analysis

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CHARACTER ANALYSIS KEY

EXISTING CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY



PROPOSED EXTENSIONS TO THE CONSERVATION AREA



PROPOSED REDUCTIONS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA



AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE



INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES



OTHER INDIVIDUALLY LISTED FEATURES

LISTED BUILDINGS 'AT RISK' OR OTHER LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES IN NEED OF REPAIR / REFURBISHMENT



IMPORTANT BUILDINGS IN THE CURTILAGES OF LISTED BUILDINGS

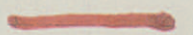


UNLISTED BUILDINGS THAT MAKE AN IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC CONTRIBUTION



OTHER DISTINCTIVE FEATURES THAT MAKE AN IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC CONTRIBUTION

Walls/railings



Tombstones



Pump



Standon Puddingstone



IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES



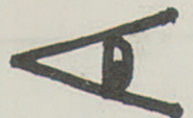
IMPORTANT WATER FEATURES



GENERAL LOCATION OF IMPORTANT TREES/HEDGEROWS



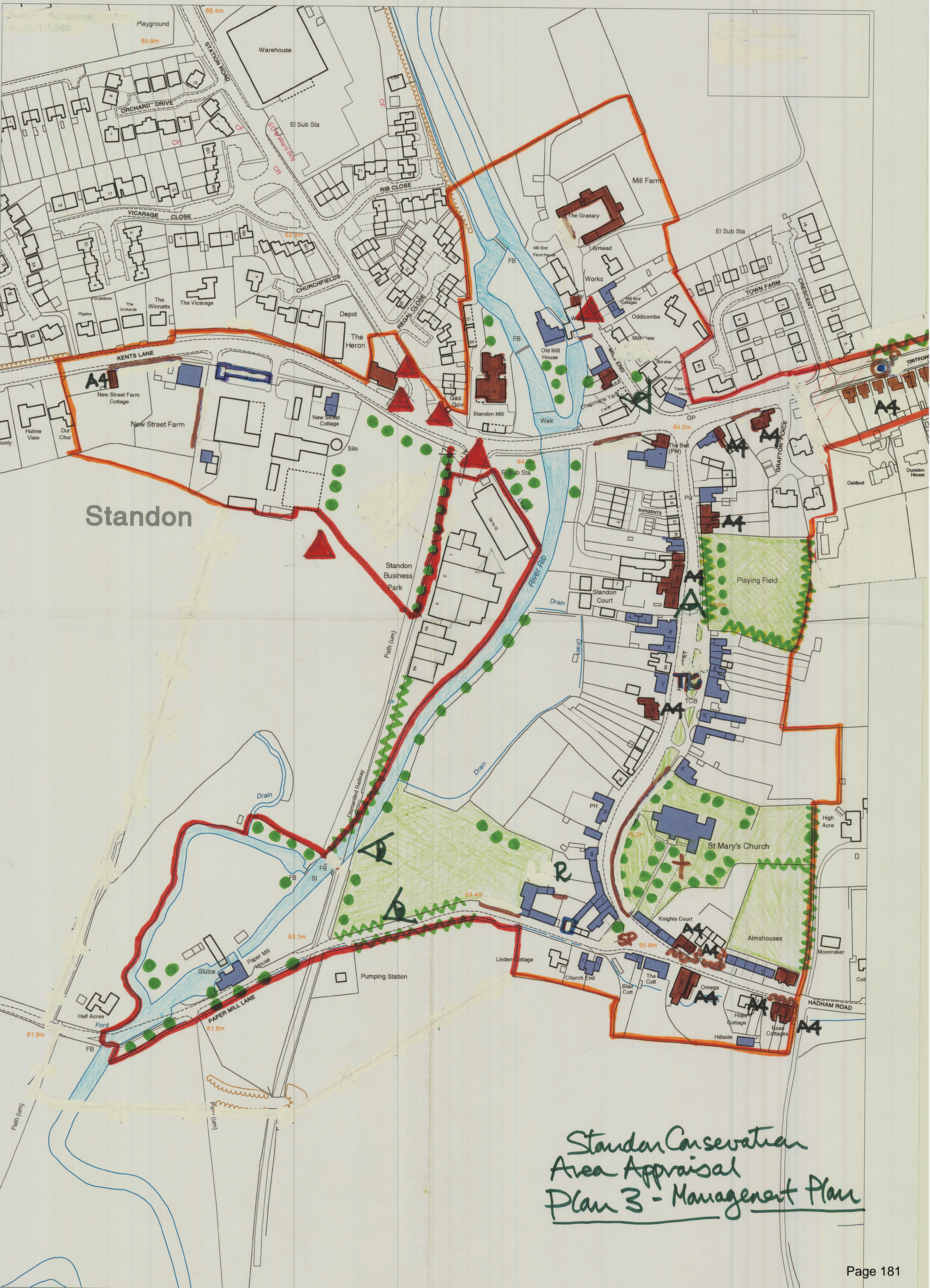
IMPORTANT VIEWS



DETRACTING ELEMENTS



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MANAGEMENT PLAN KEY

All Local Plan Policies and Government planning policies set out in the 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPP) apply as appropriate

REVISED CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY: Local Policies BH5-BH6 particularly apply



AREAS OF
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE: Local Policies BH1-BH3 particularly apply



INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES: NPP policies apply



OTHER INDIVIDUALLY LISTED FEATURES: NPP policies apply

LISTED BUILDINGS 'AT RISK' OR OTHER LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES IN NEED OF REPAIR/ REFURBISHMENT



IMPORTANT BUILDINGS IN THE CURTILAGES OF LISTED BUILDINGS: NPP policies apply



UNLISTED BUILDINGS TO BE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION



UNLISTED BUILDINGS/FEATURES CONSIDERED OF SUFFICIENT QUALITY TO BECOME LISTED.



OTHER DISTINCTIVE FEATURES TO BE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION WITHIN PARAMETERS OF EXISTING LEGISLATION: (includes features within the curtilage of Listed Buildings and walls/railings above the specified heights)

Walls/railings



Tombstones



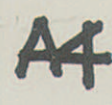
Pump



Standon Puddingstone



SELECTED FEATURES ON UNLISTED BUILDINGS WHERE ADDITIONAL CONTROLS ARE PROPOSED SUBJECT TO FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND NOTIFICATION (by Article 4 Direction)



UNPROTECTED WALLS/RAILINGS TO BE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION BY THE POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION OF ADDITIONAL CONTROLS (Article 4 Direction)



IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES TO BE PROTECTED



IMPORTANT WATER FEATURES TO BE PROTECTED



GENERAL LOCATION OF IMPORTANT TREES/HEDGEROWS TO BE PROTECTED WITHIN PARAMETERS OF LEGISLATION



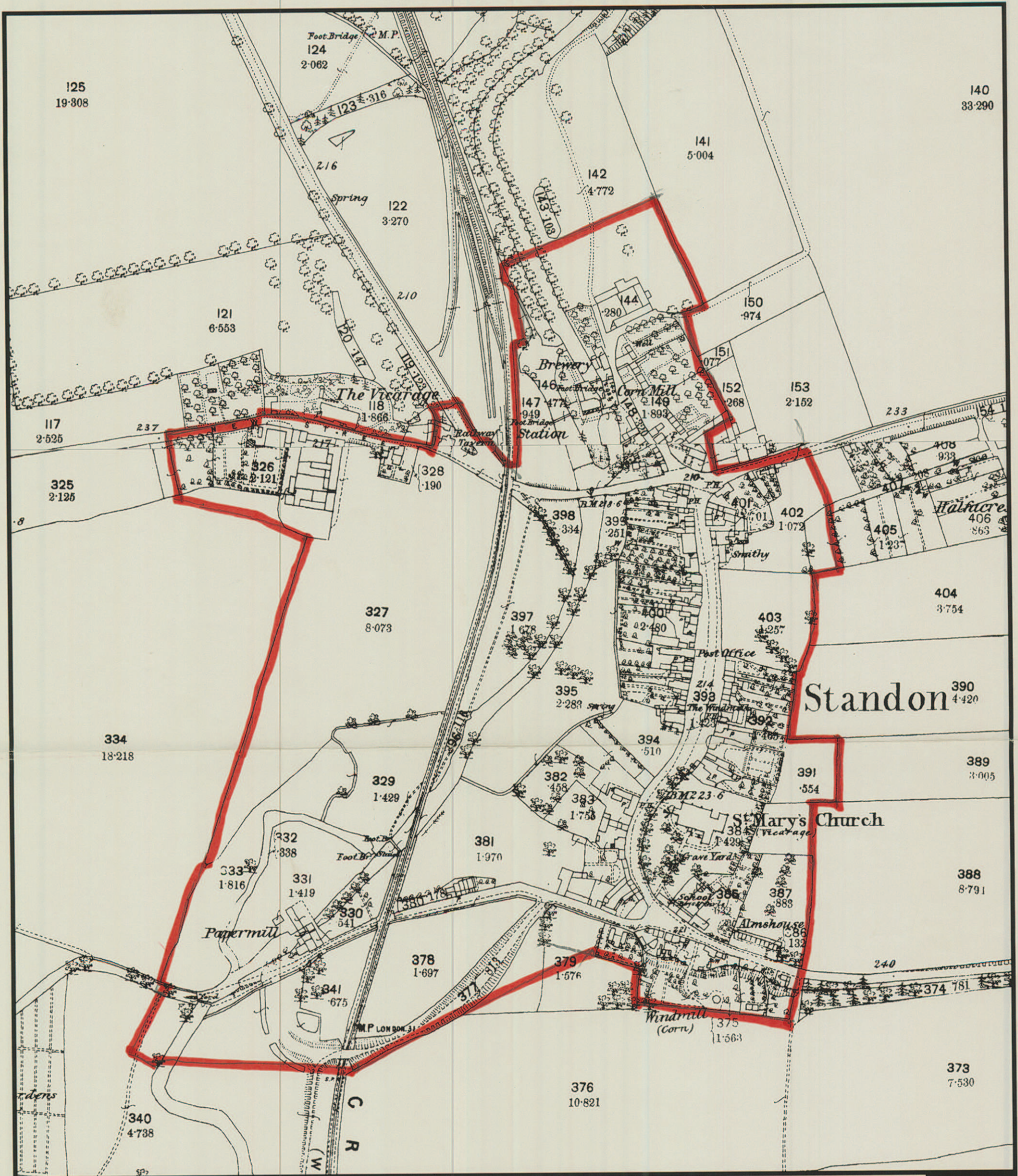
SELECTED IMPORTANT VIEWS TO BE PROTECTED



PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS



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 2009 East Herts Council. LA Ref: 100018528



Standon Conservation Area Appr
 Plan 1
 Existing Conservation Area boundary, approx
 plotted on Map dating from 1874.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON MONDAY
18 NOVEMBER 2013, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Carver (Chairman)
Councillors L Haysey and S Rutland-Barsby.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors W Ashley, R Beeching,
E Buckmaster, Mrs R Cheswright, G Jones,
J Jones, G Lawrence, M McMullen, P Moore,
M Newman, T Page, M Pope, P Ruffles,
N Symonds, G Williamson and J Wing.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Kay Mead	- Senior Planning Officer
Martin Paine	- Senior Planning Officer
Laura Pattison	- Assistant Planning Officer
Jenny Pierce	- Senior Planning Officer
Claire Sime	- Planning Policy Team Leader
Katie Simpson	- Planning Policy Officer
Brendan Starkey	- Assistant Planning Officer
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Bryan Thomsett	- Planning Policy Manager

19 **LONDON COMMUTER BELT (EAST) SUB-REGION:
OLDER PEOPLE'S HOUSING REQUIREMENTS:
OCTOBER 2013**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report setting out the key recommendations of the Older People's Housing Requirements technical study, for the London Commuter Belt (East) Sub-Region, which had been prepared by Opinion Research Services (ORS). He sought approval to the study forming part of the evidence base to inform and support the preparation of the District Plan, and for housing and other corporate strategy purposes.

Various Members commented and asked questions in relation to a number of issues, including:

- the needs of dementia sufferers;
- the design criteria for town centre accommodation;
- the need for more social housing; and
- the status of the study document.

Officers responded by stating that the study document, if accepted, would inform the District Plan, by setting the framework policy around which, further work would need to be undertaken, in order to develop policies via best practice advice notes.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED - that the London Commuter Belt (East) Sub-Region: Older People's Housing Requirements Study: October 2013, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support the preparation of the District Plan, and for housing and other corporate strategy purposes.

20 DISTRICT PLAN – UPDATE REPORT

The Panel considered a report detailing a schedule of meetings for the production of the draft District Plan prior to public consultation, together with summary notes from a recent training event for Members.

The Panel Chairman encouraged all Members to attend the training event on 28 November 2013.

The Panel noted the report.

RECOMMENDED – that the summary report on the Member Event on 24 October 2013 detailed at Essential Reference ‘B’, and the schedule of meetings contained at Essential Reference Paper ‘C’ of the report submitted, be noted.

21 DISTRICT PLAN TOPIC-BASED POLICIES REPORT (OCTOBER 2013)

The Panel gave consideration to 12 chapters of the Draft District Plan, which contained a series of policies with supporting text organised by topic, such as housing, natural environment and heritage. The Panel noted that these topic-based policy chapters effectively made up the second half of the District Plan, and would be those most commonly used by Development Management in the determination of planning applications. The report sought endorsement of these policies for their inclusion within the Draft East Herts District Plan for consultation purposes.

The Panel considered each chapter in turn and a number of comments and questions were raised by Members.

Housing

Officers confirmed that the purpose of the District Plan was to provide a framework through which robust policies could be outlined, whilst retaining a degree of flexibility in responding to different challenges. Further

detail would need to be developed in supplementary policy documents, guidance notes, etc, to enable the Authority to encourage developers to meet local needs.

Members referred to demand for Lifetime Homes, bungalows and 2/3 bedroom houses and the need to ensure an appropriate housing mix. Officers advised that developing the policies as now detailed, would provide a more robust position for the Authority to respond to specific challenges.

The Panel noted an error in paragraph 11.9.3, in that the reference to Field Farm, Levens Green should state planning permission for an additional 2 pitches.

Retail and Town Centres

Members questioned whether this chapter was sufficient for providing the flexibility needed for the period of the Plan. Officers responded by stating the need to protect existing town centres and for further work with town centre partners. Officers also clarified the rationale of the proposed thresholds for impact assessments as set out in RTC1.

Design

In response to Members' comments on some of the language used in this chapter, Officers explained that the proposed policies set out the Authority's aspirations.

In response to a question from Councillor L Haysey on what was exactly covered by the section on Advertisements and Signs, the Head of Planning and Building Control Services undertook to provide a written response.

Transport

It was noted that whilst national and local policies sought to reduce car usage, it was necessary to recognise the level of car dependency in more rural areas in order to access key services. In respect of encouraging minimum parking spaces, Officers confirmed that developing

supplementary planning guidance would be needed.

Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

In response to Members' comments on the lack of football pitches, Officers referred to the role of community use agreements and the need to look at specific settlements.

Councillor L Haysey referred to regular strategic meetings she attended with health partners and confirmed their awareness of changing demographics.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the topic-based policies be agreed for inclusion in the Draft East Herts District Plan for consultation purposes; and

(B) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, be authorised to make non-material, and typographical corrections to the topic based policies, prior to inclusion in the District Plan for consultation purposes.

22 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed the press, public and Members to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

The Panel Chairman provided a further reminder of the training session on 28 November 2013, which would deal with the draft development strategy and settlement policies. He also advised that a meeting with parish and town councils had been arranged for 12 December 2013. These and other important dates were detailed in the Update Report at Agenda Item 6 (Minute 20 refers).

