



MEETING : EXECUTIVE
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : TUESDAY 7 JUNE 2016
TIME : 7.00 PM

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Councillor Linda Haysey	- Leader
Councillor Eric Buckmaster	- Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Tony Jackson	- Ambassador and Executive Member for Shared Services
Councillor Gary Jones	- Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economic Development
Councillor Graham McAndrew	- Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space
Councillor Suzanne Rutland-Barsby	- Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support
Councillor Geoffrey Williamson	- Executive Member for Finance and Support Services

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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.)

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AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Leader's Announcements

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting held on 5 April 2016.

4. Declarations of Interest

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

5. No. 1 The Causeway, Bishop's Stortford Redevelopment (Pages 7 - 16)

6. Footway and Grassed Verge Parking Enforcement Policy (Pages 17 - 70)

7. Buntingford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Pages 71 - 162)

8. Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Pages 163 - 312)

9. Planning Enforcement Proactive Service (Pages 313 - 318)

10. Council Tax Discounts (Pages 319 - 328)

11. Council Tax Support Scheme 2017/18 (Pages 329 - 346)

12. Development Management Pre-Application Advice Service - Revision of Charges (Pages 347 - 352)

13. District Planning Executive Panel: Minutes - 24 May 2016

Report to follow

To consider recommendations on the following matters:

- (A) East Herts Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment Update February 2016
- (B) The Gilston Area and the Government's 'Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities' Prospectus
- (C) Local Development Scheme (LDS) May 2016
- (D) East Herts Draft District Plan – Chapter 15 – Retail and Town Centres: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation, Further Amendments and Draft Revised Chapter
- (E) East Herts Draft District Plan – Chapter's 16 and 20 – Design and Landscape: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation, Further Amendments and Draft Revised Chapter (Renumbered Chapter 16)
- (F) East Herts Draft District Plan – Chapter 17 – Transport: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation, Further Amendments and Draft Revised Chapter
- (G) East Herts Draft District Plan – Chapter 19 – Natural Environment: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation, Further Amendments and Draft Revised Chapter
- (H) East Herts Draft District Plan – Chapter 21 – Heritage Assets: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation, Further Amendments and Draft Revised Chapter (Renumbered Chapter 20)
- (I) East Herts Draft District Plan – Chapter 22 – Climate Change: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation, Further Amendments and Draft Revised Chapter (Renumbered Chapter 21)

- (J) East Herts Draft District Plan – Chapter 23 – Water: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation, Further Amendments and Draft Revised Chapter (Renumbered Chapter 2)
- (K) East Herts Draft District Plan – Chapter 24 – Environmental Quality: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation, Further Amendments and Draft Revised Chapter (Renumbered Chapter 23)
- 14. Net Cost of Services - Revenue and Capital Outturn 2015/16 (Pages 353 - 372)
- 15. Quarterly Healthcheck - Quarter 4 March 2016 (Pages 373 - 398)
- 16. Strategic Risk Monitoring - Jan-Mar 2016 (Pages 399 - 408)
- 17. 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.

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

NO 1, THE CAUSEWAY DEVELOPMENT

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

WARD (S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- This report sets out proposals for the interim development of the site of No 1, The Causeway, Bishop's Stortford, prior to full redevelopment of the Old River Lane site.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE:</u> That, in relation to No 1, The Causeway:	
(A)	The request to demolish the existing structure and repurpose for short term use, as detailed throughout the report and recommended by the Old River Lane Steering Group, be approved.
(B)	The funding for the cost of demolition and resurfacing from the Commercial Property Fund, recommended by the Old River Lane Steering Group, be approved.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 East Herts Council purchased the Old River Lane site in Bishop's Stortford in October 2015 as an investment property. The site comprises Charringtons House, the Causeway and Waitrose car parks, 1, 2, and 3 Old River Lane and No 1, The Causeway.

1.2 No 1, The Causeway is a detached office building on a site of 0.69 acres formerly occupied as the headquarter offices for East Herts Council adjacent to Charringtons House.

- 1.3 The three storey building was constructed in 1973 and was occupied until 2013. The building has been vacant since 2013 and is now in an un-refurbished condition having been prepared for demolition by the previous owners.

2 REPORT

- 2.1 A planning framework has been commissioned for Bishop's Stortford town centre. This will inform the mix of uses and form that should be considered for the future development of the whole town centre including the Old River Lane site.
- 2.2 The Old River Lane site was purchased as an investment property by the council for £19.55m. Within the overall purchase, No 1, The Causeway was acquired for £1.37m.
- 2.3 The site of No 1, The Causeway is strategically important to any future development of the Old River Lane site. The previous owner had planning permission for redevelopment of the site which included the demolition of No 1, The Causeway to make way for a department store and provide access to the remainder of the site.
- 2.4 Following the publication of the planning framework a detailed plan will be developed for the Old River Lane site. It is anticipated that this piece of work, obtaining the subsequent planning permission and procuring contractors will take a number of years.
- 2.5 In acknowledgment of the length of time between now and the completion of a future redevelopment scheme there is a need to assess the options for redeveloping No 1, The Causeway.
- 2.6 There are a number of options that may be considered. These are summarised in diagram 1 below:

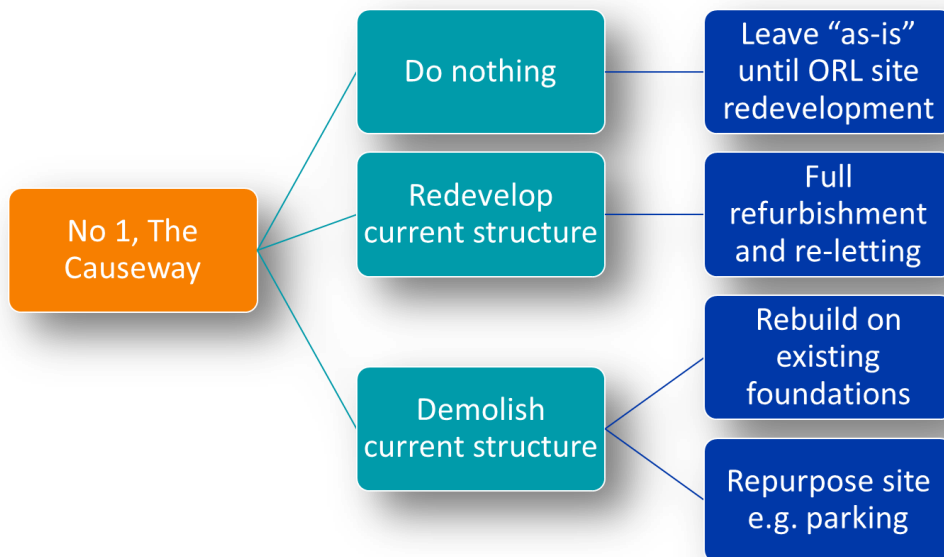


Diagram 1: Summary of development options for No 1, The Causeway

- 2.7 Four options have been considered and will be outlined in the report sections that follow. These are summarised in section 7.

3 OPTION 1: LEAVE “AS-IS”

- 3.1 The simplest option is to leave the building as it stands. The preparation for demolition undertaken by the previous owner has been substantial. The fabric of the building has been extensively surveyed which has resulted in asbestos fibres being disturbed.
- 3.2 Whilst this option does not involve significant capital expenditure it also does not present an opportunity to realise an income stream from a significant asset.
- 3.3 There are also likely to be a number of liabilities that arise if the building is left as it stands. The condition of the building is such that major repairs may be necessary to attempt to maintain the current condition of the building. These could include repairs to the roof and/or to the chimneys. The building also has a significant amount of glazing which poses a vandalism risk the longer the building remains unoccupied.
- 3.4 The current rateable value of the building is £145k per annum for which an exemption has been granted due to the presence of asbestos rendering the building un-useable. Leaving the building in its current condition has a direct impact on the Non Domestic Rates (NDR) income of the council.

4 OPTION 2: FULL REFURBISHMENT AND RE-LETTING

- 4.1 It would also be possible to refurbish the existing building. This would involve substantial work to remedy the damage caused by the demolition survey and the sealing of any exposed asbestos.
- 4.2 The space created would be lettable on the current market, although the building has some features that would prove challenging to remodel including the former council chamber and the disused plant. The refurbished space would need to be carefully configured to ensure that maximum return on investment was obtained.
- 4.3 The estimated cost of a sustainable refurbishment to a suitable standard is £2.8m plus fees (a total of £3.0m). This has been calculated by applying the values from the RICS publication 'Spon's Architect's and Builders' Price Book 2016' and the size of the occupied areas from the LSH sales documents and the council's historic records from previous occupation.
- 4.4 The expected income based on 18,000 ft² let at a rent of £17.00/ft² would yield a gross rental income of £306k per annum. This would be subject to management fees resulting in an estimated net rental of £270k per annum representing a gross yield of 9.0% and a simple payback period of 11 years, 1 month.
- 4.5 Refurbishing the existing building would also generate the ability to charge NDR which would be charged to occupying businesses. Based on the current rating of the building this would result in additional NDR income of £145k, which would be subject to the usual apportionment of 40% to East Herts, 10% to Herts County Council and 50% to central government.
- 4.6 The major disadvantage to refurbishing the existing building is the opportunity cost to the future redevelopment of the Old River Lane site. Reinstating the building would limit the potential of any scheme and to agree this now, in advance of the publication of the Bishop's Stortford planning framework, would be imprudent.
- 4.7 A refurbished building would also be a direct competitor to Charringtons House. The floor plates would be of a similar size and the market for office suites of this size is limited. The current layout of the building is likely to make the creation of smaller units challenging due to the position of the stairwells and common areas at one end of the building. If there is a downturn in the economy and suites become difficult to let in Charringtons House, a refurbished No 1, The Causeway would also be difficult to let. This would increase the

financial risk of extended void periods and the resulting loss of income would require savings to be found from other council budgets.

5 OPTION 3: REBUILD ON EXISTING FOUNDATIONS

- 5.1 It should be possible to demolish the current building and rebuild on the existing foundations. The foundations of both No 1, The Causeway and Charringtons House are secured on concrete piles which are sunk to a depth of several metres due to the permeable nature of the land within a flood plain. Reusing these foundations would negate the need to both remove the existing foundations and re-provide foundations for a new structure.
- 5.2 This option will, however, place limitations on the scope and design of any new structure to ensure that the foundations are capable of providing adequate, load-bearing support. Any proposal of this nature will therefore require expert engineering and surveying advice to ensure that any new structure is stable.
- 5.3 This option will require the demolition of the existing, above ground, structure of No 1, The Causeway.
- 5.4 The estimated cost of demolition and rebuilding to a suitable standard is £3.4m plus fees (a total of £4.0m). This has been calculated by applying the RICS Spon's guide to building prices and by estimating the space creating based on use as an office building with a similar size to the current building.
- 5.5 The expected income based on office space of 18,000 ft² let at a rent of £18.00/ft² would yield a gross rental income of £324k per annum. This would be subject to management fees resulting in an estimated net rental of £288k per annum representing a gross yield of 7.2% and a simple payback period of 13 years, 10 months.
- 5.6 A new building would also generate the ability to charge NDR which would be charged to occupying businesses. Based on the current rating of the building this would result in additional NDR income of £145k, which would be subject to the usual apportionment of 40% to East Herts, 10% to Herts County Council and 50% to central government.
- 5.7 The calculations in this report have assumed that any new building would offer office space on long term lease arrangements reflecting the premium, town centre, location. This allows a simple comparison to be made between the options outlined in this report.
- 5.8 There may be more suitable uses for a new building other than office

space which will be informed by the Bishop's Stortford Planning framework and could include a mixture of uses, e.g. retail, residential and/or office space.

- 5.9 The layout of any new building would need to be carefully designed to ensure that it delivers the requirements for any prospective tenant and is sufficiently different to the scale of suites in Charringtons House in order to minimise the effect of competition and maximise rental potential. A careful consideration would need to be made to assess the parking provision for a new building and how this would be provided.
- 5.10 In a similar way to refurbishing the current building a major disadvantage of deciding to create a new building on the existing site is the opportunity cost to the future redevelopment of the Old River Lane site. A new building would limit the potential of any scheme and to agree this now, in advance of the publication of the Bishop's Stortford planning framework, would be imprudent. If the existing building were demolished and not reconstructed, as outlined in option 4 below, this would not preclude a future building being constructed using the work of the Bishop's Stortford Planning framework to inform the most appropriate use.

6 OPTION 4: REPURPOSE SITE

- 6.1 The final option proposed is to demolish No 1, The Causeway, and repurpose the site for a short term use until a permanent decision can be made on the future of the site following the publication of the Bishop's Stortford Planning framework.
- 6.2 The cost of demolishing the existing building, leaving a flat surface and the foundations intact, is estimated to be £0.5m. The costs estimates are based on survey works completed by the previous owner of the site and would need to be validated with a quantity surveyor.
- 6.3 The interim use proposed is to create 58 parking spaces in the footprint of the existing building. The parking spaces could be offered to business users and/or residents on an annual licence basis for a fee of approximately £1,500 per annum. For comparison a season ticket in the railway station car park is £1,254 per annum and a season ticket in Grange Paddocks is £831 per annum. A number of tenants at Charringtons House have indicated that they require additional parking.
- 6.4 The expected proceeds would yield gross income of £87k per annum.

This would be subject to NDR charges of £11k (estimated from the NDR charge per space in the Causeway car park) resulting in an estimated net income of £76k per annum representing a gross yield of 15.2% and a simple payback period of 6 years, 6 months.

- 6.5 This proposal has the significant benefit of not restricting the future use of the site in the context of the future development of the Old River Lane site, allowing either reconstruction on the existing foundations or the development of an entirely new structure, whilst also generating an income in the short term.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The four options presented above, the costs, income, yield and payback are summarised in table 1 below.

Table 1: summary of options presented

OPTION	INITIAL COST £'000	ANNUAL RETURN £'000	YIELD %	PAYBACK
1: Do nothing	-	-	0.0%	n/a
2: Refurbishment	3,000	270	9.0%	11 years, 1 months
3: Rebuild	4,000	288	7.2%	13 years, 10 months
4: Re-purpose	500	76	15.2%	6 years, 6 months

- 7.2 The calculation of the yield above does not include the original purchase cost of No 1, The Causeway. If this is factored in the yield and payback periods change as shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: summary of options including initial purchase cost

OPTION	INITIAL COST £'000	ANNUAL RETURN £'000	YIELD %	PAYBACK
1: Do nothing	1,370	-	0.0%	n/a
2: Refurbishment	4,370	270	6.2%	16 years, 2 months
3: Rebuild	5,370	288	5.4%	18 years, 7 months
4: Re-purpose	1,870	76	4.1%	24 years, 7 months

- 7.3 By including the initial purchase cost the assumption is that the use outlined in each option would continue for the foreseeable future. This is a valid assumption for refurbishing or rebuilding but does not take into account the short term nature of repurposing. Refurbishing or rebuilding would create a building that would be in place for many years to come, whereas repurposing is a short term option pending future development.
- 7.4 Maintaining the current status and doing nothing with the building has the benefit of not tying up the plot in advance of the development of the rest of the site. There are significant risks that may arise as the condition of the building will decline and that the ultimate conclusion

should this be the case would result in demolition of the building. Leaving a vacant building in the town centre carries a reputational risk and has the potential to deter potential future tenants at Charringtons House.

- 7.5 The options to refurbish or demolish and rebuild both have the significant disadvantage of determining the future of the building/plot in advance of the publication of the Bishop's Stortford Planning framework. Investing significant sums of capital in a long term scheme, a new building would have a useful economic life of at least 20 years, which has the potential to damage the viability and success of a future scheme on the Old River Lane site is not recommended.
- 7.6 The current building is not configured to a modern floorplan and refurbishing the building with the same floorplan could make the resulting office suites difficult to let. If these office suites were completed and remained empty, this would cause a significant financial risk to the council due to the lack of rental income and the NDR liability that would result.
- 7.7 The option which seems most attractive and prudent is to demolish the existing building, leaving a flat surface at ground level. This space could be used to generate income from parking in the short term. The long term future of the plot could then be included in the scheme to redevelop the Old River Lane site. This has the benefit of reducing the liabilities arising from leaving the existing building "as-is" whilst not pre-determining the future potential of the site to generate a significant income for the council.
- 7.8 The revenue funding for the demolition works will come from the Commercial Property Fund and any net income will be used to replenish the fund for use in future development schemes.

8 IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

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

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	<p>Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives</p> <p>The outcome from this report will result in developing attractive and clean places.</p> <p>Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy</p> <p>The outcome from this report will deliver support for the local economy and contribute to the provision of vibrant town centres.</p>
Consultation:	This report has been presented and recommendations approved by the Old River Lane Steering Group.
Legal:	The Executive has the power to act on the recommendations contained within the report.
Financial:	<p>There are a number of options for consideration within this report, each with cost implications that have been outlined.</p> <p>The recommended course of action has a revenue cost and source of funding which will result in a source of revenue income for the council.</p>
Human Resource:	There are no Human Resources implications.
Risk Management:	The risks associated with approving (or not) the proposals are detailed throughout the report. The main risks relate to the current condition of the existing building and the possibility of risking the viability of any future development of the wider Old River Lane site.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	There are no health and wellbeing issues and impacts associated with the proposals.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FOOTWAY AND GRASSED VERGE PARKING ENFORCEMENT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To notify the Executive of the recommendations of the Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee.
- To agree the introduction of footway and grassed verge parking enforcement on an initial, trial basis.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE</u> That:	
(A)	The recommendations of the Environment Scrutiny Committee of 23 February 2016, be noted;
(B)	The introduction of footway and grassed verge parking enforcement in East Herts be approved; and
(C)	The mechanism for the introduction and operation of this enforcement, be approved.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 A 'Link' based survey undertaken by the Council indicated the existence of resident support for the implementation of footway and grassed verge parking enforcement in East Herts.
- 1.2 A study and options appraisal completed in 2015 discussed several possible approaches to the management of footway and grassed verge parking in the district.
- 1.3 On 23 February 2016 the Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee supported the adoption of footway and grassed verge parking controls and recommended the approach to be taken.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Parking on footways or grassed verges can be unacceptable for a number of reasons. At worst, footways can be obstructed, resulting in a hazard to pedestrians. Parked vehicles can damage footways and the services underneath them. Parking on grassed verges can reduce them to an unsightly mess in a short period of time.
- 2.2 Although footway and grassed verge parking is primarily a highways issue, with the cost of repairs borne primarily by the Highway Authority, Hertfordshire County Council has indicated it does not intend to implement controls on a county-wide basis, instead seeing the issue as a matter for district councils to progress.
- 2.3 The undesirability of allowing vehicles to park on footways has to be tempered by the fact that in some locations, especially narrow residential streets, vehicles parked wholly on the carriageway would obstruct other motorists. The challenge is to find a balance between the need to keep footways and grassed verges clear of parked vehicles where possible, whilst maintaining the safe passage of vehicles along the carriageway.

Recommendations of Environment Scrutiny Committee

- 2.4 On 23 February the Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee debated the options presented in the 2015 study for the implementation of footway and grassed verge parking controls in the district. The Committee supported the following proposals:
- Implementation of local, targeted bans.

The targeted ban approach is congruent with the views of East Herts residents as expressed through a 'Link' based survey. The alternative, a district-wide ban with local exemptions would be more costly and time consuming to implement.
 - District councillors to be invited to propose 'hot spot' locations in their ward for consideration for a ban, from which officers will make a final decision based on agreed criteria.

On this basis up to sixty defined areas (two per ward) would be included in an initial ban, which it is suggested would be a sufficient number for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

- Proposals to be assessed by officers against an agreed framework.

The evaluation criteria agreed by the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 23 February are as follows:

- Regularity of the offending parking acts.
 - Severity and extent to which the area is affected (e.g. visible damage to the verge or pavement surface)
 - Extent of the area that could reasonably be covered by a prohibition (e.g. is there a natural or readily definable boundary?).
 - Possibility that footway parking should be tolerated if the alternative would risk vehicles obstructing the carriageway.
 - Risk of displacement, with vehicles parking in a similar fashion outside the controlled area.
 - Records of public and Member complaints.
- Controls to be implemented under a number of Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders, allowing their effectiveness to be monitored for a period of up to eighteen months (see below).

Legal and Technical Process

- 2.5 For a footway and grassed verge parking ban to be enforceable it would be necessary to first promote a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). Two types of Order are possible – permanent or experimental.
- 2.6 An experimental TRO obviates much of the initial requirement to consult which is a feature of the permanent TRO approach. An experimental TRO is typically used where a local authority wishes to trial a new control. It can operate for a maximum of eighteen months before the authority must seek either to make it permanent or revoke it. Failure to do either will cause the Order to lapse. Should the authority wish to make the Order permanent, the requirement to consult then arises.
- 2.7 Should the Council wish to incorporate an element of monitoring and review as part of this process, an experimental TRO may be

the appropriate route to take. This was the approach favoured by the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 23 February 2016.

Timescales

- 2.8 Subject to Council agreement, Officers would spend the autumn of 2016 evaluating candidate areas identified by Members. Capital and revenue bids would be made as part of the 2017/18 MTFP process. The requisite Traffic Regulation Orders would be promoted in spring 2017 with the erection of on-street signage and the recruitment of two additional Civil Enforcement Officers completed shortly after the start of the 2017/18 financial year.

Monitoring and Assessment

- 2.9 Officers would use the maximum eighteen month duration of the experimental Traffic Regulation Orders to monitor the trial along the following lines:
- Reduction in frequency of footway and grassed verge parking.
 - Possible displacement of footway and grassed verge parking to nearby areas.
 - Revenue costs of enforcement vs revenue from enforcement.
- 2.10 Any decision by the Council to continue and/or extend the eighteen month trial would have to be taken in early 2018 and the Council's requirements would then be specified in the new parking enforcement contract, due to commence in January 2019.

Financial Implications

- 2.11 The capital and revenue costs of implementing a targeted local ban are estimated as follows:

Capital Costs

- Surveys of candidate areas – approx. £12k
- Promotion of Traffic Regulation Orders – approx. £6k
- Erection of signs – approx. £48k

Revenue Costs

- Two additional on-street enforcement (CEOs) – approx. £55k
- Additional enforcement vehicle – approx. £7k

- Additional costs of signs and lines maintenance – approx. £5k

As with all aspects of Civil Parking Enforcement, the objective of a footway and grassed verge parking ban would be to secure compliance. There should be no assumption that penalty charge income would be generated, although this is likely. Should one enforceable Penalty Charge Notice be issued each week in each of the sixty trial locations, penalty charge income of around £85k might accrue although improving compliance may see the number of PCNs issued reduce over the duration of the trial.