Finally, he reiterated the role of the Panel in the District Plan

process and emphasised that only Council could agree the final District Plan.

23 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 3 October 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Panel Chairman asked Members to note that he was the Chairman of Hertford Regional College and a board member of South Anglia Housing Association.

Councillor J Wing asked Members to note that his wife was the Vice Chairman of Hertford Regional College.

25 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED – that the dates of meetings to be held on 3 December 2013 and 16 January 2014, be noted.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Chairman

Date

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 3 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK – OCTOBER 2013

WARD (S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To set out an exception report on the finance and performance monitoring for East Herts Council for October for 2013.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> that:	
(A)	the budgetary variances set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report be noted;
(B)	£15k of the planning contingency budget being used for joint enforcement manager role, as detailed at paragraph 2.9 of the report, be noted;
(C)	the transfer of any underspend in 2013/14 on the priority spend budget to the new homes bonus priority reserve, as detailed at paragraph 2.12 of the report, be supported;
(D)	the slippage of £0.777 million of capital schemes to 2014/15 be supported and the budget adjustment for Community Capital Grants, as detailed at paragraphs 2.25 and 2.26 of the report, be agreed; and
(E)	£45,000 capital budget for property Investment, as detailed at paragraph 2.27 of the report, be approved.

1.0 Background

1.1 This is the monthly finance and performance monitoring report for the council.

1.2 Each month the report will contain a breakdown of the following information by each corporate priority where remedial action is needed:

- Salary, Capital and Revenue variance.
- Performance information (based on the performance indicator suite that is reported on a monthly basis and where relevant quarterly data) and also the Directorate's position in respect to payment of invoices and sickness absence.




1.3 **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** shows the full set of performance indicators that are reported on a monthly and quarterly basis.



Essential Reference Paper 'C' shows summarised information on salary costs.

Essential Reference Paper 'D' shows detailed information on the capital programme.

Essential Reference Paper 'E' shows explanations of variances on the Revenue Budget reported in previous months.

The codes used in relation to performance indicator monitoring are as follows:

Status	
	This PI is 6% or more off target.
	This PI is 1-5% off target.
	This PI is on target.

Short Term Trends	
	The value of this PI has changed in the short term.
	The value of this PI has not changed in the short term.

2.0 Report – Directorate Position

REVENUE FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2.1 The financial aspects of this report are based on budgetary information from April 2013 to October 2013.

	Position as at 31.10.13				Projected Position year end	
	Favourable £000	Adverse £000	Favourable Variance since last month £000	Adverse Variance since last month £000	Favourable £000	Adverse £000
(1) People						
New Homes Bonus Grant	20	0	0	0	20	0
Collection Fund Balance	55	0	0	0	55	0
Hillcrest Hostel Rent Income	0	19	5	0	0	20
Environmental Action Grants	25	0	1	0	9	0
Land Charge Income	28	0	8	0	20	0
Staff salaries (Essential Reference Paper 'C').	40	0	15	0	0	121
Customer Services – security	4	0	0	0	5	0
Revenues and Benefits Services - Recovery Of Summons Costs	0	0	0	0	0	25
Welfare Reform	64	0	0	0	97	0

	Position as at 31.10.13				Projected Position year end	
	Favourable £000	Adverse £000	Favourable Variance since last month £000	Adverse Variance since last month £000	Favourable £000	Adverse £000
(2) Place						
Hertford Theatre	87	0	0	0	6	0
Community Safety	27	0	0	0	8	0
Green Waste Collection	165	0	68	0	40	0
Recycling – Contributions from Other Authorities	29	0	0	0	81	0
Maintenance of recycling banks	7	0	1	0	5	0
Commercial and Clinical Waste Collection	15	0	0	0	6	0
Clinical Waste income	7	0	0	0	16	0
Street Cleansing	8	0	0	0	25	0
Grounds Maintenance(Net)	13	0	0	0	14	0
Parks and Open Spaces	2	0	0		0	7
Kerbside Dry Recyc. Collection	193	0	97	0	0	0

	Position as at 31.10.13				Projected Position year end	
	Favour- able £000	Adverse £000	Favourable Variance since last month £000	Adverse Variance since last month £000	Favourable £000	Adverse £000
(2) Place (continued)						
Textiles Bank (Net)	0	15	0	0	0	9
Trade Waste income	39	0	11	0	28	0
Trade Waste Collection contract	0	1	0	9	0	6
Environ Protection Parish Litter	0	1	0	0	0	1
Paper Bank Income	0	13	2	0	0	16
Dry Recycling	230	0	0	49	0	80
Animal Services and pest Control	7	0	0	0	12	0
Development Plans Service – LDF Upkeep budget not required for 2013/14.	40	0	0	0	60	0
Repayment of Housing Grant	6	0	0	0	6	0
Prevention of Repossession	7	0	0	0	10	0
Priority Spend	0	19	0	0	180	0

	Position as at 31.10.13				Projected Position year end	
	Favourable £000	Adverse £000	Favourable Variance since last month £000	Adverse Variance since last month £000	Favourable £000	Adverse £000
(3) Prosperity						
Development Management income	522	0	45	0	450	0
Pre Application Advice Income	23	0	3	0	25	0
Development Management Cost of Appeals	0	22	0	3	0	160
Pay and Display Car Park Income	0	175	109	0	0	175
Investment Interest	0	65	0	25	0	150
Car Park Enforcement Contract.	162	0	2	0	99	0
Supermarket Reimbursement.	141	0	0	0	46	0
Parking Repairs & Maintenance.	0	17	5	0	0	16
Parking – PCN Income.	0	46	24	0	0	75
Parking - Gascoigne Way – car washing.	0	5	0	0	0	8

	Position as at 31.10.13				Projected Position year end	
	Favour- able £000	Adverse £000	Favourable Variance since last month £000	Adverse Variance since last month £000	Favourable £000	Adverse £000
(3) Prosperity (continued)						
Parking – Bishop Stortford Season tickets.	13	0	1	0	9	0
Customer Services & Parking	0	4	0	0	0	3
Public Conveniences – Cleaning Contract.	19	0	4	0	4	0
Supplies and Services Base Budget reduction	38	0	0	0	38	0
Markets - Income	0	15	0	0	0	15
TOTAL:	2,036	417	401	77	1,374	887
Net Projected Variance - Favourable					487	
Supported by supplementary estimates						
Total Supplementary Estimates						

- 2.2 Subject to all other budgets being equal, this would result in an underspend of £487k.
- 2.3 A summarised salaries monitoring report for the period April to October 2013 is attached to this report in **Essential Reference Paper C**. A minor favorable variance of approximately £40,000 has been identified comparing actual salary costs for the reporting period with the profiled budget. The Forecast Outturn for 2013/14 is expected to result in an adverse variance of £120,670. This is a slight increase on the prior period forecast outturn (£97k).
- 2.4 The Budget Challenge process is now complete resulting in a base budget reduction for 2014/15 of £350k. This period's healthcheck now includes the 2013/14 impact of the base budget reductions.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

People

Financial analysis

- 2.5 A review of income recovery for summons costs has resulted in the identification of an adverse variance of £25,000 for the financial year.
- 2.6 The Welfare Reform budget for 2013/14 is currently showing an underspend with no further commitment identified against the budget a likely favourable variance of £97,000 is forecast.

Performance analysis

- 2.7 The following indicators were 'Green', meaning that the targets were either met or exceeded for October for 2013. They were:
- EHPI 129 – Response time to anti social behaviour (ASB) complaints made to East Herts Council.
 - EHPI 181 – Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events.
- 2.8 However despite meeting the target for October 2013 the following indicator shows a declining trend when performance is compared to the previous month:
- EHPI 181 – Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events. Although this indicator has been showing a declining trend since May 2013, this is expected as this is a

cumulative indicator.

Please refer to **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** for full details.

Place

Financial analysis

- 2.9 The original 2013/14 budget included a planning contingency sum of £591k which allows for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. Currently there is a balance of £452k which if not required during the year will result in an additional favourable variance over and above the £487k reported for the period. These budgets are for one-off areas of spend and if permanent growth is required for future years, would have to form part of the budget-setting process.

	£000	Comment
Planning Contingency budget at the start of the financial year	591	
Less	25	New Recycling Initiative
	40	Housing Needs Survey
	24	Human Resources Post
	15	Review of Carpark Management Systems.
	20	Resources to support the development of the Council's Investment Strategy.
	15	Joint Enforcement Manager
Planning Contingency still to be utilised	452	

- 2.10 A favourable variance has been identified of £81,000 on the payments from County for diversion of waste from landfill as a result of the implementation of the SPARC (Separate Paper and Recycling Collections).

- 2.11 The budget for the Local development Plan upkeep is not required for 2013/14 resulting in a favourable variance of £60,000.
- 2.12 A forecast outturn of £30,000 is expected on the Priority Spend budget for 2013/14. In view that the budget supports medium to short term economic development the uncommitted sums for 2013/14 will be transferred to the New Homes Bonus Priority Reserve.
- 2.13 In line with the national trend, Dry Recycling income is now forecast to result in an adverse variance of £80,000 (£15,000 for September Healthcheck) by the end of the financial year.

Performance analysis

- 2.14 **EHPI 2.1e – Planning Enforcement: Service of formal notices.**
There were no notices served in October, so there is no performance data to analyse.
- 2.15 **NI 191 – Residual household waste per household and NI 192 - Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.** The October performance data for these indicators were not available for inclusion in this report, however the data for this period will be verbally reported by the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services.
- 2.16 The following indicators were 'Green', meaning that the targets were either met or exceeded for October 2013. They were:
- EHPI 2.2(45) – Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste.
 - EHPI 2.4 – Fly-tips: Removal.
 - EHPI 2.1d – Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspections.
 - EHPI 157a – Processing of planning applications: Major applications.
 - EHPI 157b – Processing of planning applications: Minor applications.
 - EHPI 157c – Processing of planning applications: Other applications.
- 2.17 However despite meeting the target for October 2013 the following indicators show a declining trend when performance is compared to the previous month:

- EHPI 2.2(45) – Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste. This is the second consecutive month this indicator has shown a declining trend. The service has explained that performance this month fell due to an increase in missed collections for the composting service.
- EHPI 2.4 – Fly-tips: Removal.
- EHPI 157b – Processing of planning applications: Minor applications.
- EHPI 157c – Processing of planning applications: Other applications.

Please refer to **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’** for full details.

Prosperity

Financial analysis

- 2.18 With Development Management income of £125k received from the Bishop’s Stortford North Development and the underlying income being maintained, the forecast outturn for income is expected to increase by £450k (revised from £330k in September 2013). Larger fees are being received for proposed developments in Buntingford and Hertford.
- 2.19 The adverse variance on Planning Appeals has been revised to £160,000 (£60,000 for September Healthcheck).
- 2.20 Lower than expected returns on the Council’s investment portfolio are likely to result in a revised adverse variance of £150,000 (£100,000 September Healthcheck).
- 2.21 In line with national trends Market licence income has experienced a downturn as a result of fewer market traders.

Performance analysis

- 2.22 The following indicators were ‘Green’, meaning that targets were either met or exceeded for October 2013. They were:
- EHPI 6.8 – Turnaround of pre NTO PCN challenges.
 - EHPI 6.9 – Turnaround of NTO Representations.
 - EHPI 8 – % of invoices paid on time.
 - EHPI 12c – Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in post.

2.23 However despite meeting the target for October 2013 the following indicator shows a declining trend when performance is compared to the previous month:

- EHPI 12c – Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in post.

Please refer to **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** for full details.

CAPITAL FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2.24 The table below sets out expenditure to 31 October 2013 against the Capital Programme. Members are invited to consider the overall position. **Essential Reference paper 'D'** contains details of the 2013/14 Capital Programme. Comments are provided by the Project Control Officers in respect of individual schemes.

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
Summary	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Actual Commit to date	2013/14 Projected spend	Variance Col 4 – Col 2
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
People	2,315	1,800	761	1,220	(580)
Place	730	2,809	1,695	2,727	(82)
Prosperity	1,648	1,738	186	1,388	(350)
Re-profiling potential slippage	(250)	0	0	0	0
Total	4,443	6,347	2,642	5,335	(1,012)

2.25 Members are asked to support the re-profile of £0.777 million within the Capital Programme to 2014/15 as follows:

- People – Various schemes totalling £421,960
- Place – Various schemes totalling £35,760.
- Prosperity – Various schemes totalling £319,750.

2.26 Members are asked to support a request to bring forward £14,950 for the 2014/15 Community Capital Grants budget. This reflects 2012/13 grant commitment no longer required and can be reallocated to other projects in 2013/14.

2.27 Members are asked to support a capital budget of £45,000 for investment of property assets.

3.0 Implications/Consultation

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers:

2012/13 Estimates and Future Targets Report, Essential Reference Paper B – For complete list of performance indicators that are being monitored for 2012/13

<http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=119&MId=1792&Ver=4>

Contact Officer:

In terms of performance issues

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In terms of financial issues

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	<p><i>People</i></p> <p>This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services.</p> <p><i>Place</i></p> <p>This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p><i>Prosperity</i></p> <p>This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic and social opportunities.</p>
Consultation:	Performance monitoring discussions have taken place between Directors and Heads of Service.
Legal:	There are no legal implications.
Financial:	There are no financial implications.
Human Resource:	There are no Human Resource implications.
Risk Management:	There are no Risk implications.

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October Executive Corporate Healthcheck 2013/14

Traffic Light Green
Description People

Licensing and Community Safety

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 129	Response time to ASB complaints made to EHC.		100.00 %	100.00 %		There were 2 complaints made to the ASB officer at EHC all of which were responded to within the minimum of two working days, therefore meeting the 100% target. One of the complaints was however for North Herts district so the complainant was signposted to North Herts Council.	<p>October 2013 result</p>	None


Revenues and Benefits Services								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events	✓	14.1 days	15.0 days	↓	10 September 2013 - 8 October 2013 is at 17.85 days, this moves cumulative to 14.09	<p>October 2013 result</p> <p>15.9 days 15.2 days 0.0 days 14.1 days 50.0 days</p>	None


Traffic Light Green Description Place

Environmental Services								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 2.4 (47)	Fly-tips: removal	✓	1.35 days	2.00 days	↓	Performance in October was not as good as the previous month due to some inaccurate location descriptions received from the public. However the year to date performance remains well inside the target.	<p>October 2013 result</p> <p>2.02 days 2.40 days 0.00 days 1.35 days 4.00 days</p>	None

Environment Services								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 2.2 (45)	Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste	✓	40.86	47.00	↓	Performance this month fell below the level that has been enjoyed throughout 2013/14, due to an increase in missed collections for the composting service. However the year to date figure remains comfortably inside the target level.	<p>October 2013 result</p>	None

Planning and Building Control								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 157a	Processing of planning applications: Major applications	✓	100.00%	60.00%	▬	Target Achieved. Our only application was determined on time.	<p>October 2013 result</p>	None

Planning and Building Control								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 157b	Processing of planning applications: Minor applications	✓	82.00%	80.00%	↓	Target Achieved. 32 applications out of 39 were determined on time.	<p>October 2013 result</p> 	None

Planning and Building Control								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 157c	Processing of planning applications: Other applications	✓	96.00%	90.00%	↓	Target Achieved. 114 applications out of 119 were determined on time.	<p>October 2013 result</p> 	None




PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 2.1d	Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspections	✓	100.00%	75.00%	↑	Performance exceeding target.	<p>October 2013 result</p>	None

Traffic Light Green Description Prosperity

Financial Support Services								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 8	% of invoices paid on time	✓	98.69%	98.00%	↑	The number of invoices paid on time is above target. Of the 766 invoices paid in October 756 were paid on time.	<p>October 2013 result</p>	None