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

Report to Environment Scrutiny Committee – 23 February 2016

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=154&Mid=2692&Ver=4>

Minutes of Environment Scrutiny Committee - 23 February 2016

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=154&Mid=2692&Ver=4>

Study into the Adoption of Footway and Grassed Verge Parking Controls in East Herts (2015)

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/documents/s32469/Footway%20and%20Grassed%20Verge%20Parking%20ERP%20B%20Study.pdf>

Contact Member: Councillor Gary Jones – Executive Member for Economic Development
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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS:

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives	<p>Place – Safe and Clean</p> <p>This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p>
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident consultation has established an apparent mandate for the introduction of some form of footway and grassed verge parking ban. • Any proposal to implement a permanent footway and grassed verge parking ban at the end of the proposed trial would require the promotion of permanent Traffic Regulation Orders, which would incorporate an act of consultation. • Ward Members will be given a prominent role in identifying initial candidates for the implementation of a ban.
Legal:	<p>Successful promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order is a pre-requisite to the implementation of an enforceable footway and grassed verge parking ban.</p>
Financial:	<p>The capital and revenue costs of implementing a footway and grassed verge parking ban would depend on the areas to be covered.</p> <p>Assuming two locations in each of the 30 wards in East Herts were identified as suited to a targeted ban and assuming this could be achieved through the promotion of four separate Traffic Regulation Orders (one each for Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, Ware and 'rural'), the likely capital cost might be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial surveys (consultant) £12k • Traffic Regulation Orders £6k • Signage £48k (based on four signs in each of the sixty locations) <p>TOTAL CAPITAL COST £66k</p> <p>The likely annual revenue cost of operating a ban of this magnitude might be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two additional Civil Enforcement Officers £55k

	<p>(FTE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Vehicle £7k • Additional signs and lines maintenance responsibilities £5k <p>TOTAL REVENUE COST (ANNUAL) £67k</p> <p>The necessary capital and revenue bids would be made as part of the 2017/18 service planning process.</p> <p>Possible revenue based on 52 enforceable Penalty Charge Notices issued per annum in each of the 60 locations might be in the region of £85k per annum, however the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued would be likely to reduce as compliance improved. A more realistic expectation over the longer term would be that revenue from penalty charges would be likely to cover the additional revenue costs identified above.</p> <p>Following the conclusion of the trial, should the Council elect to implement and manage footway and grassed verge parking controls on a permanent basis, it might be cost-effective to employ a TRO officer at a cost of approx. £32k per annum rather than enlisting the assistance of consultants on each occasion. Such an appointment would engender savings in other areas such as the promotion of on-street resident permit parking zones Orders and off-street parking places Orders. It would also assist the Council to fulfil its obligation to the Highway Authority to inspect and maintain existing signs and lines – an obligation that would increase significantly should footway and grassed verge parking controls be implemented.</p> <p>It would be necessary to secure additional capital and revenue growth during the 2018/19 service planning cycle should the Council wish to embark on a programme to implement permanent footway and grassed verge parking controls.</p>
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Human Resource:	<p>Officers recommend that, especially if footway and grassed verge parking bans were introduced in rural areas, two additional Civil Enforcement Officers would have to be recruited to ensure adequate coverage.</p> <p>Processing the additional Penalty Charge Notices issued might require the recruitment of another Notice Processing Officer in the Council's Parking Service to ensure statutory and local service standards are maintained; however this is not proposed for the duration of the trial, during which period the effect on the 'back office' would be monitored.</p>
Risk Management:	Active enforcement against footway and grassed verge parking might place additional strain on the Council's off-street car parks and might lead to displaced motorists parking in a similarly illegal fashion elsewhere.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	Fewer vehicles parking on footways and grassed verges should enhance the appearance of the area and ensure improved access/mobility for pedestrians and others.

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**STUDY INTO THE ADOPTION OF FOOTWAY
AND GRASSED VERGE PARKING CONTROLS
IN EAST HERTS**

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CHAPTER ONE: HISTORIC CONTEXT, ISSUES AND PUBLIC PERSPECTIVES

1. Introduction

This chapter will give a succinct backdrop to the issue of vehicles being parked on footways and grassed verges. It will start by setting out the context within which such parking occurs, by outlining the impact of historic development, street patterns and the growth in car use, before then going on to consider more recent developments and planning policy for the future.

Finally, it will explore briefly some of the issues associated with footway parking, concluding with a reflection on national charity campaigns and local public perspectives on the matter.

2. Historic Context

(i) Historic development and street patterns

East Herts is a largely rural district, comprised of five historic market towns and over 100 villages and hamlets. The district's architectural and infrastructural history largely precedes the invention of the motor vehicle, resulting in a development pattern that was not built with cars in mind.

High density housing developments and narrow road widths, many built in the Victorian era, have been put under strain following a growth in car ownership, which is said to have doubled globally between 1975 and 1995 due to:

“Rising levels of income and affluence, the dispersal of urban activities, and the growth in urban population...compounded by the low costs of using the car and the perceived advantages inherent in the car” (Banister, 2005).

Indeed, it is estimated that there are over 28 million cars on our streets, and 90% of the time they will be parked (Living Streets, 2010). This rapid rise in car ownership has left many residents and visitors in East Herts with no other choice than to park on footways and grassed verges.

(ii) Newer developments and more recent planning policy

Although housing developments built in the 60s and 70s tended to be more mindful of the need to supply car parking spaces, these were often located in separate garages or drives away from properties. This may also have compounded the issue of pavement parking as many residents rejected remote spaces in favour of the convenience and surveillance benefits of parking on streets outside their homes.

Furthermore, many streets also offer free parking, in contrast to purpose-built car parks that can incur a fee. This may deter vehicle owners from parking in car parks when visiting towns, subsequently encouraging a greater incidence of on-street parking. Indeed, Shroup (2011) argues that free parking itself contributes to greater auto-independence and the development of urban areas that are fit more for cars than for people.

(iii) Planning policy guidance for future developments

Within the current Local Plan (2007), there are restrictions on the amount of parking spaces allocated per dwelling in any new development. These reflect Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note

13, put in place in March 2001, which introduced a maximum parking standard of 1.5 car parking spaces per dwelling across the district.

Justification for this restriction is outlined in a Local Plan Second Review 2007 Supplementary Planning Document (2008):

“Car parking is space-hungry, costly to provide and reduces development density. So reducing the amount of car parking in new development is essential, as part of the packet of measures, to promote sustainable transport choices.” (Planning Policy Team, 2008: p6).

Whilst encouraging greater sustainability, limiting car parking spaces also results in a greater incidence of on-street parking, thereby increasing the likelihood of parking on footways and grassed verges. Furthermore, the maximum parking standard is implemented according to a zonal system, which stipulates that town centres are not required to provide the full extent of this standard, thus further exacerbating the issue in urban areas.

Nevertheless, this national policy has since been superseded. As a result, when the District Plan is implemented, the maximum parking standard will be overridden. This will give greater flexibility to provide more parking spaces in future developments and deter car owners from parking on-street.

3. Issues associated with footway/grassed verge parking

Issues associated with cars parking on footways and grassed verges include:

- The obstruction of vulnerable pedestrians who use the verge or footway, in particular wheelchair users, mobility scooters or people pushing prams;
- Causing a hazard for any pedestrian who is forced to step into oncoming traffic to avoid the obstruction, or whose visibility is reduced at junctions, bends and/or narrow roads;
- The obstruction of other road users who wish to enter or leave properties accessed via the footway/verge;
- Causing congestion by parking on narrow streets that cannot accommodate it;
- Causing costly environmental damage to footways and grassed verges, which are not built to withstand the weight of heavy vehicles;
- Causing damage to underlying drainage and utility services networks beneath the footway/verge

4. National charity campaigns

A number of charities are running campaigns to tackle the issue of pavement parking. Two charities most prominent in this campaign are:

- a) **Guide Dogs** – who argue that parking on pavements is risking the lives of people who are blind or partially sighted, as they are forced to step into the road without being able to see oncoming traffic. They are campaigning for the Greater London law, which prohibits parking on pavements in all areas except those markedly exempt, to be expanded to the rest of the country. They argue that this would reduce regional disparity, improve clarity, empower local authorities and properly tackle the problem of pavement parking.

For more information, visit: <http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/supportus/campaigns/streets-ahead/pavement-parking/#.VakKhqRViko> (Accessed 17/07/15)

- b) **Living Streets** – who argue that it is essential to ensure that a legal and enforcement framework exists to prevent pedestrians from being marginalised or endangered by inconsiderate parking. As with Guide Dogs, they are seeking to make pavement parking illegal throughout the UK.

For more information, visit:

[http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Policy_briefings/PB0110Parking\(2\).pdf](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Policy_briefings/PB0110Parking(2).pdf) (Accessed 17/07/15)

For a further list of charities, websites and/or blogs campaigning against parking on footways and grassed verges, see the reference list at the end of this report.

5. Public opinion in East Herts

East Herts District Council distributed a parking and transport survey with an edition of the council magazine in 2011. One of the questions asked residents about whether or not they would be in favour of a pavement and grassed verge parking ban. Their response is displayed below:

Would you be in favour of East Herts Council introducing a pavement and grassed verge parking ban, enforceable by issuing Penalty Charge Notices?			
Top number is the count of respondents and the bottom number is the percent	Yes	No	No opinion
On a street by street basis as needed	289	171	48
	57%	34%	9%
Across the district with limited exemptions	198	248	60
	39%	49%	12%

The most popular response, chosen by 57% of respondents, was in favour of implementing a ban in targeted 'hotspots' on a case by case basis.

CHAPTER TWO: STATUTORY CONTEXT

1. Introduction

As stated, there are no national restrictions against parking on footways or grassed verges, except for heavy commercial vehicles. However, there are a number of ways by which local authorities or the police can enforce pavement parking restrictions.

Until the 1990s, parking violations were considered a criminal offence and thus police traffic wardens were responsible for punishing offenders for committing these crimes. Following the introduction of the Road Traffic Act 1991, certain parking offences were 'de-criminalised' and became the responsibility of individual local authorities to enforce in application.

East Herts Council enforces on-street parking on behalf of Herts County Council under an Agency Agreement. However, it is important that any regulation implemented has been informed by the national legislative landscape within which it will be operating. It is also useful to look at the statutory context in Greater London, which has enabled enforcement action against footway and grassed verge parking since 1974.

This report gives an overview of the general legal position regarding footway parking, by detailing:

- The historic context from which national legislation has derived;
- The government's current position regarding the issue (including a couple of Private Members' Bills being introduced in Parliament), and;
- The differing characteristics of enforcement under civil and criminal law.

2. Historic statutory context

(i) *Road Traffic Act (RTA) 1974*

Section 36 of the RTA 1972 was first subject to amendments regarding footway and grassed verge parking in 1973, when a clause to ban the parking of heavy commercial vehicles on verges and footways was introduced. These vehicles are defined as goods vehicles with an operating weight exceeding 7.5 tonnes.

The Road Traffic Act 1974 sought to extend this restriction to all vehicles on urban roads with the following clause:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 7 | (1) After section 36A of the 1972 Act (prohibition of parking of heavy commercial vehicles on verges and footways) there shall be inserted the following section: |
| 36B | (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, a person who parks a vehicle, other than a heavy commercial vehicle, within the meaning of section 36A of this Act, wholly or partly- <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) on the verge of an urban road, or(b) on any land which is situated between two carriageways of an urban road and which is not a footway, or(c) on a footway comprised in an urban road, shall be guilty of an offence. |

See pages 11-13 of the link below for further details of the legislation listed under this section of the RTA 1974, which includes clarification regarding: the nature of the offence; any circumstantial exemptions; and definitions of terminology:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/50/pdfs/ukpga_19740050_en.pdf

This clause, however, was never brought into operation. The government's response to queries regarding its delay in being enacted was that implementation was unable to commence before local authorities had undergone work to identify necessary exemptions. This proved to be an insurmountable barrier to nation-wide restrictions being enforced, and the non-operational clause was eventually repealed by the RTA 1991.

(ii) *Greater London Council (GLC) (General Powers) Act 1974*

Whilst the RTA 1974 failed to enable the footway parking ban nationally, 'Part III, Highways, Section 15' of the GLC Act 1974 successfully enabled local authorities to take enforcement action against footway and grassed verge parking in Greater London:

15	As to parking on footways, grass verges, etc.
(1)	Subject to subsections (3), (4), (7) and (11) of this section and without prejudice to the provisions of any other enactment, any person who, on or after the appointed day in or on any urban road in Greater London parks a vehicle so that one or more of its wheels is resting on— <div style="margin-left: 40px;"><div>(a) any footway;</div><div>(b) any land (not being a footway) which is situated between two carriageways in any such road; or</div><div>(c) any grass verge, garden or space not falling within the foregoing paragraph (a) or (b);</div></div> shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding [^{F1} level 1 on the standard scale].

See the link below for further details of the legislation listed under this section of the GLC Act, which includes clarification regarding:

- the nature of the offence and subsequently the appropriate means of prosecution;
- any exemptions (regarding individual cases/areas);
- issuing notice; and
- definitions of terminology

Link: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukla/1974/24/section/15>

(iii) *Road Traffic Act (RTA) 1991*

The RTA 1991 'de-criminalised' certain parking violations and gave powers to enforce parking regulations to individual local authorities. Section 83 and Schedule 8 also repealed the clause on footway and grassed verge parking from the RTA 1974.

Under the 1991 Act, parking contraventions committed on the public highway were no longer dealt with by the police and criminal courts, but by local authorities and an independent traffic tribunal (to hear appeals), with debts registered in a County Court and recovery by certified bailiffs. The responsibility for enforcement was thereby removed from police traffic wardens and given to ‘civil enforcement officers’ working on behalf of either a local authority or private firm.

Local authorities were given the power to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and retain the income generated from these to finance further parking enforcement. Endorsable offences (offences that result in points on a licence) and offences relating to obstruction remained, however, under the responsibility of the police (see section 4 below).

(iv) *Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004*

The TMA 2004 updated and revised the RTA 1991, which involved extending the civil enforcement powers of local authorities to enforce against certain driving and parking contraventions.

Significant changes included a couple of additional parking contraventions, which are listed in full in schedule 7, part 1 of the TMA 2004. Nine parking contraventions are referred to directly, including the parking of heavy goods vehicles (exclusively) on verges, central reservations or footways. However, the “appropriate national authority” is granted power to decriminalise further offences on the condition they consult appropriate representatives of chief officers of police and local authorities.

For the full legislation, see: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/18/contents>

(v) *The Secretary of State’s Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities*

‘The Secretary of State’s Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions’ is published by the Department for Transport under section 87 of the TMA 2004. Authorities *must have regard* to this Statutory Guidance when exercising their functions. It states:

(p6, 2.4) Enforcement authorities should design their parking policies with particular regard to:

- Managing the traffic network to ensure expeditious movement of traffic, (including pedestrians and cyclists), as required under the TMA Network Management Duty;
- Improving road safety;
- Improving the local environment;
- Improving the quality and accessibility of public transport;
- Meeting the needs of people with disabilities, some of whom will be unable to use public transport and depend entirely on the use of a car; and
- Managing and reconciling the competing demands for kerb space.

To see the full guidance document, see:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/421131/final-statutory-guidance.pdf

3. Government’s current position

(i) *Parliamentary Notes*

Current legislation gives local authorities the power to ban parking on footways and grassed verges by introducing tailored parking measures and prohibitions based on local needs in their area.

A Parliamentary Note (dated 17 November 2014) sets out the current Governments' position on the topic:

There is no national prohibition against on-street or 'pavement' parking except in relation to heavy commercial vehicles. Local authorities and the police may act to tackle pavement parking in various ways, such as under legislation governing obstruction and dangerous parking; designating limited areas of 'no pavement parking' through a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO); or establishing a special parking area.

For the full Note, see: <http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN01170/parking-pavement-and-onstreet>

For a Parliamentary Note (dated 17 October 2014) that summarises the history of parking policy in England, see the following link: <http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN02235/parking-policy>

Furthermore, it is worth noting that on February 21 2011, the Regional and Local Transport Minister, Norman Baker, wrote to councils to encourage them to use their powers to prevent parking on the pavement where it is a problem. At the same time, the Department for Transport gave councils permission to use signs to indicate a local pavement parking ban, without having to gain special signs authorisation from the government as previously expected. More information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/freeing-pedestrians-from-pavement-parking-blight>

(ii) *Highway Code*

The Highway Code (<https://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code>) states in Rule 244:

"You MUST NOT park partially or wholly on the pavement in London, and should not do so elsewhere unless signs permit it. Parking on the pavement can obstruct and seriously inconvenience pedestrians, people in wheelchairs or with visual impairments and people with prams or pushchairs."

Additionally, in Rule 243 it states:

"DO NOT stop or park where the kerb has been lowered to help wheelchair users and powered mobility vehicles."

NB: Use of the phrase "DO/SHOULD NOT" in the Highway Code does not relate to an illegal practice but instead acts as a note of caution. "MUST NOT", on the other hand, does indeed refer to specific offences in law.

(iii) *House of Commons Transport Committee 2006*

The House of Commons Transport Committee issued an inquiry on parking in 2006. Although now slightly outdated, it made the following comment in reference to footway parking:

"The Government must grip the problem of pavement parking once and for all and ensure that it is outlawed throughout the country, and not just in London. Councils should have the option of an 'opt-out' of a national pavement parking ban where this is vital, rather than relying on the use of individual Traffic Regulation Orders on specific streets and local Acts to impose a ban. That such an initiative will

initially require additional resources to enforce is no excuse for allowing some pavements to continue to be swamped by cars and made inaccessible to large numbers of pedestrians. (Paragraph 262)".

For the full inquiry, see:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmtran/1641/1641.pdf>

(iv) Private Member's Bill (England and Wales)

There has recently been renewed interest in introducing a nationwide 'blanket ban' against footway parking, led by charities such as Living Streets and Guide Dogs for the Blind. This has led to two Private Member's Bills relating to the issue in the 2014/15 Parliamentary session:

1. Mark Lazarowicz MP – submitted a bill to devolve powers to introduce a pavement parking ban to the Scottish government. The bill was withdrawn following its second reading in the House of Commons in September 2014, due to confirmation from the government in Westminster that action would be taken to ensure the devolved Parliament in Holyrood had the necessary powers to progress a bill on this issue.
2. Martin Horwood MP – submitted a bill to introduce a blanket pavement parking ban in England and Wales. The bill has yet to receive second reading, and the upcoming election is likely to delay this further. The likelihood of its success is limited. To see the bill and follow its progress, see: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2014-15/pavementparking.html>

4. Hertfordshire County Council's Position

A meeting was held on Wednesday 22 April with Steve Chappell, Senior TRO Officer at Herts County Council, to determine their position on implementing a footway and grassed verge parking ban in East Herts.

Steve's response to the inquiry was that the County Council see it as a matter for Borough and District Councils to decide upon and implement, given that they hold the responsibility for enforcement.

5. Criminal law

Although the RTA 1991 de-criminalised most parking contraventions, some parking offences can still be enforced by the police and are subject to criminal proceedings that could lead to points on the offender's driving licence. For example, parked vehicles that cause safety hazards or are parked in the approach to a zebra crossing are endorsable offences that are dealt with by the police (although a local authority may also issue a civil law Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) for this act of parking).

(i) Criminal law against driving on the footway

Under section 72 of the Highways Act 1835, it is an offence to drive (or ride) onto a pavement or footway, regardless of the length of time spent driving on it:

It is an offence to: "wilfully ride upon any footpath or causeway by the side of any road made or set apart for the use or accommodation of foot-passengers or shall wilfully lead or drive any carriage of any description upon any such footpath or causeway."

Given that it is necessary to commit this offence in order to park on the footway, many argue that parking on footways should also be subject to fines. However, clarification may be required as to whether this should be a criminal offence or a civil parking contravention, only the latter of which is enforceable by East Herts Council.

(ii) Criminal law against obstruction

The police have the power to remove vehicles if they are causing an obstruction, illegally parked or have been abandoned (granted by sections 99-102 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, and by the Removal and Disposal of Vehicles Regulations 1986 (SI 1986/183), as amended, made under sections 99 and 101 of the 1984 Act).

There are a number of statutes and regulations in place against obstructing the highway, including:

- Highways Act 1980, section 137 (wilfully obstructing the free passage of a highway);
- Town Police Clauses Act 1847, section 28 (wilfully causing an obstruction in any public footpath or public thoroughfare); and
- Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986/1078), regulation 103 (causing or permitting a motor vehicle or trailer to stand on a road so as to cause any unnecessary obstruction of the road).

(iii) Public statement, Hertfordshire police

Hertfordshire police have issued a public statement on their website detailing their stance on illegal parking. The statement recognises that most parking restrictions are the responsibility of local authorities to enforce, however it also identifies that: “Hertfordshire Constabulary still has the power to act on obstruction offences, and where vehicles are parked on zig-zag approaches to pedestrian crossings.”

When defining obstruction, they include a sentence on cars that have been parked across footways and are blocking free passage to pedestrians, particularly those using mobility scooters or with push chairs.

The statement also makes clear that borough/district councils are able to issue a PCN to vehicles that are obstructing a dropped kerb that serves a driveway, cycle track or pedestrian access – a power introduced in the TMA 2004.

Police also state that: “Inconsiderate parking alongside dropped kerbs can prevent residents, particularly people with disabilities and persons with pushchairs, from crossing the public highway in a safe manner, and also prevent the residents and businesses from getting their vehicles back on the road or in their driveway.”

For full statement, see: https://www.herts.police.uk/advice/illegal_parking.aspx

6. Summary

There have been a few instances in recent legislative history whereby a national ‘blanket’ ban on footway and grassed verge parking has been proposed. Firstly, it was put forward as a clause on the RTA 1974, although this was never operationalised. More recently, Martin Horwood MP has

submitted a Private Members' Bill also advocating a national ban, but the likelihood of its success is uncertain.

Current legislation locates the power to ban parking on footways and grassed verges with local authorities, who are able to introduce tailored parking measures and prohibitions based on local needs in their area. This reflects the de-criminalisation of parking offences (now 'contraventions') following the RTA 1991. The police, however, are still responsible for certain related parking offences, such as driving on footways and obstruction.

CHAPTER THREE: CONSIDERING AVAILABLE OPTIONS

1. Introduction

This chapter outlines in greater detail five different ways of dealing with the issue of parking on footways or grassed verges. Each option is outlined and subject to an analysis regarding the pros, cons and resource implications that would ensue following implementation of the regime suggested.

Options considered include: a district-wide ban with local exemptions; a local ban issued on a case-by-case basis; an experimental order in prioritised areas; alternative options to a ban; and finally no action taken at all. Two different approaches to signage are then considered: an individual locational sign approach versus a zonal sign approach.

2. Available options

(i) District-wide ban with local exemptions

This option involves implementing a district-wide Traffic Regulation Order to ban parking on footways across the whole district. However, some areas – where parking on footways is essential to ensure the free-flow of traffic in the absence of alternative parking provision – will be made exempt from the ban. This approach has been adopted in London to prevent on-street parking.

Designating areas of exemption from the ban requires a robust methodology to ensure consistency in allocations across the district. A comprehensive set of criteria would be in operation for granting exemption status, so that narrow residential roads with a lack of off-street parking provision can be identified systematically.

Furthermore, in areas where an exemption has been formalised, it then becomes the responsibility of the council to identify and (where appropriate) protect any services running underneath the footway. An in-depth public consultation would also be required before action could be taken, through the promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order.

Areas that are identified for exemption would then need to be clearly marked, either through signage or by bays painted in white indicating where vehicles can park on the footway or grassed verge.

Pros	Cons	Resource Implications
<p>Having a blanket ban on parking on footways and grassed verges across the district, except for areas chosen for exemption, would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the uniformity of the ban in the district • Lead to pedestrians across the whole district having an equal, unrestricted access to footways from the outset of action, except where there is no alternative • Prevent damage to footways and the urban environment in all areas from the outset of action, regardless of road use • The need for in-depth consultation would enable more accurate predictions of residents' reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A blanket ban would likely exceed organisational capacity – the Traffic Regulation Order would need to go live after all signage is in place and it would be difficult to estimate how long this would take • This option would require the largest, most arduous and most costly consultation effort of all the options – which would cover the entire district • It would result in a lengthy, time-consuming operation with a long lag-time between proposal and implementation – as well as taking up a high proportion of officer time 	<p>Costs involved in implementing this option include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation and service survey costs • Commissioning Herts County Council to write the TRO • Highest signage costs than any other option (to cover all areas, including exemptions). See below for different signage options • Maintenance of signage every 2 years • Enforcement of the ban

(ii) *Local ban issued on a case-by-case basis*

This option would involve implementing small-scale, local Traffic Regulation Orders to ban parking on footways and/or grassed verges on a case-by-case basis. This approach has been adopted in areas such as East Sussex, Eastleigh, Shepway, Windsor and Maidenhead.

Again, a comprehensive set of criteria would need to be in operation for identifying which areas should be subject to the ban and which should not, including a survey to identify any services running underneath the footway or verge that would need to be protected in areas where footway/grassed verge parking is allowed.

There would also need to be a system of prioritisation in place with regards to *which* areas should be targeted *when*. This would involve considerable consultation with the public and with Members, as well as site visits to identify areas where damage and pedestrian obstruction are worst.

Once areas have been subject to a Traffic Regulation Order to ban footway/grassed verge parking in that particular locality, they must be clearly signed using one or both of the methods listed in section 3 below.

Pros	Cons	Resource Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An approach that enables a system of prioritisation would mean that the most problematic areas can be targeted first Both costs and staff resources will be required incrementally/gradually to implement the ban, thereby reducing the impact of one 'big hit' The need for fairly lengthy consultation would enable more accurate predictions of residents' reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producing and following a robust prioritisation framework to identify which sites would have the ban implemented first will be a long and laborious process Although the consultation need for this project does not equal that of a district-wide ban, it will still require considerable resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation service survey costs Commission Herts County Council to write the TRO Signage costs for areas where ban is in operation. See below for different signage options Maintenance of signage every 2 years Enforcement of the ban

(iii) Experimental Order in prioritised areas

An experimental Order is, as suggested, a type of 'pilot' or 'trial' Traffic Regulation Order that can be implemented at chosen sites immediately and monitored/evaluated with regards to its cost and impact. It is not a means to avoid consultation, but acts as a means of consultation in itself.

An experimental Order can only take effect for a maximum of 18 months before it needs to be either revoked or made permanent. This approach has been adopted in Stevenage and Tunbridge Wells, both of which implemented experimental orders that have now been made permanent.

Again, a system of prioritisation would need to be in place to identify which area(s) the ban would be applied to. It would benefit from being an area, or areas, with demonstrable 'before' and 'after' implications. Similarly, it would be useful if the areas were representative of all three issues concerned: grassed verge damage; footway damage and obstruction issues.

Pros	Cons	Resource Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An experimental Order can be put into action at chosen sites immediately, without need for lengthy/arduous consultation processes The impact of the Order can be monitored and evaluated at a small scale before a decision is made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experimental Orders are more expensive than permanent orders Although initial implementation will be quick at a small-scale, rolling out the ban further across the district will be a lengthier process than the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission Herts County Council to write the TRO Signage costs for areas where ban is in operation. See below for different signage options Maintenance of signage every two years

about implementation across wider areas	other two options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of the ban
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(iv) *Alternatives to a ban*

A variety of physical measures can be used to discourage residents from parking on the pavement, without the need for legislative measures. Government guidance is available to inform local authorities on these alternatives via the following link:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090505152230/http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/165240/244921/244924/TAL_4-93

The document dates back to 1993, but is still relevant to the situation today. The guidance states that when determining which of these measures is most appropriate to context, the following considerations should be accounted for: Desired effect; location; funds available; safety factors; aesthetic considerations; access requirements; and need to consider requirements of disabled people and not cause obstacles to their movements. Key measures are summarised in the list below.

(a) *Railings*

There are three different types of railing to be considered: Guard rails are metal, fence-like structures that are erected on the edge of the footway. They are generally used for safety reasons to channel pedestrians to crossing points.

Amenity railings are open railings constructed from tubed structures 1.5m to 2.5m long, and around 1m high. Gaps (no wider than 1.5m) are provided between individual units to allow pedestrian movements.

Low railings are no more than 0.5m high, supported by posts 3m apart. They keep pedestrians away from the carriageway and deter cars from the footway.

(b) *Bollards*

Bollards can be erected on the edge of the footway with gaps no less than 1.2m between (to allow wheelchair users or people with double buggies to pass) and no greater than 1.5m (to prevent vehicles from mounting the pavement). The gap may need to be greater where pedestrians are intended to cross highways.

(c) *High kerbs*

The height and shape of double kerbs and trief kerbs can act as a preventative measure against footway parking. Double kerbs are characterised by a step-like structure, where a lower kerb is followed immediately by a higher kerb running alongside the pavement. Trief kerbs are specially-designed kerbs to enhance drivers' safety. They have a ramped 'toe' to provide a clear physical warning that prompts drivers to steer away and a concave recess to 'trap' the bulge in tyre sidewalls.

(d) *Landscaping*

Various landscaping approaches can be used to form an aesthetic and effective barrier to discourage vehicles from parking on footways and grassed verges. These include: fixed or movable ‘raised planters’; textured surfaces (which take a variety of forms, such as large cobbles, specially designed paving, and brick on edge); and strategically positioned street furniture (with litter bins to reduce gaps).

Careful design is nevertheless required to ensure that: pedestrians can still see/be seen easily by oncoming traffic; people are discouraged from getting in and out of vehicles; and visually impaired pedestrians are not inconvenienced.

(e) *Formalised on-street parking*

In narrow streets where parking along the pavement is a necessity, special spaces can be marked out on one side of the carriageway. This will not solve the problem of pavement parking, but will make sure it is done in a safer and more controlled manner at minimal cost. It may also have the added benefit of slowing vehicle speeds.

Pros	Cons	Resource Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite high initial set-up costs, these measures have the advantage of being self-policing and self-enforcing in the long run. Many of the measures listed may also improve pedestrian safety by channelling them into safe crossing points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical measures may cause further obstruction by limiting pedestrian access to footways. Many of the options outlined above may also not be easily detected by visually impaired pedestrians. High kerbs can make crossing roads and getting in or out of cars dangerous Most of the options considered above would add clutter to the street scene, which would have significant aesthetic costs in East Herts’ historic market towns. See reference below 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs vary according to the type, scale and extent of the measure used. However, physical measures tend to have high initial set up costs followed by steady, low maintenance costs. There are no signage or enforcement costs.

In addition to the note on street clutter – there has been a number of studies recently undertaken suggesting that de-cluttering streets and moving instead towards ‘shared space’ schemes can lead to better behaviour and safety for road users.

This idea, which is based around the notion that giving road users the responsibility for their own actions can improve safety by increasing perceived risk, has been introduced extensively in countries such as the Netherlands and, to a lesser extent, Germany and Denmark.

For a useful review of the simplified streetscape scheme idea, see:

Quimby, A. and Castle, J. (2006) *A Review of Simplified Streetscape Schemes*, Transport for London: Street Management Division [online] <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/review-of-simplified-streetscape-schemes.pdf> Accessed 13/05/2015

(v) *No action*

It is also important to consider the pros, cons, and resource implications of taking no action at all:

Pros	Cons	Resource Implications
<p>Banning parking on pavements can create other problems, which would be avoided if no action were taken. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhibiting the efficient movement of traffic and subsequently increasing the incidence of congestion • Loss of parking spaces and putting further pressure on other parking areas (eg. car parks, wider streets) • Creation of unsafe road uses for drivers and pedestrians • Restriction of access for emergency service and refuse/recycling vehicles • It may also be impractical to enforce in narrow residential roads with a lack of off-street parking provision 	<p>Cars will continue to park on footways as there would be no repercussions for doing so. This can lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavement obstruction and potential loss of independence for vulnerable users, particularly those with visual/mobility impairments • Danger as pedestrians are forced on to the road and incoming traffic • Physical damage to the pavement, which has a negative impact on the aesthetic environment, may cause safety hazards and induces high maintenance costs • 'Clutter' on the street scene, which would have a negative aesthetic impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased maintenance costs to fix cracked or damaged pavements

3. Signage Options

(i) *Individual locational signage approach*

Individual signs, as displayed below, can be used to indicate an area where parking on footways and/or grassed verges is prohibited.

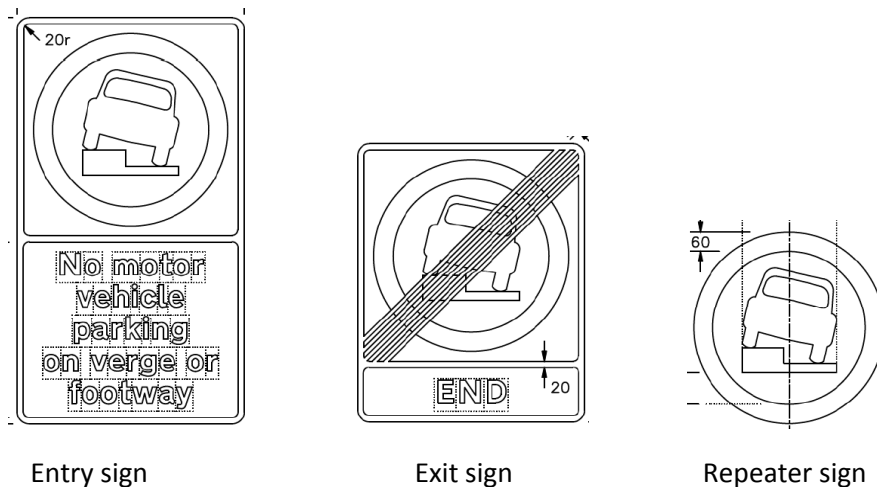


(Available online from the Department for Transport: <https://www.gov.uk/traffic-sign-images>)

Such signage is required every 30 metres within a restricted area, which can incur high costs and considerable maintenance work. Although it can be useful for isolated streets, it is not appropriate for larger areas.

(ii) Zonal signage approach

A zonal signage approach involves the erection of 'entry' and 'exit' signs at the start and end of the restriction zone, with repeater signs in between:



The zonal approach works better for larger areas, as it requires less signage than the individual locational signage approach, given that repeater signs are only required every 300 metres. This also makes it a cheaper option.

These signs are non-prescribed regulatory road signs, therefore they require authorisation from the Secretary of State for Transport. Hertfordshire County Council has been authorised to use these signs for roads for which it is the highway authority.

4. Summary

This chapter has put forward five different ways of dealing with the issue of parking on footways or grassed verges and outlined the pros, cons and resource implications for each. Where possible,

estimated cost figures have been provided using case study examples from other councils, to aid quantitative comparison between the different options.

CHAPTER FOUR: CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES FROM OTHER COUNCILS

1. Introduction

In order to get an idea about the type of approaches to footway/grassed verge parking management adopted in other councils across the country, a survey was sent out in July 2015 with eight open questions for relevant officers to complete and return. The questions were aimed at establishing: the type of approach taken and why; challenges faced; Members' roles; costs and impacts.

The survey was initially sent out to 25 local authorities, identified (through an online 'customer classification' site called Mosaic) as having the most similar demographic profile to East Herts and hosting a population within 10% of East Herts. A further five councils were contacted following search engine research work, which identified them as councils that had already implemented some sort of enforcement against footway/grassed verge parking.

Where such enforcement was beyond the remit of the councils contacted, the survey was forwarded on to the relevant authority. Two authorities responded to say that they do not operate under CPE and four authorities responded that whilst they do operate under CPE, they are not considering any enforcement against footway and grassed verge parking at this time.

Ten surveys were returned completed, the results of which are summarised below. In addition, whilst Elmbridge Borough Council and Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council did not complete the survey, they gave some useful details about alternative methods of enforcement that have been included within the first question responses.

Finally, a meeting was held with the former parking enforcement manager at Stevenage Borough Council, as he played a key role in implementing a relevant experimental TRO in the borough. His responses are included in the summary below.

2. Survey results

Each box below presents the answers to each of the eight questions asked, with words taken directly from the returned questionnaires.

Please note, West Sussex County Council's responses have been extracted from a report (dated August 2011) that they forwarded in response to the survey. The Borough of Poole also wanted to make clear that the officer's responses were his personal view, not the council's policy.

1. Please describe the approach you have taken (or are planning to take) regarding the management of footway and grassed verge parking (ie. a 'whole area' approach with local exemptions or targeted 'hot spot' bans)

East Sussex County Council:

All requests received were ranked according to various criteria. The streets ranking highest were progressed as part of an Experimental TRO. Full details are in the report available on our website <https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/Data/Lead%20Member%20for%20Transport%20and%20Environment/20141013/Agenda/LMTE131014item8parking.pdf>

Eastleigh Borough Council:

Targeted but minimal

Colchester Borough Council:

For verges: We have a piece of legislation in Essex (the Essex Act – peculiar to Essex) which, in the county, globally prohibits parking on mown and ornamental verges (amongst a great many other things), and the offence was decriminalised, with a PCN code to use, so as long as a few formalities have been checked (check on who owns the land; a check on the right for a district to enter the highway and keep the verge in the correct condition; road signage) then we can enforce. Where the land is owned by a parish or district, then we do not need the highway consent – only the district/parish consent. I expect a similar mechanism could be set up with a wide-area TRO. The signage we use is the “no vehicles on mown verge”. We have considered the TRO route for footways, if nothing comes of the private bill presently passing through parliament.

Bedford Borough Council:

Whole area approach that will be implemented if the local ward councillor is in agreement.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead:

The council has adopted the approach of targeted hot spot bans.

Borough of Poole:

We have one small area where we have applied a “Footway Parking Clearway”. We would not normally use this approach, we would normally apply waiting or loading restrictions, but the specific location is alongside pedestrian crossing zigzags, and a bus stop clearway and so the footway would not otherwise have been protected. We applied a “No Stopping” restriction so that we could enforce with the camera car, but we cannot use that to enforce this restriction now. We have not used TROs to protect grass verges, we have used bollards in the most critical areas.

Surrey County Council:

Currently there is only one verge / pavement parking ban in the entire county - this is located in the borough of Epsom and Ewell. The local committee was asked to suggest areas within that borough that might be suitable for this type of scheme, so the parking team could investigate whether or not it would be reasonable to implement or not. Two or three areas were suggested, but only one met the criteria. The committee were asked to suggest areas rather than individual locations.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council undertake civil enforcement of parking on behalf of, and through agreement with, the local highway authority – Kent County Council. We implemented an experimental (now permanent) prohibition on footway/verge parking in a limited number of streets, commencing in 2013. To date, we have only implemented a ban in 6 specific streets. This was done, initially as an experimental restriction (now permanent) to determine the effects of such a

restriction. It mainly dealt with situations where there was little need to park on a footway or verge and drivers were being either inconsiderate or copying each other without thought.

West Sussex County Council:

Do not currently engage in any enforcement activities. However, in a report outlining considerations for action, they propose the following options:

- Use of byelaws. Members of parish councils could request the provision of warning signs and posts to deter verge parking at specified locations, supported by a byelaw prohibiting parking. But the reliance on a byelaw means that enforcement is very difficult - it involves the Police taking action and comes at some financial cost.
- A TRO is a more efficient form of enforcement. Where a TRO is in place on the carriageway of a road, adjacent to the area where verge or footway parking takes place, and if the order prohibits or restricts waiting in any way, then a penalty charge notice (PCN) can be issued against a vehicle parked on the adjacent verge or footway. This is because a TRO applies not just to the carriageway, but across the highway from the centreline of the road to the back of the footway.

Where a TRO is not in place, other than under a byelaw, it is not an offence to park a vehicle on a grass verge or footway unless it is a heavy goods vehicle as these are prohibited by law nationally from doing so (a blanket ban).

Shepway District Council:

We have targeted hot spots and made TROs for these areas.

Stevenage Borough Council:

Put in place an 'experimental TRO' in Pin Green area, as this had the most verge damage and largest amount of complaints. A consultation letter was sent out to each household and majority were in favour. There were some against, but benefit of doing an experimental order is that the order can be put in place straight away without having to listen to objections. (However, that does not mean that it's a way to avoid consultation. 18 months after this experimental order was put in place, the council made it permanent. TROs are now spreading out across the town. The new town is practically covered, but the old town is more difficult as the roads are very narrow here and residents are already angry about town centre parking.

Elmbridge Borough Council:

We currently enforce footways/pavements but only where there are single or double yellow line restrictions in place and we use these to enforce the pavements. We don't have a specific order preventing footway parking though.

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council:

Roads and footpaths are administered by the County Council. Grassed verges are mainly under District Council rather than the Town Clerk's office. Issues are handled by individuals having a quiet word or involvement of PCSOs if there is a safety concern such as parking on a corner or on a footway.

SUMMARY

The majority of respondents have implemented targeted bans in local, 'hotspot' areas. Three councils used an experimental order and just one is considering a blanket ban with local exemptions. Alternative methods, such as bollards, yellow lines and PCSO involvement, were raised by three councils.

One council said they opted for a 'no stopping' as opposed to 'no parking' ban to make it an instant offence, resulting in easier enforcement.

2. What are your main drivers for choosing to manage footway and grassed verge parking? (eg. public pressure, Members, cost of footway/verge damage)

East Sussex County Council:

Complaints from members of public and local councillors that parked vehicles were causing obstruction and damage.

Eastleigh Borough Council:

Obstruction (safety)/verge damage – public complaints, but committee decisions for any action.

Colchester Borough Council:

The Essex Act has had provisions to prohibit verge parking for some time – the Act is in its second or third iteration and dates back to at least 1958 (they were quite forward-thinking!). The prohibitions are invoked mainly because of cars driving over and damaging verges. The approach is usually by local residents/groups, sometimes via Councillors. The Act had remained dormant, probably since the 1980's

Bedford Borough Council:

Public and political pressure.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead:

The main reason for targeting hot spots is due to public pressure in relation to blocked footways.

Borough of Poole:

The Footway Clearway TRO was driven by resident complaints, grass verge bollards have been driven by cost of repair

Surrey County Council:

All of the above - in the case of the one scheme that we have implemented. It was considered that the particular area we chose had wide enough carriageways to be able to comfortably accommodate vehicles parking on it, without causing any obstructions to emergency vehicles or any other road users. The area in question has very wide verges with 'run ins' to driveways, both of which were being parked on by residents and visitors - the verges were being damaged, which in turn was costing SCC a lot of money in maintenance costs, and in places footways were being obstructed.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

The main pressure had been coming from members concerned about damage to the many brick footways in Tunbridge Wells, the high cost of repair and inconvenience to pedestrians. Although we had also received comments and complaints from the public, they were not that frequent.

West Sussex County Council:

The parking of vehicles on grass verges can cause many problems, including:

- Obstructing vulnerable road users who use the verge or footway;
- Obstructing road users entering and leaving properties;
- Causing congestion by parking on narrow streets without suitable provision (i.e. half on the footway, half on the carriageway);
- Reducing visibility at junctions, bends and narrow roads;
- Parking on footways is unsightly and can cause environmental damage;
- Causing damage to underlying drainage and utility services networks;
- Parking prevention measures such as bollards require maintenance and add to street clutter.

Shepway District Council:

Public pressure, pavements being blocked by motorists.

Stevenage Borough Council:

Decided to implement the ban because they were receiving a lot of complaints and spending a fortune top-soiling and seeding to repair verges.

SUMMARY

The response to this question was fairly consistent, with the main drivers for action most commonly referred to being:

- resident complaints;
- public/political pressure; and
- costly damage

3. Please outline any challenges you faced (or expect to face) whilst researching, proposing and/or implementing the controls

East Sussex County Council:

There are no road markings for this type of restriction. It must be adequately signed and this will lead to a visual intrusion of the environment.

Eastleigh Borough Council:

Objections from residents

Colchester Borough Council:

Not many challenges actually enforcing, as it's the same as we do for yellow lines, etc. We have only to put up signs for the areas to become enforceable.

Bedford Borough Council:

As we will only implement where there is local support, we do not face any challenges.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead:

The main challenge faced is due to the majority of footway parking being done by residents who do not have parking of their own.

Borough of Poole:

1. We do not have an intention to widen our controls on footway or verge parking – there is Councillor inertia on this
2. The DfT say that they have given powers to Councils to deal with footway parking but they haven't really. The BPA has been taken in by this and are not pressing for any further changes.
3. Norman Baker wrote to Local Authorities outside London, in February 2011, urging us to use our powers to prevent parking on footways where this is a problem, but:
 - a) The Council still has to go through a lengthy (and relatively expensive) process to make a specific TRO – This Council only has funds to make a very limited number of TROs per year.
 - b) The Council has to consult road users quite widely and to formally consider any objections that it receives. Surrey Road is an example of a location where Council Members would be reluctant to confirm a TRO in the face of strong opposition.
 - c) The Council has to erect enough signs to make it clear to drivers that parking is prohibited on the particular stretch of footway concerned – Drivers might start to feel that it is acceptable to park on any footways that do not have these signs.
 - d) While the recent authorisations mean that Councils don't have to go through a lengthy application process to get authorisation for the signs, the rest of the process is still far from straightforward.