Parking Services								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 6.8	Turnaround of Pre NTO PCN challenges (10 working days)	✓	5 days	14 days	↑	This PI remains within target	<p>October 2013 result</p>	None

Parking Services								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 6.9	Turnaround of NTO Representations	✓	5 days	21 days	↑	This PI remains within target	<p>October 2013 result</p>	None












People Services & Organisational Development								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 12c	Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in post		0.40 days	0.70 days		Total absence for the year so far = 2.60 days	<p>October 2013 result</p> 	None

Traffic Light Unknown Description Place

Environment Services								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 191	Residual household waste per household	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The October performance data for this indicator was not available for inclusion in this report, however the data for this period will be verbally reported by the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services.	N/A	None

Environment Services								
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The October performance data for this indicator was not available for inclusion in this report, however the data for this period will be verbally reported by the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services.	N/A	None

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Performance Gauge	Action taken during last Executive meeting on 5 th November 2013.
EHPI 2.1e	Planning Enforcement: Service of formal Notices	N/A	N/A	50.00%	N/A	No notices served in October; therefore no performance status is available.	N/A	None

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

SALARIES/AGENCY/APPOINTMENT OF STAFF**Essential Reference Paper 'C'**

	Estimate	Profile to 31.10.13	Actual to 31.10.13	Variance to Profile	Projected outturn	Projected Outturn Variance to Estimate
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Finance & Support Services	4,901,900	2,946,154	2,923,843	-22,311	4,986,030	84,130
Neighbourhood Services	3,898,070	2,273,875	2,242,761	-31,114	3,871,260	-26,810
Customer & Community	2,853,000	1,664,253	1,677,529	13,276	2,916,350	63,350
Summary	<u>11,652,970</u>	<u>6,884,282</u>	<u>6,844,133</u>	<u>-40,149</u>	<u>11,773,640</u>	<u>120,670</u>

g:P&F/SALARIES HEALTHCHECK

SUMMARY

	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate
	£	£	£	£	£
People - focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable & delivering strong services	2,314,970	1,800,010	761,124	1,220,360	(579,650)
Place - focuses on sustainability, the built environment and our neighbourhoods and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean	729,510	2,808,790	1,694,523	2,726,710	(82,080)
Prosperity - focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities & delivering cost effective services	1,647,540	1,737,830	185,831	1,387,870	(349,960)
TOTAL	4,692,020	6,346,630	2,641,478	5,334,940	(1,011,690)
RE-PROFILING POTENTIAL SLIPPAGE (71264/7501)	(250,000)	0		0	0
	4,442,020	6,346,630	2,641,478	5,334,940	(1,011,690)
Reconciliation of Original to Revised Estimate					
Other Amendments	1,634,150				
Slippage from 2012/13	270,460				
	6,346,630				

CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/14							
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	Exp. To 31/10/13					COMMENTS
		2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
		£	£	£	£	£	
Various	Hartham	120,000	141,960	12,400	20,000	(121,960)	Slippage into 14/15 due to programming with SLM. £5k saving achieved on one scheme.
Various	Grange Paddocks	107,000	107,000	50,574	106,540	(460)	Design stage on one scheme, works in progress on roof.
72350	Pool Covers at Hartham & Grange Paddocks	59,000	59,000	40,917	42,420	(16,580)	Project agreed at CMT 28th August, pool covers complete to Hartham pools and Grange Paddocks teaching pool, necessary to review fixing method for GP main pool, allow an extra £1,503 additional costs but still within original project costs, agreed a reduction of £9,500 p.a. to SLM management fee, pro-rata to start from October 2013. Works to Grange Paddocks main pool rescheduled to start 6th November. Awaiting recharge invoices from SLM.
Various	Fanshawe	20,000	40,000	0	0	(40,000)	Specification stage. Awaiting approval to spend. Discussions taking place with Head of Environmental Services. Slip into 14/15.
Various	Leventhorpe Pool	22,800	51,780	26,484	26,500	(25,280)	Specification stage. Awaiting approval to spend. Discussions taking place with Head of Environmental Services. Slip into 14/15.
72599	Scotts Grotto Renovation	4,700	4,700	1,220	4,700	0	60% completed.

		Exp. To 31/10/13					COMMENTS
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
		£	£	£	£	£	
<u>Private Sector Improvement Grants</u>							
72602	Disabled Facilities (Note 1)	710,000	690,000	205,670	450,000	(240,000)	At a recent meeting with HCC, we were informed that there has been a change in the way applicants for the disabled facilities grants have been dealt with and that this has had a drastic effect on the numbers applying and also the reason for our underspend this year. We have been assured that the call centre problem has been corrected and that we should expect numbers to rally again. Therefore, revised estimate to be £450,000 with the remaining amount slipping into 2014/15. Please see Note 1 below re. Government funding.
72605	Disabled Facilities - Discretionary	110,000	89,000	4,990	4,990	(84,010)	As HCC backlog now nearly cleared the £50,000 that had already slipped to 2013/14 is no longer needed (reported at 4.6.13 Executive). £21k vired to Historic Building Grants (agreed at 3.9 Exec). No current large DFG schemes requiring Discretionary top up. No slippage necessary.
72606	Decent Home Grants	120,000	116,600	326	50,000	(66,600)	Spend to date relates to work carried out through Building Control Agency. Availability restricted due to limited resource. Need some of budget for vulnerable cases, however underspend likely. One case currently under consideration. Budget of £50K likely to be sufficient for priority cases this year. No slippage necessary.
72604	Energy Grants	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0	No significant interest amongst residents noted as yet for the new Green Deal Scheme, so some additional incentives required from this budget. To amend and re-launch previous insulation grant scheme; promotion in October. Publicity for this now produced, and enquiries being received, with aim to spend budget.

CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/14							
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	Exp. To 31/10/13					COMMENTS
		2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
		£	£	£	£	£	
72685	Social Housing Schemes	827,900	7,160	7,156	7,160	0	Currently, no commitments have been made as Registered Providers are in programme with the Homes and Communities Agency. The Housing Team is exploring options of utilising S106 monies first and the LA Capital subsequently to develop and deliver a strategic investment plan for affordable housing. Therefore this budget has slipped into 14/15.
72698	Rental Accommodation in Sawbridgeworth	0	360,840	360,844	360,840	0	To be used for the provision of rent accommodation in Sawbridgeworth from the monies held by Uttlesford D C who act as banker for these funds. Approved at Exec 4.9
71201	Capital Salaries	26,000	26,000	0	26,000	0	
72442	Community Capital Grants	140,900	64,900	45,104	79,850	14,950	There has been no new allocations this month. Of the 19 projects funded in 12/13, all have been completed with one group to claim. Of the 12 funded in July 2013, 5 groups have already completed or part completed their projects and submitted a claim. The deadline for the next funding round is 16 December 2013, where it is anticipated that £51,207 will be allocated. Request that £14,950 be added to the budget (this was the underspend from 12/13 that should have slipped) as some claims have now been withdrawn and some came in under anticipated spend, therefore, would like to reallocate this money.
72578	Drill Hall	4,350	4,350	4,639	4,640	290	Completed.
72582	LSP Capital Grants	12,920	7,320	800	7,320	0	LSP board determines when grants are going to be awarded. Sum of £30,790 held in Capital Grants in Advance.
72545	Presdales - Replace Pavilion	9,400	9,400	0	9,400	0	Remaining budget to be spent on further works required to pavilion & car park, to be spent within the next quarter. Partitioning works to Boiler room being costed. Property organising works.