Surrey County Council:

When we are asked to look at an area, we have to consider whether or not it will be beneficial to residents and road users alike. If a verge / pavement parking van was put in place in an area with narrow roads and houses have little or no off street parking, it may be more beneficial not to implement a scheme. In this case, the county councillor for the area canvassed his constituents to assess the need for such a scheme before SCC carried out all of the legal procedures and advertising before implementation. All residents in the area were also notified at the statutory advertising stage that there were some parking proposals in the area and the implementation of the scheme depended on positive feedback from the residents.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

The biggest challenge in this area is in streets where off-street parking is not widely available, car ownership high and there are no alternative parking facilities nearby. Many streets have vehicles parking regularly partly on footways. To remove or control that parking is highly controversial. The

streets chosen for an experimental ban were not, therefore, those where the problems were worst. The next step, should members wish to take it, would be much harder because it would displace some residents from their 'own' street. Other problems we have had with enforcing the restrictions are that, initially, we used a cctv car for enforcement in areas where we did not normally patrol and/or where it would be difficult to safely enforce on foot. The adjudicators took a very dim view of this and allowed appeals consistently, saying that we should not be using CCTV for that purpose even though we felt that it was within the guidelines. Obviously, changes to national legislation have meant that we can no longer use the car anyway. Another issue, and one which was mentioned in some appeal decisions was that signing was not adequate, even though we had followed guidelines. Because there are no road markings and only signs, it can be difficult to get the message across properly.

West Sussex County Council:

Several authorities have indicated that they are not interested in applying the new powers. The reasons for this are various, the most common being:

- The amount of officer time required to prepare, advertise and consult on possibly many new TROs at a time when resources are already stretched;
- The cost of manufacturing and installing the required new signage;
- The cost of engineering high kerbs and/or bollards;
- The added street clutter created by the new signage &/or bollards;
- Continuing doubts about the legitimacy of the new powers;
- There are no obvious contravention codes under which a PCN may be issued.

Shepway District Council:

The regulations require TROs to be made and signs must be erected. This is costly and time consuming.

SUMMARY

Two councils reported experiencing no challenges at all. The rest highlighted variations of the following:

- **Lack of road markings results in unsightly, costly signage that is time-consuming to erect,**
- **Lack of alternative parking options,**
- **Public objection,**
- **TROs are lengthy and expensive to make and require considerable officer time,**
- **Requires time-consuming and resource-intensive consultation with the public,**
- **A targeted ban may displace the problem elsewhere,**
- **Adjudicators consistently allowing appeals.**

4. What role did/will Members have in the process? (eg. in setting the policy framework)

East Sussex County Council:

Lead Member for Transport and Environment approved the report and the installation of the scheme.

Eastleigh Borough Council:

Area Committees decide priorities for any action.

Bedford Borough Council:

The Members were involved in approving the approach and associated TRO.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead:

Members are involved in the decision making process in individual Wards.

Borough of Poole:

Members will need to set the policy (they have no current plans to do that) and to approve any Traffic Orders

Surrey County Council:

Members were involved in the entire process, from initial letter drops, through to giving SCC permission to advertise the proposals at local committee meetings. They are also involved in helping officers to assess the feedback from advertising and with making decisions on how the scheme ultimately progresses.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

We have no specific policy, although our emerging parking strategy will provide a degree of guidance. Members were, however, advised of intentions to advertise an experimental restriction and subsequently make it a permanent one through reports to the Joint Transportation Board, which brings together Borough and County members. The Board has no decision making powers, however, and can only recommend that action be taken.

Shepway District Council:

The decision to implement new restrictions is made by Cabinet members.

SUMMARY

For the majority of councils, Members have held the role of ‘approval’ within decision-making processes. One council reported very high levels of Member involvement, from initial letter drops, through to giving the council permission to advertise proposals at local committee meetings and assessing feedback from this.

5. Could you give us an idea of the costs (or projected costs) of your approach?**East Sussex County Council:**

£15000. Full details are in the report.

Eastleigh Borough Council:

HCC (Highway Authority) meets costs of TROs/bollards. This Council's policy is not to provide additional residential parking.

Colchester Borough Council:

Given that the Act already existed, the main cost was in simply getting the permission (formalised) to keep the areas ornamentally mown; after that the only costs were minimal, concerning signage and patrols.

Bedford Borough Council:

Costs of implementing a scheme will depend on whether it is street or area based approach. Costs can therefore vary from a few hundred pounds for an individual road or up to £10,000 for large area.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead:

As the majority of hot spots are small areas costs are kept to a minimum due to the need for only 2 or 3 signs per area.

Borough of Poole:

N/A

Surrey County Council:

These type of schemes are included within the annual parking reviews. The committee is asked to allocate funds for these reviews in the reports that are submitted to local committee meetings - some funding is also allocated by the parking team manager from the parking teams central budget. Being part of a wider review, we are able to keep advertising and implementation costs down.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

Cost has been limited to the advertising associated with traffic regulation orders plus signing. The former was about £1500 and the latter about £1000

West Sussex County Council:

The cost and environmental impact of any additional street signage and the availability (and also cost) of officer time in preparing new TROs should be fully assessed before proceeding.

Shepway District Council:

Cost of advertising the TROs and posts/signs for 5 locations was about £2500.

Stevenage Borough Council:

Difficult to quantify. The consultation newsletter was expensive. Other costs include the cost of setting up a TRO, signage, enforcement.

SUMMARY

Costs of implementing a ban are entirely dependent on the size of the targeted area. General consensus amongst respondents was that costs can vary from a few hundred pounds for an individual road or up to £10,000 for a large area. These costs accrue from: advertising, street signage, officer time, enforcement, making a TRO and public consultation.

6. If you have already implemented controls:

- a) Did you carry out a post-implementation review, such as a report to committee? If so, is it published on your website?**

East Sussex County Council:

We are still within the initial six-month period of the Experimental TRO. After six months a report will be presented to Lead Member to decide whether to modify, abandon, or make the ETRO permanent.

Eastleigh Borough Council:

Not specifically

Bedford Borough Council:

No

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead:

No

Borough of Poole:

No

Surrey County Council:

Councillors carried out preliminary consultations - a report was submitted to committee, at which the committee decided to allow us to advertise the proposals. The report is available on line - item 32/13: <http://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=197&MIId=2974&Ver=4>

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

Because the first order was experimental, we had to report back to members prior to making the order permanent. The report detailing this is viewable at - <http://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/documents/g3204/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-Jul-2014%2018.00%20Joint%20Transportation%20Board.pdf?T=10>

Shepway District Council:

Yes we did. The proposals were made as a package and there were other restrictions included. Cabinet reports are usually published on the websites.

- b) What are the key effects or impacts resulting from your enforcement activities?**

East Sussex County Council:

Pavements in the affected areas are no longer obstructed, grass verges will grow again, and damage to the pavements and verges will be minimal.

Eastleigh Borough Council:

Residents now park in driveways

Colchester Borough Council:

In the most recent trial area the verge parking was completely ceased within a few days. 9 PCNs were issued and since then the area has been virtually self-policing (though probably partially because we still patrol it).

Bedford Borough Council:

We have gained compliance with the new restrictions and costs of repairing damaged areas are now minimal.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead:

Footways that were once blocked for all pedestrians are now clear.

Borough of Poole:

Very little obvious difference, particularly as this cannot now be enforced with the camera car.

Surrey County Council:

Damage to verges has been greatly reduced, making the area look more pleasing and significantly reducing the councils costs of verge repair in the area.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

Generally, as detailed, there is less of a problem with footway parking in the areas where a restriction was imposed, although it is noticeable that where it is school related, many still ignore the restriction despite there being perfectly adequate carriageway width. In two streets where a ban was implemented, we have had some complaints that this leaves too little space in between two rows of parked vehicles for through traffic. There isn't much hard evidence to support the claims though.

Shepway District Council:

Not much impact as the locations the restrictions were introduced are part of an area that CEOs patrol daily. No additional enforcement resources needed.

Stevenage Borough Council:

Within the 18 month period during which the experimental order was in place, the verges were transformed

SUMMARY

The majority of respondents reported a visible reduction in pavement parking, which has led to reduced instances of obstruction and reduced footway/verge damage - resulting in a more aesthetically pleasing environment and lower repair costs.

Two councils reported limited impacts and one argued that there was some benefits resulting from the ban, but also some instances where restrictions are ignored and where complaints were received from residents regarding restricted space for through traffic.

8. Have you any further comments and/or recommendations for a local authority considering the implementation of footway/grassed verge parking controls?

East Sussex County Council:

Make sure there is adequate notice and consultation.

Eastleigh Borough Council:

Consideration of any action needs to be localised, rather than a blanket approach and supported by committees.

Borough of Poole:

Yes – We should all be pressing the DfT to make the situation in London (where a PCN can be issued to any vehicle seen parking on a footway) apply to the rest of the country – I’m getting no support from anyone

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

From our own experiences, the issues to be particularly aware of are displaced parking and disgruntled residents, the need to sign heavily and possible problems with enforcement. We opted for no stopping as opposed to no parking to make it an instant offence. Because the offence is often caused by people picking up/setting down or popping into a shop, we wanted something that was easy to enforce – after all, once a driver is on a verge or footway, the damage is done.

3. Overall Results Summary

In summary, amongst the 13 councils consulted, the most popular approach towards managing footway and grassed verge parking was a targeted ban in local ‘hotspot’ areas. The main drivers for action tended to be resident complaints, costly damage and public/political pressure. Indeed, Member involvement tended to be high in the decision-making process for this matter.

Challenges that councils have faced when implementing bans against footway/grassed verge parking tend to revolve around the time-consuming and resource-intensive processes involved in set-up. Some also experienced public objection, particularly where there was a lack of alternative parking options or the problem was displaced elsewhere.

Costs have proved difficult to quantify, due to the unique nature of approaches in each area, particularly with regards to the size of the area covered. Nevertheless, the majority of councils did report an overall reduction in footway/verge parking as a result of the measures they implemented.

These results have also been summarised in the table below.

Name of council	Approach taken	Drivers	Challenges	Role of Members	Costs	Post-implementation review?	Impacts	Other
East Sussex County Council	Experimental TRO	Public and political pressure, obstruction, verge damage	Visual intrusion from signage	Approval of report and installation	£15,000	Report coming after initial 6 month period of experimental TRO	No more obstruction, grass re-grown, verge damage minimal	Make sure there is adequate notice and consultation
Eastleigh Borough Council	Targeted hotspots	Public complaints, verge damage, obstruction	Public objection	Committees decide priorities for action	County Council meets costs	No	No more pavement/ verge parking	Action needs to be localised
Colchester Borough Council	Essex Act – blanket ban on verges only	Verge damage	No challenges	-	Costs of permission, signage, patrols	No	No more pavement/verge parking	-
Bedford Borough Council	Whole area approach (proposed)	Public and political pressure	No challenges	Approval	Vary from few £100 for individual roads to £10,000 for large areas	No	Costs of repairing damage now minimal	-
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	Targeted hotspots	Public pressure, obstruction	No alternative parking available	Decision-making process	Hot spots are small areas so signage (and costs) minimal	No	No more pavement/ verge parking. No more obstruction	-
Borough of Poole	Bollards, waiting/loading restrictions, one small area with ‘footway parking clearway’	Public pressure, cost of repair	Lengthy, expensive TRO process, public objection, displacement of issue elsewhere	Set policy and approval of TRO	-	No	Little difference	Need to make the situation in London apply to the rest of the country

Surrey County Council	Targeted hotspots	Verge damage, cost of repair, obstruction	No alternative parking available	Letter drops, permission for advertisement, feedback analysis, decision-making process	Part of wider review, so advertisement and implementation costs kept down	Yes	Verge damage (and costs) reduced	-
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	Experimental TRO	Political pressure, verge damage, public inconvenience	No alternative parking available, public objection, adjudicators allowing appeals	Recommend action	TRO advertising (£1500) and signing (£1000)	Yes	Reduced footway parking but some ignore, complaints about narrow road width (but no hard evidence)	Be aware of displaced parking, disgruntled residents and need to sign heavily. Opted for 'no stopping' – easier to enforce
West Sussex County Council	Not yet enforcing	Obstruction, congestion, safety hazard, unsightly, verge damage	Resource intensive, costly, street clutter	-	Cost of street signage and officer time considerable	-	-	-
Shepway District Council	Targeted hotspots	Public pressure, obstruction	Costly, time-consuming	Decision-making process	Cost of TRO advertising and signage was £2500	Yes	Little difference	-
Stevenage Borough Council	Experimental TRO	Public pressure, verge damage, cost of repair	-	-	Expensive. Costs included consultation, TRO, signage, enforcement	-	Verges transformed	-

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

This report has explored the issue of parking on footways and/or grassed verges, situating it both in the local and national context. It began by outlining the contextual drivers that have led to the prominence of the issue in the UK today, which include:

- The nature of historic development;
- Street patterns;
- The growth in car use; and
- Planning policy regarding parking spaces in new dwellings

Secondly, the statutory context was addressed. Current legislation locates the power to ban parking on footways and grassed verges with local authorities, who are able to introduce tailored parking measures and prohibitions based on local needs. This reflects the de-criminalisation of parking offences (now 'contraventions') following the RTA 1991. The police, however, are still responsible for certain related parking offences, such as driving on footways and obstruction.

There has been some public and political support for the introduction of a national 'blanket' ban on footway and grassed verge parking in recent years, to imitate the legislation in place in Greater London. It was put forward as a clause on the RTA 1974 (but was never operationalised) and has been the subject of a couple of **as-yet unsuccessful** Private Members' Bills. Various national charity campaigns, most notably led by Guide Dogs and Living Streets, are also advocating this option.

Thirdly, the report outlined five different ways of dealing with the issue of parking on footways and grassed verges, all of which were analysed regarding their pros, cons and resource implications:

- A district-wide ban with local exemptions;
- A local ban issued on a case-by-case basis;
- An experimental order in prioritised areas;
- Alternative options to a ban; and
- No action taken at all.

Two different approaches to signage were then considered: an individual locational sign approach versus a zonal sign approach.

Finally, research was carried out amongst a number of other councils, chosen either for their demographic similarity to East Herts or for their known engagement with the issue, to get an idea about how other local authorities have approached the issue.

Out of the 13 councils consulted, the most popular approach towards managing footway/verge parking was a targeted ban in local 'hotspot' areas. The main drivers for action tended to be resident complaints, costly damage and public/political pressure, although challenges outlined included the time-consuming and resource-intensive processes involved in set-up and public objection.

In summary, it would appear that implementing a ban on parking on footways and/or grassed verges would be a very costly and arduous task. However, the general opinion of other councils who have implemented bans tend to suggest that on the whole, measures do lead to a successful reduction in footway/verge parking.

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Acts and Guidance (referred to in statutory context)

Section 36 of the Road Traffic Act 1974 (see p11-13): http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/50/pdfs/ukpga_19740050_en.pdf

Part III, Highways, Section 15 of the GLC Act 1974: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukla/1974/24/section/15>

Schedule 7, part 1 of the TMA 2004: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/18/contents>

‘The Secretary of State’s Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions’ is published by the Department for Transport under section 87 of the TMA 2004: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/421131/final-statutory-guidance.pdf

A Parliamentary Note (dated 17 November 2014) that summarises Government's position on pavement parking: <http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN01170/parking-pavement-and-onstreet>

A Parliamentary Note (dated 17 October 2014) that summarises the history of parking policy in England: <http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN02235/parking-policy>

Highway Code: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code>

The House of Commons Transport Committee inquiry on parking, 2006:
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmtran/1641/1641.pdf>

Progress of pavement parking bill: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2014-15/pavementparking.html>

Hertfordshire police statement: https://www.herts.police.uk/advice/illegal_parking.aspx

Traffic signage: <https://www.gov.uk/traffic-sign-images>

Charities/websites/blogs campaigning against parking on footways and grassed verges

- <http://pedestrianliberation.org/>
- <http://www.disabledmotoring.org/news-and-features/news/post/64-pavement-parking-petition>
- http://www.britishparking.co.uk/write/documents/bpa_response_to_tsc_report_-_dec_2013.pdf
- <http://www.healthyplaces.org.uk/themes/enabling-active-travel/restricting-traffic/parking-restrictions/>
- <http://www.roadswerenotbuiltforcars.com/pavementparking/>
- <http://therantyhighwayman.blogspot.co.uk/2013/02/footway-parking-fail.html>

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'C'

REPORT ON APPROACHES TO FOOTWAY AND GRASSED VERGE PARKING MANAGEMENT

SUMMARY PAPER

JANUARY 2016

Options for the management of footway and grassed verge parking in East Herts will be debated by the Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee on 23 February 2016 and by the Executive on 7 June 2016.

This document summarises the key issues addressed in a study undertaken in 2015 into the public policy, legal and operational perspectives of implementing footway and grassed verge parking controls and outlines the options available.

Drivers for Change

The local authority case studies included in the main study illustrate the existence of common drivers for the adoption of controls, including:

- Public and political pressure
- Unsightliness of damage to footways and grassed verges and costs of repair
- Impact of obstruction to other road users

Complaints along the above lines are received by East Herts Council on a frequent basis, although the service does not currently keep a formal record of them.

A 2010 survey of East Herts residents undertaken during the Council's preparation of its Parking and Transport Strategy sought the views of residents on approaches to footway and grassed verge parking management in East Herts. The relevant question is set out below.

Would you be in favour of East Herts Council introducing a pavement and grassed verge parking ban, enforceable by issuing Penalty Charge Notices?			
	Yes	No	No Opinion
On a street by street basis as needed	57%	34%	9%
Across the district with limited exemptions	39%	49%	12%

Although footway and grassed verge parking could be regarded as primarily a highways issue, Hertfordshire County Council confirms it will not take the lead in implementing any form of footway and grassed verge parking ban as it sees it as a matter for individual district/borough councils to progress.

With the exception of heavy goods vehicles, which are already dealt with in legislation, a local authority must promote a Traffic Regulation Order before it may implement an enforceable footway and grassed verge parking ban.

Options for Change

The study identifies a number of approaches, ranging from the implementation of a district-wide ban to no action. The benefits and dis-benefits of the three principal options are summarised below and detailed more fully in the study.

Options for Managing Footway and Grassed Verge Parking	Comments
District-wide ban with local exemptions	<p>Implementation of a district-wide ban, whilst accepting there are areas where footway parking – ideally on a managed basis - might be essential (or at least desirable) on traffic management grounds.</p> <p>Entry signs on all vehicle routes into the affected area communicate the existence of the ban. Locations where footway parking is permitted confirmed through local signage (and sometimes highway markings).</p> <p>High cost of initial research and surveys.</p> <p>High costs of on-street and back-office enforcement.</p> <p>Possible lower cost of signs and lines (depending on how many exempted areas need to be individually signed).</p>
Local ban on a case by case basis	<p>Opposite approach to the above, whereby footway parking is banned at specific locations.</p> <p>Controllable costs and manageable expansion subject to agreed policy framework.</p> <p>Each scheme would have individual set up costs which over time might exceed those of establishing a district wide ban with local exemptions.</p> <p>Suitable for local hotspots enabling other areas to benefit from maximised local amenity of parking (in some areas there is little or no alternative for our residents).</p>

Physical obstructions	<p>Using physical obstructions such as bollards or fencing to discourage parking on footways and verges.</p> <p>Localised solutions, high cost for control but no enforcement costs. Maintenance and risk management processes required.</p>
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Should the Council wish to take action, the ‘local ban’ approach is recommended as a proportionate, cost-effective and manageable option and this is in line with our residents’ stated preference.

Resource Implications

The legal and operational process of implementing a footway and grassed verge parking ban is analogous to that of implementing a resident permit parking scheme. The resource implications will be significant and long-lasting. These are summarised in the committee report and below.

Process

A robust and manageable process would have to be instituted to gather, evaluate and prioritise requests for a footway and grassed verge parking ban. The process could be analogous to that now in place in respect of RPZ requests.

- Members should be asked to agree a framework for the prioritisation of requests, based on criteria such as the severity, impact and frequency of the problem at each location
- Members could be invited to submit their top problem areas in their wards, which could then be assessed against the pre-agreed criteria
- Requests from members of the public could be logged and assessed against the agreed criteria
- Full local member support (county and district) would be required before a local ban was implemented

Capital and Revenue Costs

The capital and revenue costs of implementing a footway and grassed verge parking ban would depend on the approach taken and the number of areas to be covered.

Assuming two locations in each of the 30 wards in East Herts were identified initially as suited to a targeted local ban and assuming this could be achieved through the promotion of four separate Traffic Regulation Orders (one each for Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, Ware and rural areas), the capital cost might be as follows:

- Initial surveys (consultant) £12k
- Traffic Regulation Orders (consultant) £6k
- Signage £48k (based on four signs in each of the sixty identified locations)

TOTAL CAPITAL COST – APPROX £66k

The revenue cost of operating such a targeted ban might be as follows:

- Two additional Civil Enforcement Officers £55k (FTE)
- Additional vehicle £7k
- Additional signs and lines maintenance responsibilities £5k

TOTAL REVENUE COST – APPROX £67k

Should the trial be made permanent it would be necessary to seek additional capital and revenue growth during the 2018/19 service planning cycle.

Revenue Implications

Although the purpose of introducing footway and grassed verge parking controls would be to engender compliance rather than generate revenue, the *theoretical* revenue from 52 enforceable Penalty Charge Notices issued per annum in each of 60 'hot spot' locations might be in the region of £85k; however an initially high number of Penalty Charge Notices would reduce over time as awareness and compliance improved.

A more realistic expectation would be that over the longer term penalty charge revenue would probably cover the £57k annual revenue costs identified above.

TRO Officer

Each year the Parking Service promotes a number of Traffic Regulation Orders relating to the council's off-street car parks and to on-street matters such as resident permit parking schemes. Additionally, the Parking Service is responsible for the maintenance of

on and off-street signs and lines implemented by virtue of TROs promoted by East Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council.

A large amount of TRO survey, design and promotion work is currently outsourced to consultants. Should the Council elect to retain and possibly expand footway and grassed verge parking controls consideration should be given to employing a TRO Officer within the Parking Service, thus reducing the service's reliance on consultants and to assist with the significant task of maintaining signs and lines across the district.

The estimated cost of employing a full time TRO Officer at Grade 6 would be in the region of £32k. This would be the subject of a funding bid in the relevant financial year.

Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders

An alternative to promoting full Traffic Regulation Orders would be to promote one or more *experimental* TROs. An experimental Order would remove much of the initial requirement to consult. The maximum eighteen month period during which the experimental Order would be in force would be used to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the controls implemented under the Order.