		Exp. To 31/10/13					COMMENTS
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
		£	£	£	£	£	
TOTAL		2,314,970	1,800,010	761,124	1,220,360	(579,650)	

Reconciliation of Original to Revised Estimate

Other Amendments	(556,900)
Slippage from 2012/13	41,940
	1,800,010

Expenditure on Joint Use Pools 40% funding sought from HCC/schools as appropriate

Note 1. Government funding of £232,717 in 13/14

CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/14							
Exp Code	PLACE	Exp. To 31/10/13					COMMENTS
		2013/14	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14	
		Original Estimate	Revised Estimate	Total Spend to Date	Projected Spend	Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
	2013/14 Approved Schemes	£	£	£	£	£	
Various	Hertford Theatre	19,700	118,800	99,623	117,680	(1,120)	Saving achieved on roof.
71272	Castle Gardens Bungalow - Replace Roof Covering	0	2,400	905	900	(1,500)	Completed. Saving achieved.
71271	Castle Gardens B/S-Resurface Footpaths	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	0	Started on site 11.11.13
72701	Hartham Art Project	0	5,000	3,500	5,000	0	Final completion date now November 2013. Fully funded from Sainsbury's S106 monies. 2nd stage payment to be made this year.
74102	Historic Building Grants	35,000	50,140	15,285	50,140	0	Further to the report to Exec of 4.6.13, it is now highly likely that the grants for Buildings at Risk will be forthcoming and no capital provision has been made for this year. Therefore, after consultation with the Exec Member and the Director of Finance & Support Services a virement has been made of £21k from the underspend within discretionary disabled facility grants.
Various	Refuse Collection & Recycling	139,000	2,341,190	1,511,782	2,297,490	(43,700)	New recycling vehicles delivered in September and are now being prepared. Project on target. Vehicle cost came in under anticipated level.
72504	Provision of Play Equipment	50,000	50,000	4,634	50,000	0	Spend programmed for the next two quarters. Mainly in improvements to open spaces at Chapplefields; Hornsmill; Lowerbourne Gardens and King George Playing Fields in accordance with the parks development programme

		Exp. To 31/10/13					COMMENTS
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
		£	£	£	£	£	
72506	Art in Parks Project (Note 1)	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	0	Have identified a possible project to create wood sculpures at Pishobury Park and this will developed in the next quarter.
72585	The Bourne, Ware - Play Area Development Programme	40,000	40,000	4,245	4,240	(35,760)	External funding /compensatory works have been agreed with Thames Water which will add value to the project but delay completion to next year. Spend to date relates to consultation costs. Please note total project spend will be £44,280 as £4,280 of this is funded from S106 monies. Therefore, request that sum of £35,760 slips into 14/15.
72507	Pishiobury Park Wetland Habitat Project (Note 2)	0	20,000	7,820	20,000	0	First stage complete. Second stage requires a land swap with local fishing club and this is subject to a Non-Key decision report which will be coming forward during the autumn.
72508	Hartham Common-Parks Development Plan Project (Note 3)	25,000	0	0	0	0	Currently working with the Countryside Management Service to lever in external funding so project has slipped to 2014/15
75168	Energy Efficiency & Carbon Reduction Measures (Note 4)	45,000	0	0	0	0	Programme work to commence early autumn 2014. The works would include the web based smart metering to cover electric/gas (+ water if proves practicable) to as many metered sites as possible to build on that within Wallfields. We will also be recommending the solar pv scheme. Regarding costs these 2 schemes are likely to take the bulk of the funding available, if not all – and we are seeking revised detailed costings, which should be available later in the month. Agreed at 1.10.13 Exec. to slip into 2014/15.

CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/14

Page 226	PLACE		Exp. To 31/10/13					Essential Reference Paper 'D'	
	Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	COMMENTS	
			£	£	£	£	£		
	72591	Castle Weir Micro Hydro Scheme	210,210	4,730	4,729	4,730	0	Water Framework Directive study now complete. Work to date shows the scheme will result in no increase in flood risk or damage to ecology. However, Environment Agency are seeking upstream improvements and this is subject to further negotiations. Project unlikely to be completed in current financial year and has slipped to 2014/15.	
	74106	Heart of B/S - Market Improvement Scheme	45,300	45,300	0	45,300	0	Ideas being developed for B/S market. There will be cost implications but we will need to consult with traders when we have something more tangible. Consultation is likely to take place in Autumn/Winter 2013.	
	74105	Town Centre Environmental Enhancements	85,300	96,230	12,000	96,230	0	Town council projects have been slow to deliver. Officer undertaken a series of site visits in October to monitor reasons.	
		TOTAL	729,510	2,808,790	1,694,523	2,726,710	(82,080)		
		Reconciliation of Original to Revised Estimate							
		Other Amendments	2,011,520						
		Slippage from 2012/13	67,760						
			2,808,790						

- Note 1. Provision to attract external funding.
- Note 2. This project will require match funding to maximise the potential of this project and this sum reflects provision for this.
- Note 3. Development of this site will require significant external investment and this sum represents provision to support bids for external funding.
- Note 4. Relates to provision for energy efficiency measures following C3W. This is subject to bids for grant funding.

CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/14							
PROSPERITY							
Essential Reference Paper 'D'							
Exp. To 31/10/13							
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	COMMENTS
		£	£	£	£	£	
71374	Network, Servers & Storage Upgrade	50,000	0	3,900	0	0	Spend to be transferred to correct code (H. Lewis to advise)
71442	Revenues & Benefits Programme		0		18,600	18,600	Request that BACS (71377) and Housing Benefits System (71408) be merged into this one scheme
71377	BACS	2,500	2,500	0	0	(2,500)	See code 71442
71379	Authentication	31,000	31,000	0	31,000	0	Interim Head of ICT to clarify.
71388	GIS	2,000	5,470	0	0	(5,470)	Completed, saving achieved.
71395	EDM - Corporate	11,000	16,070	0	5,000	(11,070)	Requirement for this budget still to be determined. Therefore, request to slip £11,070 into 14/15.
71408	Housing Benefits System	16,100	16,100	0	0	(16,100)	See code 71442
71409	Locata	10,000	10,000	0	10,000	0	Scheme not to go ahead, but request that this budget is utilised elsewhere (yet to be determined).
71414	Hardware Funding	140,000	0	9,233	0	0	Spend to be transferred to correct code (H. Lewis to advise)
71425	2 Blade Enclosures	0	24,270	0	24,270	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.
71426	8 Blade Servers for Workstation Virtualisation	0	39,050	0	39,050	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.
71427	12 Blade Servers for Workstation Virtualisation	0	30,720	0	30,720	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.
71428	Servers for GCS(X) Network	0	12,020	0	12,020	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.
71429	1 New Datacenter core network switches	0	28,360	0	28,360	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.

CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/14							
Exp Code	PROSPERITY						
	Exp. To 31/10/13						COMMENTS
	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate £	
		£	£	£	£		
71430	2 storage switch 2 x IL3 switch	0	16,380	0	16,380	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.
71431	Establishment of LES & internet links to replace MPLS	0	50,000	0	50,000	0	To be completed in Qtr 4.
71432	10TB Tier 1 (SAS Class) Storage	0	20,940	0	20,940	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.
71433	20TB Tier 2 (MDL Class) Storage	0	17,240	0	17,240	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.
71434	Zero Clients	0	54,020	0	54,020	0	Completed. Awaiting invoices from Stevenage.
71415	Applications	55,000	110,070	0	0	(110,070)	Orders raised to date relate to ICON upgrade and BACS software. Request that these are transferred to separate budget headings and the remaining £62,300 budget transferred to 71435.
71443	Civica ICON Upgrade		0	25,774	25,770	25,770	See above comment on 71415
71444	BACS Software		0	21,984	21,980	21,980	See above comment on 71415
71435	Proposed Funding for Applications	0	200,000	0	112,320	(87,680)	See above comment on 71415. Slip total variance of above codes & 71435 of £150,000 into 14/15.
71436	Desktop Virtualisation Application Virtualisation Secure Gateway Access	0	33,000	0	33,000	0	Will be spent this year, but request that this is utilised elsewhere (H. Lewis to advise in due course).
71437	Windows Server Licensing	0	10,000	0	5,000	(5,000)	Slip £5k into 14/15
71416	Merging systems - Licensing & Env Health	15,000	0	0	0	0	Slipped into 14/15 (agreed at 3.9 Exec)
71418	Mayrise Upgrade	10,000	30,000	23,609	30,000	0	To be completed by year end.

CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/14							
PROSPERITY							
Essential Reference Paper 'D'							
Exp. To 31/10/13							
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	COMMENTS
		£	£	£	£	£	
71420	Integrated DC & BC Systems	60,000	60,000	0	60,000	0	Subject to soft market testing (which is now taking place), information to be sent to CMT with a probable higher figure. Interim Head of ICT and Head of Planning to discuss further.
71422	Shared Services Infrastructure Integration	50,000	0	0	0	0	Budget utilised elsewhere.
71438	EH share 50% of estimated costs of implementation	0	55,000	0	55,000	0	
71439	Service Desk & Utilities	0	64,000	0	64,000	0	
71440	Shared service print investment costs 50%	0	20,500	0	20,500	0	
71441	Shared service accommodation costs 50%	0	62,000	0	62,000	0	
71424	Provisional IT Investment	500,000	0	0	0	0	Budget utilised elsewhere.
71362	Capital Salaries	109,000	109,000	0	109,000	0	
71423	Replacement Condensers to Server Room	0	1,000	0	0	(1,000)	Completed. Saving achieved.
75240	Bircherley Green MSCP - Major Refurb. & Repairs	66,240	66,240	10,294	66,240	0	Asset Management Group have requested that further expenditure be postponed until after a decision has been made on the future of the car park. Spend to date relates to final payment for the major works.
75241	Gascoyne Way MSCP - Major Refurb. & Repairs	0	8,600	7,435	8,600	0	Completed, awaiting final invoices.
75268	Northgate End - Resurfacing & Lining	50,000	50,000	39,052	50,000	0	Orders placed.

		Exp. To 31/10/13					COMMENTS
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
		£	£	£	£	£	
75269	Bell Street - Resurfacing & Lining	25,000	25,000	15,762	25,000	0	Orders placed.
75166	Replace Footbridge Library Car Park Ware	7,200	7,200	5,265	5,300	(1,900)	Completed. Saving achieved.
71273	Wallfields Fire Alarm Upgrade	0	0	(766)	(770)	(770)	Completed, small saving.
71274	Wallfields Replacement of Radiators	60,000	60,000	0	0	(60,000)	Replacement of radiators not to go ahead, however, other works are needed on improving the boiler and heating system. Request that the budget is utilised on the boiler instead and also slip into 14/15 as works can't be carried out until the summer months.
71275	Wallfields & Charringtons - Server Room Fire Suppression Systems	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0	Not to be spent on this scheme, to be utilised elsewhere (awaiting instructions from S. Whinnett)
71276	Wallfields - Equality Access & Card Control to Doors	40,000	40,000	4,150	40,000	0	Specification stage.
71269	Wallfields Security Gates & Fencing to Boiler House	15,000	15,000	0	0	(15,000)	Scheme to be reviewed therefore, slip into 14/15.
72598	Cricketfield Lane - Resurface Footpath & Retainment Works	75,000	75,000	0	0	(75,000)	Scheme to be reviewed. If this goes ahead, it can only be caried out in school summer holidays therefore, slip into 14/15.
71203	Replacement Chairs & Desks	10,000	11,080	5,862	11,080	0	It is expected that about £4,000 will be spent on refurbishment project in Wallfields old building in 4th quarter.

		Exp. To 31/10/13					COMMENTS
Exp Code	2013/14 Approved Schemes	2013/14 Original Estimate	2013/14 Revised Estimate	2013/14 Total Spend to Date	2013/14 Projected Spend	2013/14 Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
		£	£	£	£	£	
75160	River & Watercourse Structures	47,500	61,800	13,650	61,800	0	Consultation still ongoing to replace the St. Andrew Street Car Park bridge in Hertford Castle grounds . Remedial works required for other EH owned bridges have been assessed according to priority and we are awaiting quotes .Proposed flood alleviation asset to be constructed in Dane End is progressing and is still awaiting necessary consent for the works from HCC Flood Risk Management Team.
75157	Footbridge over River Stort	91,020	90,220	0	90,220	0	Still trying to resolve the outstanding issues so while there is no progress yet, hope to finalise the matter this year.
72568	North Drive - reconstruct road & drainage	15,380	15,380	627	630	(14,750)	Unable to resolve this at the moment as the money available is not enough to upgrade the road properly, however there are a couple of private planning schemes that may come forward that we hope to be able to include the road in. Request that this budget slips into 14/15.
71266	Capital Salaries	53,600	53,600	0	53,600	0	
71251	Automated Telling Machines at Hertford & B/S	0	0	0	0	0	Due to significant issues with the testing of the Civica payment system upgrade £12,800 has slipped to 2014/15.
72702	Parking Services - Operational Vehicle	10,000	10,000	0	0	(10,000)	Originally an approved capital bid for a used operational vehicle for Parking Services. Following a full cost/benefit review the lease cost of a new vehicle was comparable to the net cost of running a used vehicle so a new lease is to be progressed instead.
TOTAL		1,647,540	1,737,830	185,831	1,387,870	(349,960)	
Reconciliation of Original to Revised Estimate							

Exp Code	Exp. To 31/10/13						COMMENTS
	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14		
	Approved Schemes	Original Estimate	Revised Estimate	Total Spend to Date	Projected Spend	Variance between Proj Spend and Approved Estimate	
		£	£	£	£	£	
	Other Amendments	(70,470)					
	Slippage from 2012/13	160,760					
		1,737,830					

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'E'

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUSLY REPORTED VARIANCES ON THE REVENUE BUDGET

Projected Outturn 31 March 2014 £'000		
1.1	April	0
	May	225
	June	349
	July	340
	August	290
	September	138
		Favourable

ITEM (in order of Corporate Priority)		MONTH(S) REPORTED
People		
1.2	TURNOVER There are no financial issues this month regarding this priority.	April
1.3	TURNOVER A new payroll system has been installed and staff are being successfully paid. However, the output from the system has yet to be tested for interfacing into the General Ledger (financial system). As a consequence there is no information on budgetary monitoring for April and May.	May
1.4	TURNOVER April and May sickness absence data for EHPI 12c – Total number of sickness absence days per FTE being restated (paragraph 2.9 of report).	July
1.5	TURNOVER The Forecast Outturn for 2013/14 is expected to result in an	August

ITEM (in order of Corporate Priority)	MONTH(S) REPORTED
adverse variance of £113k. The projection includes the part year cost of Pensions Auto Enrolment	
1.6 TURNOVER	September
The Forecast Outturn for 2013/14 is expected to result in an adverse variance of £97k	
1.7 NEW HOMES BONUS GRANT	May
The Government has released additional New Homes Bonus grant monies. As a consequence East Herts Council has received a windfall sum of £20k.	
1.8 COLLECTION FUND	May
Upon finalising the balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund there is a £55k favourable position.	
1.9 REVENUES AND BENEFITS SERVICE	August
Additional DWP support has been received totalling £38k to assist with the ongoing cost of the Welfare Reform arrangements. The additional funding will be spent by the end of the financial year.	
1.10 COMMUNITY CAPITAL GRANTS	July
£54,900 of the Community Capital Grants budget to be re-profiled from 2013/14 to 2014/15. (Para 2.38 to Report)	
1.11 DISCRETIONARY DISABLED FACILITIES	July
In accordance with Financial Regulation 4.5.5, the virement of £21,000 from Discretionary Disabled Facility Grants capital budget into the Historic Buildings Grant budget. (Para 2.39 of Report)	
1.12 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	September
Reprofile of Capital Programme for Portfolio as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People – Social Housing Schemes - £820,740. • People – Community Capital Grants - £21,100. 	
Place	
1.13 PLANNING CONTINGENCY	April

ITEM (in order of Corporate Priority)**MONTH(S)
REPORTED**

The 2013/14 budget includes a planning contingency sum of £600k which allows for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. The changes that were agreed in February 2013 to the current recycling provision in East Herts have now been financially evaluated and a paper is included as **Essential Reference Paper 'F'** that details the latest available financial information. Due to changes in funding available from County, a reduction in the value achievable through sale of the vehicles and reductions in expenditure, £24,606 is required from the planning contingency to allow the scheme to remain affordable

The current assumptions are that the remainder of this budget are also fully utilised in 2013/14 but no further call is made on this budget, then the Council will have an under spend of £575k. Future Healthchecks will consider if there are any further calls on this sum.