By the end of eighteen months from the implementation of the experimental Order the Council would have the option of:

- Letting the Order lapse, thus removing the controls.
- Amending the Order and making it permanent – in which case the obligation to consult would arise at that point.
- Make the Order permanent 'as is' – in which case the obligation to consult would arise at that point.

In summary, the primary justification for using an experimental Order approach arises should the Council commit to implementing controls on a trial basis and to monitoring their effectiveness in the expectation of committing to a course of action by the end of the eighteen month trial period. The Highway Authority, Hertfordshire County Council, has confirmed its 'in principle' agreement to an experimental Order approach being used.

Whichever approach is adopted Hertfordshire County Council approval would be required before the implementation of the new controls.

Risks

- The Council is likely to be inundated with requests for new controls. Without a robust mechanism in place to filter and prioritise requests there would be a danger of the Council failing to meet public (and Member) expectations.
- Once a restriction had been put in place there would be a legitimate expectation that it would be enforced on a regular basis. This would place additional strain on Civil Enforcement Officer resource (and potentially on back office staff) unless growth along the lines identified above was secured.
- Footway and grassed verge parking might simply be displaced to other, unrestricted areas.

Benefits

Some benefits of a footway/grassed verge parking ban cannot be costed – e.g. improved visual amenity and the ability of pedestrians to move freely along the footway.

The greatest financial benefit of a ban would be to reduce damage to footways and grassed verges; however in most cases responsibility for their maintenance lies with the Highway Authority. It is unlikely the County Council would make any form of financial contribution to East Herts Council towards the implementation and operation of a ban in recognition of the likely reduction in damage to footways and grassed verges.

Summary

The adoption and implementation of footway and grassed verge parking controls in East Herts would carry with it significant capital, revenue and wider resource implications. Whilst it appears such a move would be popular with the majority of residents, the case studies show that they can provoke controversy similar to that stimulated by RPZ proposals.

Committed member support at district and county level would be vital from the start and a strong policy and operational framework would be essential to govern the process.

A proportionate and cautious entry into this area might be the implementation of a 'targeted ban' approach in a few 'hot spot' areas, perhaps facilitated through the promotion of an experimental TRO, enabling the success or otherwise of the trial to be properly monitored and reported on, prior to the possible adoption of a final, district-wide policy.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND COUNCIL SUPPORT

BUNTINGFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

WARD(S) AFFECTED: Buntingford

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To enable Members to consider the Buntingford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan following public consultation.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:	
(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Buntingford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be supported;
(B)	authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the document which may be necessary; and
(C)	the Buntingford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 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 Buntingford Conservation Area is one of a series of reviews being undertaken and this is the latest one for consideration.
- 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 are reviewed and, where appropriate, practical enhancement proposals are suggested.
- 1.4 Once Members have considered each document and it has been adopted by the Council, it becomes a 'material consideration in the process of determining planning applications.

2.0 The Buntingford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

- 2.1 The Buntingford Conservation Area was designated in 1968 and reviewed in 1981 and again in 2000. This Appraisal document was completed in 2015 and went through a period of public consultation from 1st March 2016 to April 12th 2016 with a public meeting held on 1st March 2016 at Buntingford Town Council offices at which about 30 persons attended. The headline issues are set out in the following paragraphs:
- 2.2 The document as revised following consultation considers the conservation area boundaries and proposes a number of alterations. These are:

Include field to east of Little Court; extend Chapel End footpath including the River Rib and its treed banks south to the bridge.

Exclude the following areas: area south of the town consisting of the Fire Station, the Co-operative store and car park to the east of Station Road and residential development on the west of Station Road being The Gables and nos. 1 - 14 Rib Way; group of 13 lock up garages to rear of High Street and south east of car park; No. 15A Norfolk Road; No. 131 High Street; Nos. 2- 4 Garden Road;

Nos. 2 - 6 and Layston House, The Causeway; Nos. 1 - 10 Bridewell Close.

The document identifies the key environmental features and the manner in which they can be controlled. In relation to Buntingford 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. Two are on the Council's Heritage at Risk Register.
- 2.4 *Non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection:* A number have been identified that make a positive contribution to the conservation area and these should be retained through the planning process. Some non-listed residential buildings have good quality architectural features of high quality whose formal protection could be achieved through the introduction of an Article 4 Direction which is a course of action the Council has yet to consider. Article 4 directions remove permitted development rights for certain types of development within sites in a conservation area.
- 2.5 *Other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection.* A number have been identified and include walls and railings which are important to the character of the town. Some are in need of repair or rebuild. Without prejudice and as set out in the document grant assistance may be available to assist in such cases.
- 2.6 *Important open land and spaces.* The following particularly important open spaces have been identified: Green spaces around St Richard's church; River Rib and adjacent footpath; 'shared space' junction of High Street/Church Street.; Layston Court Gardens; Land to the east of Wyddial Road and around Little Court.
- 2.7 *Enhancement proposals to deal with detracting elements.* A number have been identified. As set out in **Essential Reference Paper B**, the Buntingford TC has offered to

pursue the majority: their initiative and co-operation is much appreciated.

- 2.8 *Other significant proposals.* The Appraisal notes the diminishing quality of several historic terraces damaged principally by the exercise of householder Permitted Development Rights and suggests an initiative involving the preparation of an experimental improvement scheme (see paragraph 7.12 of appraisal document).

A potential redevelopment has been identified (see paragraph 7.13).

The issue of A Boards on the High Street is raised and it is suggested discussions take place with the interested parties in the first place.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

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

- 3, 2 A summary of comments received through the consultation process and officer responses are set out in the table is included as **Essential Reference Paper B**

- 3.3 **Essential Reference Paper C** is a copy of the Buntingford Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan as it appeared at the consultation draft stage with any subsequent track changes to text and alterations to accompanying plans that incorporate any necessary changes. Further minor changes will be incorporated reflecting the status of the final document once Members have considered it for adoption.

Background Papers

Written representations received through the consultation process.

Contact Member: Councillor S Rutland-Barsby, Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support
suzanne.rutland-barsby@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer:

Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and
Building Control, Extn: 1407.

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Report Author

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives :	<p>Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities</p> <p>Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives</p>
Consultation:	With local residents and stakeholders – details set out in Essential Reference Paper B.
Legal:	Preparation of the Appraisal fulfils statutory requirements.
Financial:	Costs associated with the preparation of the Appraisal are met from within existing staffing and operational budgets. The Appraisal suggests works and actions which could be undertaken to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and remove detracting elements which would generally be the responsibility of individual owners. An experimental initiative involving the preparation of an improvement scheme for a terrace damaged by the exercise of Permitted Development Rights is suggested but there is no firm commitment. Other actions such as the possible introduction of an Article 4 Direction might result in additional cost but the Council is not committed to undertaking such further action. Such costs can be further assessed should such decisions be reached.
Human Resource:	No additional staffing implications.
Risk Management:	No significant risk issues.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	The work seeks to secure the character of the area

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER B

Issue	Representations made	Officer comment
General support.	The Town Council (BTC) has prepared and approved a Management Action Plan based on the relevant section of the Appraisal document. It is attached as an Appendix to this reference Paper B with updates noted in red..	This initiative is warmly welcomed and BTC's cooperation is highly commended.
Conservation area boundaries. The proposal in the draft document to exclude Chapel End footpath.	BTC consider <i>The Chapel End footpath along the River Rib to the bridge and to the centre of the river bank should remain within the Conservation Area boundary.</i>	Officers had originally proposed this area to be excluded from the Conservation area as part of a wider area of exclusion being the modern development of Rib Way. It is still proposed to exclude the latter housing. However on reflection (notwithstanding its curious plan form) it is accepted it is appropriate to retain the footpath river and treed banks within the conservation area because this part is visually and environmentally attractive, It is also proposed to extend the boundary to the bridge as requested.
The proposal in the draft document to exclude	BTC consider GH should <i>remain within the boundary as part of the Bridewell House site.</i>	Officers have reconsidered this issue and agree that GH itself is a well detailed, albeit modern, asset that should,

Grovebury House (GH).	Another respondent takes the same view and draws a distinction between the qualities of GH and nearby properties at Bridewell Close (the latter remain proposed for exclusion).	on reflection, remain within the conservation area.
Additional distinctive feature making an important architectural or historic contribution.	A respondent drew attention to a wall on the south side of Little Lane.	This wall is of red brick and about 2m in height and makes a positive contribution on the south side of a well-used footpath. Partly within partly beyond the conservation area. It is now identified as such in the document.
Other detailed points. Availability of plans. Level of development.	One representation noted a personal desire to have copies of plans available for further study and noted they would correspond with officers. Representations were received concerning the level of development being experienced by Buntingford. This representation notes that this <i>quaint little town will be ruined and no longer...of interest or character.</i>	Copies of plans and documents were available at the meeting but presumably had been taken by the time this comment had been made. Officers recall having had extended discussions with this person at the meeting. No further correspondence was received. Comments noted. Whilst the conservation area appraisal is not the vehicle by which such considerations are determined, the level of development being experienced in Buntingford is even more the reason for preserving its historical and environmental qualities.

Untidy site, Church Street.	The representation advised as to the ownership of the site.	Information received with thanks. Both the representation and subsequently the Town Council advise the land is now in the ownership of the Crown Estates.
Condition of Bridgefoot House.	A representation concerning the visual appearance of part of this building was received, the essence of which principally relates to the need to paint windows and undertake other minor improvements..	It is accepted this listed building would be improved by undertaking the recommended improvements. It is suggested the local community (BTC) bring the matter to the attention of the owner and seek to influence the appropriate outcome. An appropriate reference has been made in the appraisal document.
Detracting commercial site.	A representation acknowledges the unattractive nature of the buildings so identified but considers the owners <i>should be given consideration</i> if the site is advanced for redevelopment	Noted.
Spalled brickwork St Peter's Church.	A representation agrees with the need to undertake works.	BTC have agreed to pursue and make contact. Some financial assistance is potentially available from EHDC.
Tree planting in the High Street.	Representations have been received concerning the potential damage this may cause. One	It is accepted any such proposals will need to be very carefully considered in respect to potential damage to buildings and services.

	rep.suggests trees in tubs may be an option. Another resident of the High Street expresses concerns regarding the stability of historic buildings.	Tree planting in other historic street scenes has been successfully undertaken. BTC note this matter is under consideration.
Realignment of profile of High Street to allow parking.	A respondent makes a detailed point on this subject in relation to the southern end of the High Street.	Not an issue of concern for this appraisal but an issue for BTC and Highways to consider.
Road markings and signage.	A respondent notes this issue is not mentioned and draws attention to large but now faded road markings on Church Road. No other examples are provided.	Officers accept the reference to the road markings but assume they were placed by HCC for safety reasons. The fieldworker originally considered this issue but generally concluded the impact was relatively minor.
Path alongside the River Rib Little Court to Tannery Court.	A respondent notes this <i>does not seem to be anybody's responsibility</i> and that the respondent personally undertakes litter picking. Another respondent makes similar comments.	BTC advises the responsibility in this location rests with HCC whom BTC may wish to contact for their community.
Neighbourhood Plan.	A respondent advises <i>Issue should be included in Neighbourhood Plan.</i>	This is principally a local matter.
Knowledge of being in a conservation area.	A representation advised there are no visible signs advising the presence of a conservation area and the associated	Information regarding the extent of the conservation area is freely available locally and on EHDC website. The fact is revealed as a Land Charge when properties are

	responsibilities.	purchased so all incoming residents will be aware.
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Appendix 1 - BTC Action Plan

Detracting Element	Location	Proposed Action	BTC Action	Comments
Diminishing quality of several 19 th century terraces principally damaged by the exercise of Permitted development Rights	High Street Church Street Norfolk Road Union Terrace	Council officers in association with residents draw up proposals to improve one such terrace, to be implemented by residents on a voluntary basis.	Liaise with EHDC to select a terrace and form proposals to be presented to residents.	Very much dependent on property owner's co-operation and funds.
Brick Wall in poor state of repair in key location	High St, frontage to Old Grammar School, on Council's Buildings at Risk Register	Approach owner and seek co-operation in undertaking appropriate repairs. Potentially eligible for grant assistance. (Wall subsequently removed)	Write sensitive letter to owner asking for co-operation and send a grant application form	
Detracting commercial site	North end of High Street (carpet and tile shops)	Consider through planning process any redevelopment of this site by an appropriate use and at an appropriate scale and alignment	No available action unless planning proposals are submitted by owners.	Both quite successful businesses, unlikely to see applications for redevelopment in the near future.
Spalled	High	Seek owner's	Write	

brickwork	Street elevation of St Peter's Church	co-operation in undertaking repair. Without prejudice grant assistance may be available	sensitive letter to owner asking for co-operation and send a grant application form	
Detracting corner location	The Jolly Sailors PH	Consider in greater detail and contact owner with view of seeking co-operation to make visual improvements. EHDC enforcement team negotiated significant improvements.		Would need to consider if this is something the TC wishes to undertake. Need for sensitivity.
Spalled brickwork	Wall south of Almshouses, r/o St Peter's Church Market Hill	Source owner and seek co-operation in undertaking necessary repairs. Without prejudice grant assistance may be available	Wall belongs to Almshouses. BTC to contact Almshouse charity.	
Seat	Near War memorial	Repair and refurbish	BTC could undertake, almost impossible to locate original owner	
Telephone Kiosk	Near War memorial	Needs refurbishment	Owned by BT, BTC could contact BT	Box is listed

			asking for a refurbishment	
Ivy growth on wall	Rear of Manor House	Undertake removal	BTC to undertake	
Signage	Nisa Local Store, Baldock Road	Seek owner's co-operation in considering limited rationalisation to improve street scene	Write sensitive letter to owner asking for co-operation	
Windows in need of repair	Nisa Local Store, Baldock Road	Seek owner's co-operation in undertaking necessary repair/refurbishment	Write sensitive letter to owner asking for co-operation	
Group of 13 lock up garages	Rear of High Street and south east of car park	Despite proposal to remove from Conservation Area seek owner's co-operation in undertaking necessary refurbishment	Write to owner seeking co-operation	Garages owned by South Anglia Housing.
A Boards	High Street	Discussions need to take place with interested parties in the first instance		Jurisdiction of Highways. A boards are not permitted.
Weeds and excess vegetation	Footpath between Pigs Nose and The Causeway	Remove and maintain	Instruct our contractors to clear or contact Highways	Responsibility of Highways, we could do a one off but need to ensure we

				don't become permanently responsible.
Boundary wall in need of repair	To frontage of New Cottage, The Causeway	Seek owner's co-operation to undertake necessary repairs.	Write sensitive letter to owner asking for co-operation	
Commemorative seat in need of repair	Wyddial Road	Seek owner's co-operation to undertake necessary repairs.	BTC could undertake repairs, difficult to contact owner.	
Untidy area	Church Street, south side	Land appears to be up for sale. Seek to establish owners intentions		Land not for sale, is property of The Crown.
Damaged Seat	High Street/ Baldock Road	Short term – repair seat. Long term consider future of whole site in association with Phoenix project proposals	Seats outside of Black Bull. Cannot establish owner, BTC could sanction repairs	
In association with PPG consider the potential for tree planting at suitable strategic locations in the High Street			Already under consideration with the PPG.	
Shared Space High St/Church St. Consider commissioning a landscape enhancement scheme.			Already under consideration with the PPG.	
Consider preparing a landscape management plan for Layston Court			Refer to Amenities	

Gardens and improve access from High Street	Committee	
Stone plaque west side of bridge over River Rib, south end of High Street. Plaque reads Hertfordshire County Council 1937. Contact HCC and seek their co-operation to re-inscribe it	Contact HCC.	
Stone plaques east side of bridge over River Rib, south end of High Street. Plaques are initialled and dated 1766. Contact HCC and seek their co-operation to re-inscribe them.	Contact HCC	
Metal plaque dated 1899 on bridge carrying Wyddial Road over River Rib. Contact HCC and seek their co-operation to restore it.	Contact HCC	
Contact owner of Bridgefoot House and seek co-operation in replacing concrete capping detail with traditional rounded bricks to part of low boundary wall.	BTC to contact owner seeking co-operation.	
Inform Historic England that nos. 68-70 High Street and no. 78 Gilpin House are wrongly plotted on their mapping. Also, their records are confused as to whether no. 66 High Street is grade II or II*. Also advise Historic England of 2 no. listed buildings at Buntingford Road Puckeridge (no 7 and no 27) are wrongly included in their records as being in Buntingford Parish	BTC to write to Historic England.	
Show railings to frontage of Alms houses as being listed on EHDC mapping records.		

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BUNTINGFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION 2015

[Revised following consultation 2016](#)

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Retaining a rich architectural heritage whilst at the same time maintaining a buoyant economy are issues that are closely associated and a challenge particularly in relation to the High Street.

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

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Plan1. Existing Conservation Area on historic map dating from 1874-1894.

Plan 2. Character Analysis

Plan 3. Management Plan

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BUNTINGFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

2015

[Revised following consultation 2016](#)

This Appraisal [and Management Plan](#) has been produced by officers of East Hertfordshire District Council to assess the current condition of the Buntingford Conservation Area, to identify where improvements can be made and to advise of 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.

The content of Appraisals written from 2015 which include this paragraph differs slightly from predecessor documents. Selected revisions have been incorporated to reflect changes to legislation, the emerging District Plan, nomenclature, consolidation and other improvements resulting from experience gained to date. This process is ongoing.

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. The Town of Buntingford is the smallest of the five main settlements in the District and the only such settlement that does not have a Railway Station. The public transport services to the surrounding large towns are infrequent and unreliable, therefore making the car the preferred method of transport for commuters and shoppers. 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, Royston and Cambridge. 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 commits 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. If appropriate the document puts forward simple 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 discussions with owners. Thus such 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 apply to estimating dates of buildings.

1.8. This Conservation Appraisal will:

- Identify the special character of the Conservation Area.
- Identify elements that should be retained or enhanced;
- Identify detracting elements;
- Review the existing boundaries;
- Put forward practical enhancement proposals;

1.9. The document will be prepared in partnership with the Town Council and the local community through the consultation process. The fieldworker would like to thank the Town Council for their considerable assistance and advice to date.

1.10. The Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan has recently been produced by the community and is currently out on consultation (October 2015). This document identifies the importance of the river Rib and underlines the need to maintain a sense of place and local character and to preserve and enhance valued green spaces. The Council has also commissioned 'The Phoenix Project' produced by Phil Jones Associates which the authors advise as serving 'as a supplement to the Neighbourhood Plan'. This is based on work undertaken by Ben Hamilton- Baille in 2014. The proposal *'sets out to explore ways to enhance the relationship between traffic and pedestrians and to retain and enhance the quality of our historic town'*.

1.11. The report advises that *'all who have been made aware of our proposals have been very enthusiastic'*.

1.12. The Department of Transport have produced Local Transport Note 1/11 Shared Space in October 2011 advising that *Shared space is a design approach that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance of motor vehicles, primarily through lower speeds and encouraging drivers to behave more accommodatingly towards pedestrians.*

1.13. An article dated April 2015 by Barbara Speed entitled Shared spaces: a clever trick for safer roads or a step backwards into chaos discusses some considerations associated with shared spaces.



Picture 1. High Street, Buntingford - date unknown probably early 20th century. An historic perspective of the concept of 'shared space'. Reproduced from the collection of the late Philip W. Plumb and The Buntingford in Old Photographs Facebook page.

1.14. In relation to the High Street the key aims set out in the Phoenix Project are as follows

- *Build on existing high quality environment through minor interventions.*
- *Remove bollards along length of High Street*

- Patch repairs to surface treatments where required.

1.15. This Conservation Area Appraisal does not comment on the general principles set out in the Phoenix Project as the associated proposals contained therein are principally matters of highway design and traffic/pedestrian safety. However the removal of selected street furniture and clutter as advised would be welcomed if consistent with safety.

1.16. In addition to the bullet points identified by the Phoenix Project above, this Appraisal considers that tree planting in the High Street at suitable strategic locations is worthy of further investigation subject to overcoming practical considerations such as location of underground services, [stability of nearby buildings](#) and property entrance points. There are publications which give practical advice on the subject e.g. Trees for Cities. Such planting if considered appropriate could occur in association with or independent of Phoenix Project proposals.



Picture 2. Would limited strategic tree planting in the High Street improve the environment and is it worthy of further consideration?

1.17. Acknowledgement and thanks are recorded to Hertfordshire County Council whose [e's](#) Historic Environment Unit has been particularly helpful.

1.18. A very small part of the Conservation Area falls within Wyddial Parish. This is a small triangle of woodland to the north east of Wyddial Road and Vicarage Road.

1.19. This document 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 areas accord with the statutory definition and are not devalued by including land or buildings that lack special interest.

2.4. Planning permission is required for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area but is subject to certain exceptions. For example, it does not apply to Listed Buildings which are protected by their own legislation but is relevant to other non listed buildings in the Conservation Area above a threshold size set out in legislation*. Looking for and assessing such buildings is therefore a priority of this Appraisal.

* The demolition of a building not exceeding 50 cubic metres is not development and can be demolished without planning permission. Demolition of other buildings below 115 cubic metres are regarded as 'Permitted Development' granted by the General Permitted Development Order, subject to conditions that may require the Council's 'prior approval' regarding methods of proposed demolition and restoration.

2.5. Certain ecclesiastical buildings (which are for the time being used for ecclesiastical purposes) are not subject to local authority 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 other necessary planning permissions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2.6. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England), Order 2015 defines the range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required 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.

2.7. However, even within Conservation Areas there are other minor developments associated with many non-listed buildings 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 commonly include some developments fronting a highway or open space, such as an external porch or the demolition of some gates, fences or walls or their alteration. The removal of existing important architectural features that are important to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area such as chimneys, traditional detailing or materials, distinctive porches, windows and doors or walls or railings 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' which withdraws 'Permitted Development Rights'. The use of such Directions needs to 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 appropriate.

2.8. Works to Trees. Another additional planning control relates to trees located within Conservation Areas. Setting aside various exceptions principally relating to size, any proposal to fell or carry out works to trees has to be 'notified' to the Council. The Council may then decide whether to 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 an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, particularly when viewed from the public realm. Other trees not specifically identified may still be suitable for statutory protection. Some trees in the Conservation Area have already been made subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

2.9. 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 and extent of the hedge, its age and or its historical importance, the wildlife it supports and its number of woody species.

2.10. National Planning Policy Framework. The principle emphasis of the 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.

2.11. Of particular relevance to this document, the 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 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 an application affecting 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.

2.12. 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 works which result in the maintenance of listed buildings and other unlisted buildings of architectural or historic interest. ~~The maximum grant will not normally exceed £1,000.~~ [Details are available on the Council's webpage.](#)

2.13. In respect of the above the Council has produced a number of leaflets and guidance notes that are available on line and on request. These guidance notes on the preservation and repair of historic materials and buildings' provide useful information relevant to the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. They will be updated as resources permit.

2.14. The Council also has a 'Buildings at Risk Register', originally produced in 2006 and updated in 2012/13 [and more recently in 2016.](#) This document is available on the Council's website. In relation to the Town and the Conservation Area there are two such buildings identified as being 'At Risk'. These are identified later in the document. Grant assistance not exceeding £10,000 may be available for necessary works that lead to such buildings' long term security.

2.15. 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 [67](#)).

2.16. 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. As currently drafted this emerging District Plan advises that development in Conservation Areas should, inter alia, conform with the content of the Appraisals.

2.17. Buntingford Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 and its boundary reviewed in 1981 and again in 2000.

Part B - APPRAISAL

3. Origins and Historical Development

3.1. There are about 60 records within the existing Conservation Area held by the County Archaeologist. A considerable number of these relate to Listed Buildings, some descriptions of which are included later in this document.

3.2 Prehistoric. There was Iron Age settlement to the east and [North West](#) of the Conservation Area.

3.3. Roman settlement. The High Street is the route of Ermine Street, London to York. A Roman pit has been discovered to the rear of No. 59

High Street containing two rim sherds of late first/early second century date.

3.4. Buntingford is not documented until the 13th century and in 1288 was described as a hamlet with a chapel on the highway and church some distance away. The chapel referred to is assumed to have stood on the site of present day St Peter's built by the Rev Alexander Strange in the early 1600's *'for the benefit of the Inhabitants, who are at a great distance from the church'*, (the latter is now in the process of an imaginative conversion to a house). In 1338 the Lord of the Manor received license to transfer her market to the highway with the grant of a fair.

3.5. Minutes from 1742 Turnpike Minute Book notes a resolution to erect stones from Wadesmill to Royston in the northern road. Buntingford was an important coaching town with large numbers of inns. The 1838 Layston Tithe map shows a toll gate at the approximate position of High Street Hare Street Road.

3.6. Prior to the late 19th century Buntingford as we know it today consisted of an accumulation of land falling in the parishes of Layston, Wyddial, Throcking and Aspendon. The mapping from 1874-1894 curiously refers from time to time to *'obsolete boundary' 'retained to separate different sets of parcel numbers'*. Were such 'obsolete' boundaries the alignment of former parish boundaries?

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3.7. A picture of the settlement as it can be recognised today is set out in Kelly's Directory of 1874 which refers as follows: *Buntingford is a Union Town, in the parishes of Aspenden, Layston, Throcking and Wyddial. ...Buntingford is lighted by gas from works erected at the south end of the town in 1861.. Here is the terminal station of the Ware and Buntingford branch of the Great Eastern Railway; it is a single line of about 13 miles....Here is a free Grammar school, endowed in the year 1630...also a National and a British school, several almshouses...there are other charities amounting to about £70 annually, which is usually expended in coals...The Independents and Particular Baptists have each a chapel, and there is a Police station...The Union Workhouse is capable of accommodating 160 inmates.*

3.8. Kelly's Directory of 1874 lists the following commercial entries; saddler and harness makers (2), ironmonger, confectioner, linen and drapers (2), leather seller and tanner, hairdresser and beer retailer, straw bonnet maker, brewer and cooper, tailor, cooper, undertaker, thrashing machine proprietor, coach maker, tailor and draper, coal merchant, book seller, shopkeepers (3), chimney sweepers (2), butchers (3), boot and shoe makers (3), baker and coal dealer, beer retailers (6), millers (2), farmer, wheelrights (2), chemist and druggist, bakers (3), general dealer, surgeon, haberdasher, family grocers (3), tailor and drapers (2), watch and clock makers (2).

3.9. Public houses mentioned are the Railway Inn, Fox and Duck, Crown, Bell, White Hart, Adam and Eve, George and Dragon, Angel, Bull, Chequers.

3.10. From the numbers of local trades it can be seen that the considerable and varied level of self- sufficiency is a hall mark of communities of this date and is consistent with other communities of similar size at this time.



Picture 3. Appears on 1874-1894 OS map as *Formerly Throcking Ph. (det.No.2) Gas Works*. Now north end of Downhall Ley. Reproduced from the collection of the late Philip W. Plumb and The Buntingford in Old Photographs Facebook page.



Picture 4. The railway station and branch line (1863-1965, freight). Now Fairfield Estate area. Reproduced from the collection of the late Philip W. Plumb and The Buntingford In Old Photographs Facebook page.



Picture 5. The Cattle Market Market Hill/High Street. Date of picture unknown probably early/mid 20th century. Reproduced from the collection of the late Philip W. Plumb and The Buntingford In Old Photographs Facebook page.

3.11. Mapping from 1874 -1894 (Plan1) shows The Old Vicarage (modern day Co-operative store), the site of the Throcking Gas Works, the Buntingford Union Workhouse and Tannery opposite (set up circa 1792, closing 1925). A leat or artificial waterway connected the Tannery to the River Rib. Several malshouses exist, two Smithy's are noted; Church

Street was called Great Lane. A school is shown on the Causeway and another one behind the High Street (the old grammar school). There was a gravel pit to the west of Little Court and a saw pit to its south. There are a number of references to obsolete boundaries and to land formerly being in Layston Parish and Throcking Parish. The railway together with its station and cattle pen and Railway Inn were located in at the south of the town (now Fairfield area). At the north end of the town was a long linear plot with a Vicarage, now demolished and the present day location of Vicarage Road. Mapping of 1920-24 identifies a football ground, allotment gardens and a tennis garden behind the Chequers PH, north of Norfolk Road and defined by The Bowling Green (now Bowling Green Lane). There was a large gravel pit in the general area of Honey Lane.

3.12. The community commenced larger scale expansion in the 1940-50 period with the development of Archers, Bridgefoot and Sunny Hill. Mapping 1938-51 shows a curious collection of buildings (Snells Mead area) which was the site of a Royal Army Ordnance factory, various buildings and enclosure. Buildings believed to have gone by the early 1970's.

Thereafter expansion has been substantial but much of the core retains many of its early historical characteristics.

3.13. The publication, Place Names of Hertfordshire, Cambridge University Press 1970 by J E B Gover, Allen Mawer and F M Stenton advises several names, a selection of which are included thus: Buntiford (1226), Buntingford (1255), Bontingford (1275). The origin of the name may relate to 'Ford of the people of Bunta'.

3.14. Plan 1 shows the existing Conservation Area boundary approximately imposed on mapping dating from 1874-1894.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS AND CRITERIA USED TO IDENTIFY OTHER IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

4.1. Scheduled Ancient Monuments. A National designation. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

4.2. Areas of Archaeological Significance. Designated locally by EHDC on advice from HCC. The areas identified by this Appraisal include areas as shown on the latest emerging District Plan. The identification and refinement of such areas is an ongoing process.

4.3. Listed buildings. A National designation. Individually listed buildings have been identified, plotted and a selected few are briefly described, such abbreviated descriptions being based on the national list, occasionally with additional comments *in italics* by the fieldworker. Full descriptions can be obtained on line at Historic England's website. Listed buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration

or extension. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilage of listed buildings, if they are pre-1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings.

4.4. Non listed buildings of quality and worthy of protection. Such other non-listed buildings and structures that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area are identified by this Appraisal. The basic questions asked in assessing 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 visually important in the street scene?**

4.5. Important trees and hedgerows are identified by this Appraisal. 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 are identified by this Appraisal. The basic question asked in identifying such areas is does the open space or gap form 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 identified by this Appraisal. In relation to walls and railings those at and above prescribed heights in a Conservation Area 1m abutting a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway, waterway or open space) or 2m elsewhere, are protected and require permission for their demolition.

4.8. Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions in justified circumstances. The Appraisals undertaken to date have identified that many historic architectural features of quality remain unaltered on some non listed buildings but, on the other hand, the exercise of Permitted Development rights has eroded other parts of some Conservation Areas. Should Members decide to proceed with such an initiative, such important historic detailing including features as identified below could justifiably be retained and inappropriate alterations to them controlled.

- Chimneys, in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property, prominent in the street scene and generally complete with chimney pots.
- Selected windows, on front or side elevations, fronting and visible from the street/s, generally contemporary with the age of the property or of a sympathetic historic design and where the majority of windows of respective elevations retain their original characteristics and have not been replaced by disruptive modern glazing units.
- Other features might include good quality architectural materials and detailing constructed of wood, metal or other materials.
- Walls or railings which make a positive architectural or historic contribution to the visual appearance of the Conservation Area.
- It may also be appropriate to introduce Article 4 Directions to retain quality buildings below the prescribed Permitted Development threshold.

4.9. Features that are out of character with the Conservation Area and detract or are in poor repair are identified.

4.10. Important views are identified.

4.11. Conservation Area boundaries. In suggesting any revisions to the Conservation Area boundaries, principal consideration is 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 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.

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5. CHARACTER ANALYSIS.

5.1. General Landscape setting. In terms of its wider setting, the Landscape Character Assessment produced in 2007 as a Supplementary Planning Document, describes Buntingford as probably superseding a deserted settlement close to St. Bartholomew's church and developing as a typical coaching town along the original linear road pattern. The document notes the most extensive visual impact comes from adjacent residential areas.

5.2 General overview. The Conservation Area principally consists of the High Street, made up of historic buildings of various dates, many being in commercial use. Elsewhere are River Green and the River Rib and a large area of paddock and permanent grassland surrounding Little Court. The landscape surrounding Little Court is attributed to Humphrey Repton, a famous 18th century designer although its extent is not plotted on the source of this information being the Council's Historic Parks and Gardens document. The design and layout of the various 20th century developments which envelop the Conservation Area varies considerably in quality with many such housing areas being in contrast to the high architectural qualities of the older parts of the town.

5.3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are none.

5.4 Areas of Archaeological Significance. The majority of the Conservation Area is so designated; principal exception being land north of Little Court. The designation shown is that identified on the emerging District Plan.

5.5 Individually Listed Buildings. There are 89 Listed Buildings within the existing Conservation Area. Of this total, 3 date from the 15th century (3%); 19 from the 16th century (21%); 21 from the 17th century (24%); 29 from the 18th century (33%); 14 from the 19th century (16%) and 3 from the 20th century (3%). All buildings are Grade II except Nos. 41-43 High street, The Almshouses, High Street which are grade II*; also the church of St Peter which is grade I. (There is conflicting advice in respect of No. 66 High Street where Historic England's records are ambiguous, one reference stating the building is grade II the other saying it is grade II*).

5.6. As previously indicated two Listed Buildings have been identified as being 'At Risk'. These are No. 59 High Street and the curtilage listed wall to the front of the Old Grammar School on the High Street frontage [\(recently removed\)](#).

5.7. A selection of Listed Buildings many with much abbreviated descriptions based on the National list is provided below. Any additional comments by fieldworker are in italics.

5.8. Almshouses - Grade II*. 1684 (possibly by Robert Hooke) for Seth Ward Bishop of Exeter and Salisbury, mathematician and astronomer, friend of Wren. Plum brick in Flemish-bond, Portland stone dressings, and steep old red tile hipped roof. 2 storeys, U-shaped building around a court. 7- windows wide symmetrical front to west range and 5-windows wings. 2 windows to each floor on ends of wings which also have an offset plinth in line with the red brick courtyard retaining wall topped by a wrought iron railing on timber posts, swept up to a central gate approached by 2 steps. On tablet over door '1684/THIS HOSPITAL WAS ERECTED AND/ENDOWED BY SETH WARD D:D LD. BP. OF/SALISBURY & CHANCELLr. OF YE MOST NOBLE: ORDER OF YE GARTER WHO WAS BORN IN YIS:/TOWN WITHINYE PARRISH OF ASPDEN & EDVCA-/TED IN YE FREE- SKOOL OF BUNTINGFORD.' Fine scrolled stone trusses support the entablature with swelled frieze and moulded surround to battened door. A classical almshouses of 1684 of outstanding interest. *The railings to front are not plotted on EHDC records but should be.*



Picture 6. Finely detailed entrance to this Grade II* group of Almshouses.

5.9. St. Peter's church - Grade I. Chapel of Ease, now a church. Circa 1615 (inscription stone with 'Domus Orationis 1615' on east gable) for Vicar Dr Alexander Strange. Restored 1899-1900 by W A Pite, renewing windows restoring west gallery and adding north porch,

and vestry/heating chamber. Red brick in English-bond with steep tiled roofs. An unusual Jacobean town preaching house in Greek cross form orientated with chancel and semi-circular apse at south and entrance under clock and bell at north. Gothic Survival style. ***Spalled brickwork to elevation fronting High Street. Without prejudice grant assistance may be available.***



Picture 7. Repairs to spalled brickwork to St Peter's church may be eligible for grant assistance. Note the Milestone is also individually listed (the new metal plaque was attached in 2006).

5.10. War Memorial - Grade II. War memorial cross. Circa 1919.

Portland stone. A tall tapering octagonal pillar with moulded base raised on an inscribed square block worked to octagon at top, raised on 3 steps. All topped by a small octagonal-shafted tapered armed cross with expanded finials to arms. Capital of pillar carved in leaf scroll with acorns. Sunk flower ornament around neck of pillar and trefoil panels around bottom. Ornamental motif above inscription on each face of square base block.



Picture 8. Fine 20th century War Memorial.

5.11. Jubilee Pump House - Grade II. Pump 18/19th century:
 pumphouse 1897 inscription reads 'SET UP BY/F J ROBINSON
 ESQRE/1897 TO COMMEMORATE/THE 60th YEAR OF
 THE/GLORIOUS REIGN OF/QUEEN/VICTORIA'. Wooden pump pillar,
 oak pumphouse with shingled roof. A slender square pump pillar.
 Hexagonal pumphouse on angled oak posts with braces to
 wallplate. Pointed hexagonal shingled roof. Inscription in relief on 4
 sides.



Picture 9. Jubilee Pump, High Street.

5.12. Nos. 41 - 43 High Street - Grade II*. Front range 15th century incorporating earlier north crosswing, 16th century North West wing, front altered in early 18th century. Timber frame plastered at front, roughcast or dark weather boarded rear parts. Steep old red tile roofs. A large 2- storeys U-shaped group, formerly the Angel Inn, with carriageway entrance to yard in the centre. Remains of wall paintings on ground floor of No 41 around fireplace, of 2 periods. Earlier ones of skilful execution and solid colour. Elaborate moulded fireplace lintol. Interior of No. 43 has exposed close-studding, tension braces and heavy flat joists.



Picture 10. No. 41-43 High Street, a fine grade II* listed building with typical carriageway entrance to rear.

5.13. No. 59 and 59A High Street - Grade II. Early 16th century hall house with two crosswings, hall largely rebuilt in the 19th century when middle and north part of street front cased in brick. Timber frame largely cased in grey gault brick. Steep red tile roofs. Heavy arch-braced entrance to carriageway and brackets to each end of jetty. Small shopfront with fascia to left. Three tall octagonal brick shafts to central chimney to middle, backing onto carriageway. Nos. 59 and 59a are included on the Councils Buildings at Risk Register. Works continue in relation to new development to the rear. The building at the front appears unoccupied with windows to ground floor partially boarded (for security reasons?)



Picture 11. No. 59 High Street The return of this building to occupation will be very welcome.

5.14. No. 81 High Street - Grade II. 17th century or earlier, 18th century front. Timber frame roughcast with steep old red tile roofs. A small 2-storeys L-plan house with carriageway through. Lobby-entry, central-chimney plan with stair to rear of stack. Front has moulded wooden eaves cornice, 2 windows to upper floor and one to left of central door. 2-storeys projecting bay window with sashes and canted corner-lights. Similar oriel with coved base over carriageway with small brackets to lintol. 6-panel door with step, moulded surround and dentilled open pediment on brackets. *Metal fire Insurance plaque centrally attached.*



Picture 12. No. 81 High Street and historic metal fire Insurance plaque.



Picture 13. Another example elsewhere on the High Street of a metal Sun Insurance fire plaque. Can you find it? Such plaques were added to buildings to identify them as being insured by the company's fire brigade in the 18/19th centuries before the advent of municipal fire services.

5.15. No. 100 High Street - Grade II. Late 18th century. Red brick with a steep red-tiled roof. An asymmetrical 2-storeys and cellars, double-pile, end-chimneys plan house. 4 windows long front with 2nd bay from north projected slightly containing the door and window over. Triple-sash recessed windows with small panes, plastered reveals, and segmental gauged arches. 2 steps to 6-panel door with fanlight and deep moulded arched stucco hood mould. Formerly Top o' Town House.



Picture 14. No 100 High Street - late 18th century red brick house.

5.16. The Old Croft (on north corner of Little Lane) Grade II. Late 16th or early 17th century, taller west parlour wing early 18th century. Timber frame on stuccoed plinth, plastered upper part over red brick nogging. East gable has remains of old fan pargetting. Steep thatched roofs. *One of few thatched properties in the town; thus traditional roofing is particularly important to retain.*



Picture 15. One of only two thatched properties in the Conservation Area.

5.17. Bridge foot House - Grade II. Formerly Buntingford Union Workhouse 1836, South west wing added 1872. Yellow brick with red brick at rear, and slate roofs. A large symmetrical building facing west with projecting centre of a high basement and 2 storeys, and 2 storeys wings. 2 storeys 1872 extension in matching materials. Heavy dentilled brick cornice and central pediment. Built to serve the 16 surrounding parishes and to hold 160 inmates.

[Some early windows in need of repair/maintenance.](#)

5.18. Layston Cottage and No. 3A - Grade II. Early 16th century hall house with 2 crosswings, 17th and 18th century north range, 19th century single-storey gabled front extension and general renovation. Timber frames roughcast with diaper pargetting to jettied middle range. Steep old red tile roofs. Flint and slate gabled front wing with red brick dressings. An irregular 2 storeys and attics building.



Picture 16. Layston Cottage, River Green - A large early 16th century Hall house with later additions.

5.19. Peel House, High Street Grade II. Early 19th century. Buff brick with slated roof. A tall 2-storeys building. Irregular front with panelled soffit to eaves overhang, 3 regularly spaced upper windows, Double doors in wide doorcase up 3 steps at left hand end and adjoining 2 taller windows to police office, single width door up 6 steps in similar doorcase and taller and wider Ground floor window at right.



Picture 17. Peel House, former Police Station.

5.20. Brick wall The Causeway - Grade II. Red brick wall to rectangular garden south of Little Court. Garden wall. Early 18th century. Red brick in lime mortar. Large rectangular walled garden alongside road. Sloping plinth offset of 3 courses, and pilaster buttresses carried up to die into wall at projecting course under the brick-on-edge coping. About 3m tall, courses follow the slope.



Picture 18. Fine listed kitchen garden wall, a prominent feature on [The Causeway](#).

5.21. Bridge to Little Court - Grade II. Bridge carrying drive over River Rib. 18th century red brick. 9 inch segmental arch ring and red brick parapets with half-round coping over tile creasing.



Picture 19. Picturesque 18th century bridge to Little Court.

5.22. The Cage - grade II. Town lockup. Early 18th century. Walltop and roof renewed in mid 19th century. A small square building near the bridge over the River Rib, about 3m x 3m. Recessed battened and framed door with decorative iron hinges hung on iron pins from heavy frame under timber lintol. Of special historic interest as a local antiquity.



Picture 20. The Cage, Wyddial Road.

5.23. Telephone Kiosk High Street - Grade II. Telephone kiosk. Type K6. Designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made by various contractors. Cast iron. Square kiosk with domed roof. Unperforated

crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and door. *This listed structure needs vegetation removing, repainting and general refurbishment and 2 no. panes of glass replacing.*

5.24. George VI letter box that forms part of the formal description of one of the listed bridges over the River Rib. Inscribed GR. Such boxes were designed in the reign of George V but the Post office continued installing them (to use them up) in the early reign of George VI, after which a new design was introduced.



Picture 21. GR letter box considered to be listed as it is part of formal listing description.

5.25. **Important buildings within the curtilages of Listed Building.** The issue of deciding whether or not a building is 'curtilage listed' can sometimes be problematic and there is no exact legal definition of a building's curtilage.

5.26. The main tests relate to the physical layout of the land surrounding the main building/s at the date of listing, the physical layout and functional relationship of structures to each other; ownership, past and present and use or function, past and present. Structures need to be ancillary or subordinate to the main Listed Building and form part of the land and not be historically independent. Protection is granted to such objects or structures within the curtilage of a Listed Building if they were built prior to July 1, 1948. In determining the extent of a Listed Building and its curtilage, a key assessment will be to examine the situation at the time of listing.

5.27. Benson Hall is assessed as being within the curtilage of St. Richard's RC church and dedicated to the memory of Monseigneur Robert Benson who wrote the novel 'Lord of the World' in 1907. It would seem the building was erected in the late 1920's following the Roman Catholic church. The front elevation is of flint with stone window and door detailing. Slate roof with 2 no. finials. Sides and rear of concrete block construction.



Picture 22. Benson Hall - a curious 20th century building dedicated to Catholic priest and novelist, Robert Hugh Benson whose novel Lord of the World is regarded by some as a prophetic neglected Catholic masterpiece.

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5.28. Single storey barn to rear of 69 High Street (The Buntingford Kitchen). Single storey red brick building with old tiled roof. Worthy of retention despite modern alterations.



Picture 23. Barn to rear of 69 High Street most worthy of retention.

5.29. Group of single storey barns constructed of brick and flint with slate roofs within curtilage of Little Court - probably 19th century in origin.



Picture 24. Barns in curtilage of Little Court. The mapping from 1874 shows a saw pit to their front on what is now the approach road.

5.30. Other non listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. This Appraisal identifies other buildings of high quality that are not listed but that should be retained. These date from the 19/20th century and are an important element in the high environmental quality of the Conservation Area and make a contribution to its built form and historical evolution. Any important architectural features they possess and worthy of retention are identified.

5.31. Nos. 1- 3 and no. 5 Chapel End. Two storey 19th century cottages, frontages rendered with slate roofs. Nos. 1-3 has central chimney with tall pots. Modern windows detract to a degree but the effect is minimised because all are the same. Doors painted same colour. Front elevation makes a most worthwhile contribution to the street scene. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 25. Nos. 1-3 Chapel End. Plaque reads *These properties...were bequeathed by the Buntingford Almshouse Trust by Miss A Saggers of Buntingford*. Note harmony achieved by windows of same design and doors painted same colour.