1.14 PLANNING CONTINGENCY**May**

The original 2013/14 budget included a planning contingency sum of £600k which allows for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. In the April corporate healthcheck it was agreed that some of this funding will be used to support the new recycling initiative. This left a balance of £575k which if not required during the year will result in an additional favourable variance from the £225k reported this month.

1.15 PLANNING CONTINGENCY**June**

The original 2013/14 budget included a planning contingency sum of £600k which allows for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. It has been agreed that some of this funding will be used to support further initiatives namely a Housing Needs survey and a Human Resources post. Currently there is a balance of £511k which if not required during the year will result in an additional favourable variance from the £349k reported this month.

1.16 PLANNING CONTINGENCY**June**

ITEM (in order of Corporate Priority)	MONTH(S) REPORTED
<p>CMT agreed on 16 July 2013 to vire £40k of the Planning Contingency budget for the Housing Needs Survey. They also agreed to vire a sum for an additional Human Resources admin post for one year on scale 5. It is assumed that the funding required in 2013/14 will be for eight months at circa £16k. This will be result in a cost of circa £8k falling in 2014/15 in respect of the balance of four months.</p>	
<p>1.17 PLANNING CONTINGENCY</p> <p>In accordance with Financial regulations 4.5.5, the £40k virement form Planning Contingency budget agreed by CMT on 16 July for Housing Needs Survey. (Para 2.10 of Report)</p>	July
<p>1.18 PLANNING CONTINGENCY</p> <p>The planned appropriation to the interest equalization reserve in 2013/14 being reduced in line with any shortfall in investment income arising in the current year. (Para 2.27 of Report.</p>	July
<p>1.19 PLANNING CONTINGENCY</p> <p>The original 2013/14 budget included a planning contingency sum of £591k which allows for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. Currently there is a balance of £502k which if not required during the year will result in an additional favourable variance from the £209k reported this month.</p>	August
<p>1.20 PLANNING CONTINGENCY</p> <p>The original 2013/14 budget included a planning contingency sum of £591k which allows for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. Currently there is a balance of £502k which if not required during the year will result in an additional favourable variance from the £138k reported this month</p>	September
<p>1.21 CCTV</p>	June

ITEM (in order of Corporate Priority)	MONTH(S) REPORTED
<p>There has been a CCTV refund of £8k received from Stevenage Council in respect of previous years running costs.</p>	
<p>1.22 GREEN WASTE COLLECTION</p> <p>There is a possible under spend on Green Waste collection of £40k (subject to the implementation of the new recycling scheme). This is due to limited opportunities to implement organic waste collection from hard to reach properties and contract design efficiencies.</p>	June
<p>1.23 RECYCLING BANKS MAINTENANCE</p> <p>There is an expected under spend of at least£5k on the maintenance of recycling banks. Recycling banks have been reduced in recent years to collect textiles and paper only. There is a reduction in the number of sites due to supermarkets making their own arrangements expected. Members chose not to implement cardboard recycling banks as part of the new recycling service.</p>	June
<p>1.24 CLINICAL WASTE</p> <p>Business in the first quarter suggests additional income of £20k with Clinical Waste.</p>	June
<p>1.25 STREET CLEANSING</p> <p>There is an under spend of £25k in the Street Cleansing service due to contract efficiencies.</p>	June
<p>1.26 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE</p> <p>There is a net saving of £13k in the Grounds maintenance contract as Hertford Town Council has taken over the maintenance of the Castle grounds under a service level agreement. This was a Non Key decision report made in September 2012.</p>	June
<p>1.27 TRADE WASTE</p> <p>Due to an increase in Trade Waste business, income is predicting to be £60k greater than expected. This is partly off set by increased operating costs.</p>	August
<p>1.28 RECYCLING</p>	August

ITEM (in order of Corporate Priority)	MONTH(S) REPORTED
A reduction in paper tonnage collected is likely to result in reduced income of £10k for the year.	
1.29 RECYCLING Since the last reporting period the forecast outturn for Kerbside Dry recycling has been reduced to £23,000. Dry Recycling Income is forecast to result in an adverse variance of £15,000.	September
1.30 ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CARBON REDUCTION MEASURES – CAPITAL BUDGET Re profile £45,000 Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction capital budget to 2014/15 from 2013/14.	August
1.31 CAPITAL PROGRAMME Reprofile of Capital Programme for Portfolio as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place – Parks – Hartham Common - £25,000. • Place – Castle weir Micro Hydro Scheme - £203,980. 	September
Prosperity	
1.32 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FEES With income of £125k received from Bishop's Stortford North Development and the underlying income being maintained for the first two months an extra £150k is expected at this point in time.	April
1.33 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FEES With Development Management income of £125k received from the Bishop's Stortford North Development and the underlying income being maintained, the forecast outturn for income is expected to increase by £300k (revised from £250k in July 2013). Larger fees are being received for proposed developments in Buntingford and Hertford.	August

ITEM (in order of Corporate Priority)	MONTH(S) REPORTED
<p>1.34 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FEES</p> <p>With Development Management income of £125k received from the Bishop's Stortford North Development and the underlying income being maintained, the forecast outturn for income is expected to increase by £330k (revised from £300k in July 2013). Larger fees are being received for proposed developments in Buntingford and Hertford.</p>	September
<p>1.35 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FEES</p> <p>In line with increased development activity in the District, pre application advice is expected to increase resulting in a forecasted favourable variance of £25,000.</p> <p>However Planning Appeals are expected to increase in 2013/14 resulting in a forecast adverse variance of £60,000 for the additional costs.</p>	September
<p>1.36 CAR PARK INCOME</p> <p>There has been a £12k loss of Car Park income (£5k stolen) due to machines being broken into and then out of action (£7K).</p>	June
<p>1.37 CAR PARK INCOME</p> <p>Due to significant volatility in car park use, the 2013/14 income budget for Pay and Display Parking will not be achieved, a shortfall of £160k is anticipated. This includes a shortfall in the income forecast to result from the re-designation of Link and Northgate End car parks.</p> <p>A realignment of supermarket parking reimbursement fees is forecast to result in a favourable variance of £46k.</p>	August
<p>1.38 CAR PARKING EXPENDITURE</p> <p>A contingency in the Enforcement contract is now no longer required resulting in a favourable variance of £50k. The implementation of a mobile enforcement vehicle has been delayed until 2014/15 resulting in a further favourable variance of £29k. These are in addition to the</p>	August

ITEM (in order of Corporate Priority)	MONTH(S) REPORTED
favourable contract variation of £20k reported in the prior period due to the abandonment of vehicle removals.	
<p>1.39 CAR PARK INCOME</p> <p>2.1 Parking PCN income is expected to be £75,000 lower than expected by the end of the financial year. Officers are satisfied that the issue and processing arrangements for the service are robust. The adverse variance may have an ongoing impact for the 2014/15 budget. This adverse variance is partially offset by higher than expected season ticket sales at Bishop Stortford (£9,000). However the car washing income for Hertford is no longer a feasible income stream.</p>	September
<p>1.40 INVESTMENT INTEREST</p> <p>The planned appropriation to the interest equalization reserve in 2013/14 being reduced in line with any shortfall in investment income arising in the current year. (Para 2.27 of Report.</p>	July
<p>1.41 IT – MERGING OF LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CAPITAL BUDGET</p> <p>That £15,000 of the IT merging Licensing and Environmental Health capital budget is re- profiled from 2013/14 into 2014/15.</p>	July
<p>1.42 CAPITAL PROGRAMME</p> <p>Reprofile of Capital Programme for Portfolio as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prosperity – Automated Telling Machines at Hertford and B/Stortford - £12,800. 	September