5.32. Austins Funeral Directors building. Simple early/mid 20th century single storey rendered building with tiled roof. Building of good proportions with early/ original windows. Plaque to front reads Fire Station 1931. A number of features worthy of retention are protected by existing planning control.



Picture 26. Austins Funeral Directors - a simple building of pleasing proportions.

5.33. Barclays Bank, Market Hill House, Buntingford Dental Care and flats nos.1- 4 to rear, the latter advised formerly to have been a stable block. Mixture of slate and tiled roofs. Late 19/early 20th century in appearance (Bank annotated as such on 1920-24 mapping). Some original window and wooden other detailing noted; such features worthy of retention on commercial premises being protected by existing planning control. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on the residential property may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 27. Group of properties displaying good quality architectural detailing which positively contribute to the townscape and which should be retained.

5.34. Nisa Local Store, Baldock Road. Tall robust red brick building probably dating from the mid 20th century with hipped tiled roof and tall chimney stacks. Original windows worthy of retention to side elevation but in need of repair. Some limited rationalisation of signage would significantly improve the street scene.



Picture 28. Local Nisa store. A robust mid 20th century property, a good example of its period and worthy of retention. Shows on OS mapping as being a Post Office for which purpose it may have originally been built. Some modest rationalisation of signage would be of considerable benefit to the street scene.



Picture 29. Early windows to Nisa Local Store and PO worthy of retention and in need of refurbishment.

5.35 Buntingford Youth Centre building. Probably dates from the early 20th century. Of brick, render and pebble dash finish with recessed entrance and decorative wooden detailing to front. Sign to front reads 'Technical Institute'. Early leaded window detailing. Slate roof with cupola. Many features worthy of retention through normal development control.



Picture 30. Buntingford Youth Centre, an interesting early 20th century building.

5.36. Nos. 1-11 Norfolk Road. Early 20th century two storey terrace of yellow brick with slate roof and 3 no. chimneys with pots. Usual personalised changes to windows and doors but overall mass and uniformity of roofscape contributes positively to the quality of the Conservation Area. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for

selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 31. Nos. 1-11 Norfolk Road - an early 20th century group that despite changes to detail, continues to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

5.37. Nos. 13-15 Norfolk Road. Two storey pair of early 20th century semi detached houses of brick pebble dash and render finish. Hipped tiled roof with diagonally set chimney stack. Some wooden decorative detailing. Despite personalised changes the overall mass contributes positively to the quality of the Conservation Area and adds historic diversity. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.38. Nos. 4 - 20 Norfolk Road. Two storey late 19th century of brick construction with slate roofs (roof to no.10 is tiled). Chimneys mostly with pots. ~~An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.~~ Despite personalised changes, including painted brickwork and render, the overall mass contributes positively to the quality of the Conservation Area and adds historic diversity. Impact of modern windows to no.4 reduced virtue of common design. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.39. Nos. 105 - 113 High Street. Two storey late 19th century terrace visually and historically unified by roofscape consisting of slate roof and chimneys with pots. Elsewhere some original features but usual personalisation in relation to windows doors and surfaces. Despite such changes the overall mass contributes positively and on balance is worthy of retention. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.40. Nos. 88 - 94 High Street. Group of two storey 19th century rendered cottage with tiled roofs and chimneys with pots. Some original features but many window and door alterations through the exercise of Permitted Development rights. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 32. Nos. 88 -94 High Street. Despite alterations general mass and scale and roofline adds to the architectural character and historic diversity of the High Street.

5.41. i Smashed It Repairs, no.76A High Street. Single storey of brick construction with old tiled roof and carriage entrance; adds to variety and character of the street scene.



Picture 33. I smashed it repairs. Varied roofline adds to quality of the Conservation Area.

5.42. Nos. 1 - 7 Union Terrace. Two storey 19th century terrace, principally rendered; slate roofs, chimneys with pots. Various traditional elements altered but nevertheless the general mass is pleasing and the buildings are of historic interest. Assumed to take their name from the Buntingford Union Workhouse (now Bridgefoot House) opposite. An

Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 34. Nos. 1 - 7 Union Terrace. Despite alterations the mass of this terrace is visually pleasing and the buildings have interesting historical association.

5.43. No. 25 Wyddial Road. Two storey 19th century of flint and brick construction with slate roof and central chimney stack set diagonally. Two range brick window and central door surrounds. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 35. No. 25 Wyddial Road.

5.44. Nos. 9-21 and No. 47A (correctly numbered? being property between No. 21 and PH) Church Street. Two storey late 19/early 20th century terrace. Some original features but usual window and door alterations. Roofs to Nos. 9-15, slate; remainder tiled. All with chimneys, some with pots. Nevertheless whole mass contributes to the quality of the Conservation Area and is worthy of retention. An Article 4 Direction

to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 36. Late 19/early 20th century terrace Church Street worthy of retention.

5.45. Nos. 5-7 River Green. Pair of 19th century cottages of red brick construction with some decorative blue brick detailing. Tiled roof with large prominent central chimney stack with pots. Some decorative wooden detailing to dormers and entrance. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 37. Pair of distinctive cottages being Nos. 5-7 River Green.

5.46. Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution. Walls and railings so identified are protected to varying degrees virtue of exceeding specified height relevant to the Conservation Area legislation or by being within the curtilage of a Listed Building unless otherwise noted.

5.47. Wall to south of Almshouses. Of red brick construction approximately 2m in height. Some spalled brickwork in need of repair.



Picture 38. Important wall to south of Almshouses in need of repair.

5.48. Metal railings to front of Almshouses. Sturdy metal railings on dwarf brick wall; forms an important visual function and encloses garden to one of the most important listed buildings in the town.

5.49. Red brick wall to rear and north of Town Council offices. 3m + in height generally in good condition. Suggest removal of young ivy growth whilst this is still easily achieved.



Picture 39. Good quality tall brick wall to rear and north of Town Council offices. Suggest removal of ivy whilst young and easy to achieve.

5.50. George VI Pillar letter box, High Street. Iconic British design. Inscribed GviR with crown above and words Post Office below.



Picture 40. George VI pillar Letter box in High Street, standard iconic British design.

5.51. Wall - frontage to Old Grammar School High Street. Brick wall that makes a significant contribution to the Conservation Area in this location. ~~In urgent need of repair~~ Wall now removed in period following publication of draft appraisal. and ~~is~~ Included on the Council's Buildings at Risk Register.



Picture 41. Wall to frontage of Old Grammar School in urgent need of repair and potentially eligible for grant assistance from EHDC. Wall now removed, photo retained in document as record.

5.52. Plaque west side of bridge over River Rib, south end of High Street. Plaque reads Hertfordshire County Council 1937. The lettering needs re- inscribing.



Picture 42. Plaque on bridge over River Rib needs re-inscribing to retain information for the future.

5.53. Plaques east side of bridge over River Rib, south end of High Street. Initialled N M AND W E, both dated 1766. The lettering needs re-inscribing.



Picture 43. Historic plaques on bridge presumed to have formed part of an earlier bridge structure.

5.54. Low wall to boundary of Bridgefoot House, forms part of curtilage of listed building and thus protected. Capped with half rounded bricks for most part. Ideally modern concrete capping detail needs replacing.



Picture 44. Curtilage listed low wall to Bridgefoot House. Modern concrete capping detail needs replacing.

5.55. Wall to front of New Cottage The Causeway. A prominent flint wall fronting New Cottage forming boundary to River Rib. Of flint construction with rounded brick capping detail. The wall is a prominent feature in the immediate location and in need of repair. The western end is covered in ivy.



Picture 45. Boundary wall to New Cottage, The Causeway in need of repair and removal of vegetation.

5.56. Wall to south side of Little Lane. Of red brick construction and about 2 m in height. Some piers. Prominent feature on this well used footpath. Should be retained. Partly within, partly beyond revised conservation area.

5.567. Bridge over River Rib at junction of Wyddial Road/ Vicarage Road. Of brick construction. Interesting metal plaque affixed to wall fronting

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road dated 1899 signed by the then Clerk of the County Council. Lettering difficult to decipher and would benefit from restoration.



Picture 46. Bridge carrying Wyddial Road over the River Rib with interesting plaque in need of restoration dated 1899.

| 5.578. Important Open Spaces. Small green spaces with trees to front and rear of St. Richard's church.

| 5.589. The River Rib and adjacent footpath. The River Rib runs through the community from north to south and forms a most attractive and important feature and is of local distinctiveness.



Picture 47. The river supports many birds and gives pleasure to many people.



Picture 48. The River Rib and adjacent footpath is a most valuable natural and community asset.

5.5960. 'Shared Space' junction of High Street/Church Street. This paved area provides access to Church Street and is flanked by buildings. The paved area has some cracked or broken surface slabs. There is also a single tree, a flower bed in container, a seat, salt container and litter bin. It occupies a prominent site in the town centre and in the author's opinion it could be improved to provide an enhanced environment in a key location. It is suggested landscaping proposals be drawn up.



Picture 49. 'Shared space' junction High Street and Church Street. In the author's opinion it could perhaps be improved to make it more vibrant.

5.601. Layston Court Gardens. An open space of considerable environmental value in the centre of the town run by the Town Council. The space is well used and well linked to the town's footpath network. It is approached by a narrow footpath from the High Street in need of improvement. It is understood the close board fencing in this location is not the responsibility of the Town Council. The Gardens themselves contain mature tree specimens, several scattered flower and shrub beds and a number of seats, litter bins and dog waste containers. Mapping from the 1920's through to the 1950's shows the location of a Sun Dial in the Gardens.

5.612. The manner in which such areas are landscaped is a matter of local preference but it is considered improvements could be made. Questions asked

- Could the existing layout be improved to create a better sense of openness?
- Are the relatively scattered higher maintenance flower and shrub beds necessary or appropriate?
- Is there an overall cohesive landscape approach?
- Is the seating in the right places?
- Are there too many litter bins and other containers?

5.623. It is suggested consideration be given to the preparation of a landscape assessment and management plan including proposals for improving the approach from the High Street.



Pictures 50, 51, 52. Layston Court Gardens. Top picture, mature trees form the basis of the Gardens high quality but a greater sense of openness could be achieved: litter bins detract and are all of them really necessary? Middle picture - there are a number of higher maintenance flowers beds. Would a larger single or border display be more effective? Lower picture shows access to Gardens from High Street which is unattractive - some repairs necessary but it is understood this is not the responsibility of the Town Council - solution?

5.634. Land to the east of Wyddial Road to the River Rib being a linear strip of horse paddocks and land around Little Court consisting of an enclosed historic walled garden adjacent to the Causeway and land to

the north of Little Court to Wyddial Road which is permanent grassland that can be viewed from the public domain. The site in combination provides an important open setting to the listed property Little Court and also a visually important open space which can be viewed in parts from the public domain. Throughout there are many trees that add to the high quality of the natural environment in this part of the Conservation Area. The whole represents a natural environment of high quality that should be protected. It is proposed to extend the Conservation Area boundary in an easterly direction (see below).



Picture 53. Open land viewed from Wyddial Road that makes a significant visual contribution to the Conservation Area in this location.

5.645. *Any others e.g. Wildlife sites/ Historic Parks and Gardens.* There is a diagrammatic circle towards the northern end of the Conservation Area called Porters Close. The East Herts. Wildlife Sites Inventory of 2013 describes this as being *Buildings and environs important for protected species.*

5.656. Historic Parks and Gardens. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document produced in 2007 'Historic Parks and Gardens' identifies Little Court as being a 'well preserved Humphrey Repton landscape surrounding and late C19 gardens'. The document does not identify the extent of Repton's landscape surroundings. The author has discussed the matter further with the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust and they advise there is only reference in Repton's accounts that he visited Little Court. Whether or not elements of landscape around Little Court can be attributed to Repton is not proven, in their view. However Hertfordshire Gardens Trust are of the opinion that land to the east beyond the fence in [the pPicture 53](#) below forms part of the parkland setting to Little Court and is worthy of protection.



Picture 54. Landscape surrounding Little Court provides a parkland setting worthy of retention.
View from house up the slope in easterly direction.

5.667. Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Those trees that are most important are shown very diagrammatically on the accompanying plans.

5.678. Important views. A selection as shown on accompanying plans.

5.689. The views along the High Street are those which demonstrate the principal built historic quality of Buntingford.

5.6970. The view of the River at several locations and into permanent grassland at the northern end of the Conservation Area best illustrates elements of the high quality natural environment.

5.701. Elements out of character with the Conservation Area. Design and condition of group of 13 lock up garages to rear of High Street and south east of car park. Notwithstanding the proposal to remove these from the Conservation Area improvements are essential if they are to remain in use and existence.



Picture 55. Poor quality lock up 'garaging' area that detracts. It is proposed to be removed from the Conservation Area. Despite this can any improvements be made. What is its future?

5.7⁴². A-boards on the High Street detract in selected locations. They vary in size and style. Discussion need to take place with interested parties including the traders, the Town Council and Hertfordshire County Council to first ascertain their consideration of the matter. The author has been advised that complaints are occasionally received but not in relation to their visual appearance.



Picture 56. A - Boards on the High Street. In visual terms these are disruptive and uncoordinated. Is there an acceptable solution? Should action be taken?

5.7²³. Site at northern end of town being The Tile Shop, Direct Carpets and Acorn House. This group of properties set back from the road and to the south of a grouping of listed buildings is visually unattractive. If the site could be redevelopment for an appropriate use and at an appropriate scale with buildings located to the front of the site continuing the historic alignment of the High Street, this would represent a significant gain.



Picture 57. Site principally consisting of The Tile Shop and Direct Carpets is alien to the general alignment and historic qualities of the rest of the High Street. Its redevelopment to an appropriate use and at a sympathetic scale and alignment would be beneficial.

5.743. Elements of the Jolly Sailor's PH. This building is strategically located on the corner of High Street and Hare Street Road. Elements probably date from the late 19th century but it is much altered. Advertisement banners to the Hare Street Road frontage detract as do poor quality elements including fencing and outbuildings to the rear. If improvements could be achieved to this strategic corner location within the Conservation Area, this would represent a real benefit. [Some improvements have been made following discussion between the Council and the owners.](#)





Pictures 58, 59. Improvements to this strategic corner location would be of real benefit. The Phoenix Project appropriately suggests an enhanced seating area outside the PH. [These banners have now been removed and a considerable visual improvement has resulted.](#)

5.754. Opportunities to secure improvements. Repair spalled brick work to Market Hill elevation of St Peter's church. Similarly repair spalled brick work to wall south of Almshouses nearby. Seat in need of refurbishment /minor repair north of War memorial. Undertake repairs to listed K6 telephone call box. Remove young ivy growth on wall to rear of Town Council offices. Seek to secure modest rationalisation of signage to Nisa Local store, Baldock Road.

5.765. Footpath linking Pig's Nose and The Causeway. Removal of weeds and excess vegetation would be an advantage.



Picture 60. Removal of excess vegetation on footpath linking Pig's Nose and The Causeway would be advantageous.

5.767. Small untidy area, Church Street south side. ~~Would appear land is for sale.~~ Now advised land is owned by the Crown Estates.



Picture 61. Untidy site Church Street.

7.778. Commemorative seat in need of repair, Wyddial Road. Damaged and vandalised; in need of repair or replacement.



Picture 62. Damaged commemorative seat in need of repair or replacement.

5.789. Seating area High Street/Baldock Street. The minimum needed here is repair to one of the seats. However long term future and design of the site may be interlinked with Phoenix Project proposals which make a general recommendation to declutter and remove barriers.



Picture 63. Minimum works involve repairs to one of the pair of seats.

5.7980. Suggested boundary changes. These details are shown on accompanying plans. Councils have a responsibility to ensure such areas justify Conservation Area status and are not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

5.801. There are other individual buildings and areas elsewhere such as the 20th century housing development of Dell Spring which lack special architectural or historic importance. However in the latter situation for example, it would be difficult to sensibly redraw the boundaries to

exclude this area so its retention as 'neutral' buildings within the Conservation is accepted.

5.8¹². It is proposed to

(a) Extend the Conservation Area to the east of Little Court to include a well defined field that is important to the setting of Little Court, a listed building. The land in question contains a number of trees some of which are mature and ancient.



Picture 64. It is proposed to extend the Conservation Area to the east of Little Court to include the parkland type setting of the field beyond the fence in the picture.

(b) Exclude the following areas which are modern developments and are not considered to be areas of special architectural or historic interest.

(i) Area south of the village consisting of the Fire Station, the Co-operative store and car park to the east of Station Road and residential development on the west of Station Road being The Gables and nos. 1 - 14 Rib Way. Following consultation and representation from the Town Council, the Chapel End footpath, including the River Rib and its treed banks and further extended south to the bridge remain within and be included in the conservation area. It is accepted the treed areas banks and stream adjacent to a well used footpath are visually and environmentally important and add to the local distinctiveness of the conservation area..



Pictures 65, 66, 67. The Fire Station, the Co operative store and housing opposite is proposed for removal from the Conservation Area on the basis that this area is not of special architectural or historic interest.

(ii) Group of 13 lock up garages to rear of High Street and south east of car park. These buildings are of very poor quality and assumed to be associated with nearby residential development beyond the Conservation Area. Notwithstanding the proposal to remove them from the Conservation Area their future should be explored and should they remain improvements need to be carried out.



Picture 68. Garage block proposed for removal from the Conservation Area. Notwithstanding this improvements are needed.

(iii) No.15A Norfolk Road 'Red Bricks'. A modern property on the edge of the Conservation Area of insufficient architectural quality and limited historic interest.



Picture 69. No.15A Norfolk Road, proposed to be excluded from the Conservation Area.

(iv) No. 131 High Street. A modern property on the edge of the Conservation Area of insufficient architectural quality and limited historic interest.



Picture 70. No.131 High Street, proposed to be excluded from the Conservation Area.

(v) Nos. 2- 4 Garden Road. A pair of modern properties on the edge of the Conservation Area of insufficient architectural quality and limited historic interest.



Picture 71. Nos. 2-4 Garden Road, proposed to be excluded from the Conservation Area.

(vi) Nos. 2 - 6 and Layston House, The Causeway. A group of modern properties on the edge of the Conservation Area of insufficient architectural quality and limited historic interest.



Picture 72. Nos. 2 - 6 and Layston House, The Causeway, proposed to be excluded from the Conservation Area.

(vii) Nos. 1 - 10 Bridewell Close ~~and Grovebury House~~. A larger group of modern properties on the edge of the Conservation Area of insufficient architectural quality and limited historic interest. Following representations Grovebury House is proposed to remain within the conservation area.



Picture 73. Nos. 1- 10 Bridewell Close, modern properties of insufficient architectural or historic interest to be included in the Conservation Area.

5.823-. Other actions. Advise Historic England of several errors as set out in table to Management section below. Show railings to front of Almshouses on EHDC mapping records as being listed.

6. OVERALL SUMMARY

6.1. Buntingford Conservation Area is of high quality and generally considered worthy of its status as a Conservation Area. It is considered to be an area of '*special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance*'.

6.2. This Appraisal considers there the Conservation Area should be extended to include land of a parkland nature to the east of Little Court.

6.3. However it also concludes that its boundaries should be modified elsewhere to exclude modern housing located in peripheral locations.

6.4. The Town's greatest environmental asset is the High Street and its historic buildings, many of which are finely detailed and a number having interesting carriageway entrances. The quality of these buildings must be carefully maintained and in this respect planning and listed building control has an important role to play.

6.5. The Phoenix Project currently being considered by the Town Council makes a number of recommendations although those relating to the High Street are limited to minor interventions, removal of bollards and patch repairs to surface treatments. It is suggested this be re examined to reconsider if there are other aspects that would add vitality and visual improvements. One such consideration might be the introduction of limited tree planting if services and other practical considerations could be accommodated.

6.6. Another significant asset is the River Rib which runs north south throughout the town. This is partly accessible by public footpath which links with the important open space in the town centre, Layston Court Gardens, managed by the Town Council. The river is of visual importance and of wildlife interest to the wider community.

6.7. In the north east corner of the Conservation Area there is a large area of open land around Little Court. This is heavily treed in many locations and consists of an historic walled garden, an historic landscape setting attributed to Humphrey Repton, horse paddocks and permanent grassland. Whilst this area is privately owned a number of its fine qualities are visible from the public domain and it is highly important its openness and fine qualities are protected for the future.

6.8. A number of non listed buildings from the late 19th/early 20th century have been identified for retention and protection along with other features of architectural or historic interest.

6.9. A number of opportunities have been identified where improvements could be secured. These vary from very small proposals to more strategic considerations such as the future of larger sites and introducing greater vitality to others. Any such improvements will

principally be executed through the owners' co operation but there could be instances where District Council officers may be able to assist. Experience elsewhere has shown the active involvement of the local Town or Parish Council can be critical. These enhancement proposals are set out in tabular form below.

PART C - MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS.

7. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS.

7.1. Revised Conservation Area Boundary. The revised boundary is shown on accompanying Management Plan to which the reader is referred and includes the following amendment/s.

(a) ~~(a)~~ Include field to east of Little Court.

(b) Extend Chapel End footpath including the River Rib and its treed banks south to the bridge.

(bc) Exclude the following areas

(i) area south of the town consisting of the Fire Station, the Co-operative store and car park to the east of Station Road and residential development on the west of Station Road being The Gables and nos. 1 - 14 Rib Way.

(ii) Group of 13 lock up garages to rear of High Street and south east of car park.

(iii) No. 15A Norfolk Road.

(iv) No. 131 High Street.

(v) Nos. 2- 4 Garden Road.

(vi) Nos. 2 - 6 and Layston House, The Causeway.

(vii) Nos. 1 - 10 Bridewell Close ~~and Grovebury House.~~

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 currently against this document and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPP) that the District Council will process applications. The NPP is supplemented by Planning Practice Guidance. One such guidance note of particular relevance is 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'. In due course the 2007 Local Plan will be replaced by the District Plan whose policies will then be relevant.

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7.3. Applicants considering submitting any application should carefully consider the relevant policies and if necessary contact Officers to seek pre-application advice.

Telephone 01279 655261 (For development proposals ask for Development Management. For general conservation advice ask for a Conservation Officer).

E-mail: planning@eastherts.gov.uk

Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk

Or write to Development Management, East Herts. District Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

7.4. Applicants may also wish to refer to one of the several Guidance Notes previously referred to which will be updated as resources permit.

7.5. *Planning Control - Potential need to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation.* Within the sites designated as being an Area of Archaeological Significance as shown on the emerging District Plan, 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.

7.7. Listed Buildings are a significant asset in contributing to the quality of the Conservation Area. It is essential that their architectural detailing is not eroded nor their other qualities and settings compromised.

7.8. *Planning Control – Other Unlisted Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.* Within the existing Conservation Areas this Appraisal has identified 15 unlisted buildings/ groups of buildings that are considered to have sufficient qualities to be described thus. These are: Nos.1-3 and No. 5 Chapel End; Austin Funeral Directors building; Barclays Bank, Market Hill House, Buntingford Dental Care, High Street and Nos. 1 - 4 flats to rear; on Baldock Road - Nisa Local Store; Buntingford Youth Centre building; on Norfolk Road - Nos. 1-11; 13-15; 4-20. Elsewhere on High street Nos. 105-113; 88-94; 76A (iSmashed it Repairs). Nos. 1-7 Union Terrace; No. 25 Wyddial Road; Nos. 9-21 and adjacent 47A (?) Church Street; Nos. 5-7 River Green. Any proposal involving the demolition of these buildings is unlikely to be approved.

7.9. *Planning Control – Other unlisted distinctive features that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.* This Appraisal has identified a number of railings and walls that make a particular

contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. They are protected from demolition virtue of exceeding the specified heights relevant to Conservation Area legislation or by Listed Building legislation. Any proposal involving their demolition is unlikely to be approved. Removal of other PD rights involving alteration is also an available option.

7.10. Other distinctive features that contribute to the quality of the environment are also identified. These should be protected within the parameters of existing legislation.

7. 11. There are other distinctive features that are integral to some of the important unlisted buildings identified above that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including selected chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing. In some situations protection already exists through existing planning controls but in other cases protection could only be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via an Article 4 Direction. The associated 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.

7.12. Improvement of features and architectural detailing. This Appraisal has noted the diminishing quality of several 19th century terraces principally damaged by the exercise of Permitted Development Rights. If there is support for the idea one initiative could be the preparation of an improvement scheme whereby Council officers in association with residents, draw up improvement proposals to be implemented on a voluntary basis over a long period. This could involve the replacement of inappropriate architectural items such as windows and doors at such time replacements were proposed.

7.13. Possible redevelopment site. Site at northern end of town consisting of The Tile Shop, Direct Carpets and Acorn House. This group of properties set back from the road and to the south of a grouping of listed buildings is visually unattractive where redevelopment by an appropriate use and at an appropriate scale and alignment would be beneficial.

7.14. *Planning control - Wildlife Sites.* Any development that adversely affects wildlife species occupying such sites will not normally be permitted and would need clear justification. Proposals will be considered against Policies ENV 14 and ENV 16.

7.15. *Planning Control – Important Historic Parks and gardens.* EHDC Supplementary Planning Document ‘Historic Parks and Gardens’ has identified Little Court as being locally important, although its extent is not geographically defined. Proposals that significantly harm such

gardens special character will not be permitted and will be considered against Policy BH16.

7. 16. Planning Control – Important open land, open spaces and gaps.

This Appraisal has identified the following particularly important open spaces: Green spaces around St Richard's church; River Rib and adjacent footpath; 'shared space' junction of High Street/Church Street.; Layston Court Gardens; Land to the east of Wyddial Road and around Little Court. These open spaces will be protected.

7. 17. Planning Control – Particularly important trees and hedgerows.

Only the most significant trees are shown diagrammatically. It has not been possible to plot trees on inaccessible land. 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.

7. 18. Planning Control - Important views. A selection of general views are diagrammatically shown. Policy BH6 is particularly relevant.

7.19. Enhancement Proposals. The Appraisal has identified a number of elements that detract which are summarised in the Table below together with a proposed course of action; other actions are also identified. Within the staff and financial resources available, Council Officers will be pro-active and provide assistance. It must be recognized that such improvements will generally be achieved only by the owner's co-operation. [Butingford Town Council have offered significant and much appreciated assistance by assuming responsibility for progressing many of the actions set out below.](#)

Detracting element.	Location.	Proposed action.
Diminishing quality of several 19th century terraces principally damaged by the exercise of Permitted Development Rights.	Various locations, High Street, Church Street, Norfolk Road, Union Terrace.	If through the consultation process there is support, consider an initiative whereby Council officers in association with residents draw up proposals to improve one such terrace. Such proposals to be implemented by residents on a voluntary basis.
Brick wall in poor state of repair in key location. <u>Wall subsequently removed.</u>	High Street frontage to Old Grammar School. On Council's Buildings at Risk	Approach owner and seek co operation in undertaking appropriate repairs. Potentially eligible for grant assistance from

	Register.	EHDC.
Detracting commercial site.	North end of High Street.	Carefully consider through the planning process any redevelopment of this site by an appropriate use and at an appropriate scale and alignment.
Detracting corner location.	The Jolly Sailor's PH.	Consider in greater detail and contact owner with view of seeking co operation to make visual improvements. Some improvements recently undertaken.
Spalled brickwork.	High Street elevation St Peter's church.	Seek owner's co operation in undertaking necessary repairs. Without prejudice grant assistance may be available.
Spalled brickwork.	Wall south of Almshouses, r/o St Peter's Church, Market Hill.	Source owner and seek owner's co operation in undertaking necessary repairs. Without prejudice grant assistance may be available.
Seat.	Near War Memorial.	Seek owner's co operation in undertaking repair and refurbishment and repainting.
Telephone kiosk.	Near War memorial.	Seek owner's co operation in undertaking refurbishment.
Ivy growth on wall.	Rear of Town Council offices.	Seek owner's co operation in undertaking removal.
Signage.	Nisa Local Store, Baldock Road.	Seek owner's co operation in considering limited rationalisation to improve street scene.
Windows in need of repair.	Nisa Local Store, Baldock Road.	Seek owner's co operation in undertaking necessary repair/ refurbishment.
Group of 13 lock up garages.	To rear of High Street and south east of car park.	Despite proposal to remove from Conservation Area seek owner's co operation in undertaking necessary refurbishment.
A Boards.	High Street.	Discussions need to take place with interested parties in the first instance.

Weeds and excess vegetation.	Footpath between Pig's Nose and The Causeway.	Remove and maintain.
Boundary wall in need of repair.	To frontage of New Cottage, The Causeway.	Seek owner's co-operation to undertake necessary repairs.
Commemorative seat in need of repair.	Wyddial Road.	Seek owner's co-operation to undertake necessary repairs or replace.
Untidy area.	Church Street south side.	Land appears to be up for sale. In first instance seek to establish owners intentions.
Damaged seat.	High Street/Baldock Road.	Short term - repair seat. Long term consider future of whole site in association with Phoenix Project proposals.
Other Actions.		
In association with the Phoenix Project if implemented (or if not) consider the potential for tree planting at suitable strategic locations in the High Street in order to secure visual improvements.		
'Shared space', High Street/Church Street. Consider commissioning a landscape enhancement scheme for this key central space.		
Consider preparing a landscape and management plan for Layston Court Gardens and improve access from High Street.		
Stone plaque west side of bridge over River Rib, south end of High Street. Plaque reads Hertfordshire County Council 1937. Contact Herts. County Council and seek their co operation to re-inscribe it.		
Stone plaques east side of bridge over River Rib, south end of High Street. Plaques are initialled and dated 1766. Contact Herts. County Council and seek their co operation to re-inscribe them.		
Metal plaque dated 1899 on bridge carrying Wyddial Road over River Rib. Contact Herts. County Council and seek their co operation to restore it.		
Contact owner of Bridgefoot House and seek co-operation in replacing concrete capping detail with traditional rounded bricks to part of low boundary wall. Also seek cooperation in undertaking necessary repair/maintenance to selected early windows.		
Inform Historic England that Nos. 68-70 High Street and No. 78 Gilpin House are wrongly plotted on their mapping. Also their records are confused as to whether No. 66 High Street is grade II or II*. Also advise Historic England of 2 no. listed buildings at Buntingford Road Puckeridge (No.7 and No. 27) are wrongly included in their records as being in Buntingford parish.		
Show Railings to frontage of Almshouses as being listed on EHDC mapping records.		



BUNTINGFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN Draft for Consultation 2015

Historic Plan from 1874-1894 with existing Conservation Area boundary approximately plotted. © Crown copyright and database right 2015. Ordnance Survey 100018528

Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk


























E-mail: john.bosworth@eastherts.gov.uk

Phone: 01279 655261 (ask for the Conservation Officer)

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CHARACTER ANALYSIS KEY

EXISTING CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY	
PROPOSED EXTENSION TO THE CONSERVATION AREA	IN 
PROPOSED REDUCTIONS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA	
AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE	
INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES	
OTHER INDIVIDUALLY LISTED FEATURES	
Walls/railings	
Pumphouse	
War Memorial	
Telephone Kiosk	
Milestone Marker	
Bridges	
LISTED BUILDINGS 'AT RISK' OR OTHER CURTILAGE 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	
<hr/>	
OTHER DISTINCTIVE FEATURES THAT MAKE AN IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC CONTRIBUTION	
Walls/railings	
Pillar Letter Box	
Wall mounted Letter Box	
Plaques	
Bridge	
IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES	SQ 
IMPORTANT WATER FEATURES	
GENERAL LOCATION OF IMPORTANT TREES/HEDGEROWS	
WILDLIFE SITE	
LOCALLY IMPORTANT HISTORIC PARK AND GARDEN	
IMPORTANT VIEWS	
ELEMENTS OUT OF CHARACTER WITH THE CONSERVATION AREA	

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MANAGEMENT PLAN KEY

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

A new District Plan (DP) is being prepared that when adopted will contain the relevant DP planning policies.

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

Walls/railings



Pumphouse

PH

War Memorial

W

Telephone Kiosk

TK

Milestone Marker

M

Bridges

Br

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

R

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



Pillar Letter Box

LB

Wall mounted Letter Box.

WLB

Plaques

P

Bridge

B

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

A4

IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES TO BE PROTECTED



IMPORTANT WATER FEATURE TO BE PROTECTED



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



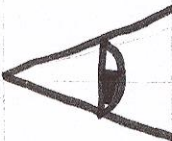
WILDLIFE SITE TO BE PROTECTED: Local policies Env 14 and Env 16 particularly apply

WS

LOCALLY IMPORTANT HISTORIC PARK AND GARDEN TO BE PROTECTED: Local policy BH16 particularly applies

HPG

SELECTED IMPORTANT VIEWS TO BE PROTECTED



PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND COUNCIL SUPPORT

WARE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL WARE WARDS

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To enable Members to consider the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan following public consultation.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:	
(A)	the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be supported;
(B)	authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the document which may be necessary; and
(C)	the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 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 Ware Conservation Area is one of a series of reviews being undertaken and this is the latest one for consideration.

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 are reviewed and, where appropriate, practical enhancement proposals are suggested.

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

2.0 The Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

2.1 The Ware Conservation Area was designated in 1981 and reviewed in 1995. This Appraisal document was completed in 2015 and went through a period of public consultation from 8 December 2015 to 26 January 2016 with a public meeting held on 8 December 2015 at Ware Town Council offices at which about 20 persons attended. The headline issues are set out in the following paragraphs:

2.2 The document is substantial. The draft document considers the conservation area boundaries and proposes a number of extensions. These are:

- To include trees of conifer and other species between London Road and Grange Gardens.
- (b) To include Nos. 1- 45 and Nos. 2- 56 Musley Hill, a 19th century street of visual and historic importance.
- (c) To include Nos. 1-18 and Nos. 21 - 33/33a/34/34a Gladstone Road, a late 19th century street of visual and historic importance.

- (d) To include an area on south side of River Lea to include important trees in general vicinity of Kings Meads Nature Reserve (up to edge of pathway) and school playing fields.
- (e) To principally include Ware dental building no. 6 Star Street.

The document identifies the key environmental features and the manner in which they can be controlled. In relation to Ware 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. Several are already on the Council's Heritage at Risk Register and there are several additional potential candidates identified.
- 2.4 *Non listed buildings of quality worthy of protection:* A large number have been identified that make a positive contribution to the conservation area and these should be retained through the planning process. Some non-listed residential buildings have good quality architectural features of high quality whose formal protection could be achieved through the introduction of an Article 4 Direction which is a course of action the Council has yet to consider.
- 2.5 *Other unlisted distinctive features worthy of protection.* A number have been identified and include walls and railings which are important to the character of the town. Included are some structures on the Council's Heritage at Risk Register where, without prejudice, grant assistance may potentially be available. In relation to selected railings alongside New River, officers are in discussion with the owners Thames Water, with a view of seeking their co-operation in securing the necessary repairs.
- 2.6 *Important open land and spaces.* The following particularly

important open spaces have been identified: the River Lea and New River; western churchyard and main churchyard; Tudor Square; Malt Makers Garden; former Quaker burial ground - Kibes Lane and small area nearby - corner Kibes Lane/Bowling Road; low lying field - London Road/Viaduct Road; parallel open space to New River north of Hertford Road; Christ church churchyard; open space to front of The Old Boardroom/Octagon; open space to front of Fire Station Baldock Street and narrow triangle opposite; small sitting area Watton Road/Gladstone Road; Buryfield Recreation Ground and gardens around and to the south of The Priory.

2.7 *Enhancement proposals to deal with detracting elements.* A considerable number have been identified including some which are the responsibility of the District Council. These are identified in tabular summary form at paragraph 7.23 of the document.

2.8 *Other significant proposals.* The Appraisal notes the diminishing quality of several historic terraces damaged principally by the exercise of householder Permitted Development Rights and suggests an initiative involving the preparation of an experimental improvement scheme (see paragraph 7.16 of document).

A number of large scale sites have been identified where potential redevelopment could secure improvement (see paragraph 7.22)

It is suggested selected commercial and shop fronts detract in parts of the commercial centre and that means of securing improvements are worthy of further investigation. Some improvements have already been secured to Baldock Street properties using funds provided through the recent Asda retail development.

Other areas have been identified where the street scene could be improved which include Amwell End, the Watton Road/Baldock Street roundabout and entrance to the town and the mediocre quality of various street scenes where joint initiatives between the three councils could result in improvements.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper ‘A’**
- 3.2 A summary of comments received through the consultation process and officer responses are set out in the table is included as **Essential Reference Paper B**
- 3.3 **Essential Reference Paper C** is a copy of the **Ware** Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan as it appeared at the consultation draft stage with any track changes to text and alterations to accompanying plans that incorporate any necessary changes. Further minor changes will be incorporated reflecting the status of the final document once Members have considered it for adoption.

Background Papers

Written representations received through the consultation process.

<u>Contact Member:</u>	Councillor S Rutland-Barsby, Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support suzanne.rutland-barsby@eastherts.gov.uk
<u>Contact Officer:</u>	Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and Building Control, Ext 1407 kevin.steptoe@eastherts.gov.uk
Report Author	John Bosworth Conservation Assistant john.bosworth@eastherts.gov.uk

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives :	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives
Consultation:	Undertaken with residents and local stakeholders and summarised in Essential Reference Paper B
Legal:	Preparation of the Appraisal fulfils statutory requirements.
Financial:	Costs associated with the preparation of the Appraisal are met from within existing staffing and operational budgets. The Appraisal suggests works and actions which could be undertaken to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and remove detracting elements which would generally be the responsibility of individual owners. However in the case of Ware some would be the responsibility of the District Council and if Members support such actions, these would need to be costed. Other actions such as the possible introduction of an Article 4 Direction might result in additional cost but the Council is not committed to undertaking such further action. Such costs can be further assessed should such a decision be reached.
Human Resource:	No additional staffing implications.
Risk Management:	No significant risk issues.
Health and Wellbeing – issues and impacts:	The Appraisal seeks to protect and secure the character of the area.

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER B

Issue.	Representations made.	Officer comment.
General support.	<p><i>'Ware Town Council welcomes the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and management Plan and supports the proposals in the document.'</i></p> <p>General support was also received from the Ware Society who <i>'found the document to be comprehensive and well constructed'</i>. They note that when <i>'formally adopted it will form a useful working document for the activities of the Ware Society'</i>.</p> <p>Another resident noted general appreciation of <i>'an excellent scheme' that should continue to be liaised and discussed with the Ware Society'</i>.</p>	Noted and appreciated.
The possible introduction of an Article 4 Direction.	<p>No specific representations on this subject were made by the Town Council or by the Ware Society.</p> <p>A respondent appreciated comments on the subject and the potential of introducing an Article 4 Direction in relation to properties identified at New Road and suggested such a Direction could be extended to protect remaining boot scrapers and iron gratings/ covers because these are considered to have some historical value.</p>	<p>The Town Council's general support is noted and interpreted as embracing the references in the Appraisal to this subject. A separate report is being presented to Members of the District Council for their consideration. Should Members consider an Article 4 Direction to be appropriate details will be drawn up at that time. The boot scrapers referred to can be regarded as an historic feature worthy of retention. They are metal with rounded decorative detailing and embedded into the walls of a number of houses in the terrace.</p>
Conservation area boundaries.	<p>Suggested additional extensions to the conservation area.</p> <p>Ware Society note that the proposed extensions <i>'seem wholly reasonable'</i> and endorse them. They express particular support for the two areas identified principally for their trees.</p> <p>The Town Council <i>'requests that consideration be given to</i></p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Gilpin Road is a street dating from the late 19th century and located to</p>

	<p><i>the inclusion of Gilpin Road in the Conservation Area.'</i></p> <p>A representation regarding parts of Vicarage Road and King Edwards Road. An interested respondent considers some unidentified houses in these locations warrant reference in the document because of their significant historical features.</p>	<p>the south of the southern extremity of the conservation area. It is accepted that the street has historic and architectural associations but regrettably its character has been eroded by many alterations including the erection of a considerable number of porches to front elevations. On careful reflection officers consider Gilpin Road is not a suitable candidate for inclusion in an extended conservation area.</p> <p>Within this area it is accepted there are some properties of historic interest but there are also others which are not. A number of those with historic association have had their architectural qualities diminished by modern window replacement and by the erection of porches and other alterations for example. On balance it is considered the conservation area is correctly drawn in this general location.</p>
<i>Open spaces and public areas.</i>	<p>General: The Ware Society notes that the responsibility for their improvement and maintenance clearly rests with the local authority and hopes that <i>'should the final document receive acceptance then these issues will be acted on by those with this responsibility'</i>.</p> <p>Kibes Lane burial plot. A respondent notes that the Quaker burial plot in Kibes Lane is greatly improved in relation to its previous condition.</p>	<p>It is accepted the documents makes reference as the Ware Society have noted and that some suggested improvements are the responsibility of EHDC. In this regard Members have commenced preliminary consideration by requesting officers maintain a definitive list as appraisal documents are completed for their ongoing consideration.</p> <p>This may be the case but nevertheless the comments in the Appraisal about further improvements are relevant. These comments accept that the site is generally attractive but lacks a sense of enclosure and could be improved by more satisfactory and effective boundary treatment.</p>
Suggested improvements in conjunction with property owners and the need for local good will and commitment.	The Ware Society advises it <i>'would be happy to pursue in conjunction with the local authority'</i> . It also advises it would offer direct action as it has done in the past.	These comments are noted and appreciated and the Society's assistance may be sought on appropriate future occasions.

<p>Inappropriate shop front and facia design issues raised by the Appraisal.</p>	<p>A respondent accepts some are not ideal but draws attention to the importance of small independent traders and the services they offer. The respondent considers '<i>section 4 orders</i>' could be counterproductive and that '<i>requests</i>' to them would be a better option.</p>	<p>There is no suggestion in the Appraisal of introducing Article 4 Directions if that is what the respondent means. In fact the report emphasises the need to consider means of securing improvements through the investigation of best practice elsewhere in the country, increasing local awareness (including possible update and distribution of the council's existing guidance on the issue) and liaising with local shopkeepers as well as through the process of determining new applications for shopfronts and facias.</p>
<p>Other detailed points.</p>	<p>One respondent raised queries regarding the Ware Common Wharf. In a follow up conversation the respondent raised issue of ownership.</p> <p>Fletcher's Lea building at Ware Priory. A respondent makes reference to the cost and perceived inappropriate nature of this building in relation to the conservation area.</p> <p>Tudor Square. A respondent advises reference in the appraisal document to a 'plan' is incorrect and the Town Council have been debating for a long period without resolution.</p>	<p>This is an area adjacent to the river near Beds to Go Warehouse. The Town Council advise that their information is that the site is protected as common land but that ownership is unknown. Queries relating to ownership are not relevant to this appraisal and need to be pursued further, if appropriate between interested parties.</p> <p>Noted. Planning permission granted/structure completed. The design was not thought to be controversial at the time of its approval and in fact was designed by Donald Insall Associates, a recognised conservation architect. Appreciation of design may vary from person to person.</p> <p>The reference in the document is that the Town Council have commissioned a landscaping scheme. Officers have discussed the latest position with the Town Council who advise they are currently in the process of discharging planning conditions and a Highway agreement. They are hoping for a successful conclusion to these discussions and hope a start can be made in 2016. Tudor Square is described by the document as being 'rather desolate' so it is hoped the Town Council can implement improvements.</p> <p>Officers have already responded to</p>

	<p>Loss of Gazebo type building behind the High Street, re development site. A respondent raises the issue of its demolition.</p> <p>General condition of some town centre properties referred to in the appraisal. A respondent considers some such buildings may be owned by external investment companies with limited local affinity or allegiance</p> <p>A respondent advises the rear of Fenella and GSK Mini Stores (Nos. 77 and 79 High Street) are in poor condition and may be at risk.</p> <p>Loss of trees several years ago. A respondent drew attention to the loss of established trees alongside the River Lea.</p>	<p>this query and advised that the loss of this later gazebo was part of the consideration of applications at this site which was addressed in the committee report.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Following a further site visit it is accepted the area to the rear of these properties is in declining condition. Some deterioration of old tiled roofs was particularly noted. However an application relating to No.77 involving the conversion of the listed building with additional limited enabling development should partly resolve this issue once implemented and may act as a catalyst. Their current condition has now been noted and referred to in the Appraisal.</p> <p>Unable to comment in detail. In general trees above a certain very modest size are protected from removal without prior notification in the conservation area.</p>
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WARE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION 2015



The relationship between waterways and town is very special indeed.

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

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WARE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

2015

This Appraisal [and Management Plan](#) has been produced by officers of East Hertfordshire District Council to assess the current condition of the Ware Conservation Area, to identify where improvements can be made and to advise of 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.

The content of Appraisals written from 2015 which include this paragraph differs slightly from predecessor documents. Selected revisions have been incorporated to reflect changes to legislation, the emerging District Plan, nomenclature, consolidation and other improvements resulting from experience gained to date. This process is ongoing.

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 commits 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 puts forward simple 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 discussions with owners. Thus such 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 apply to estimating dates of buildings.

1.8. This Conservation Appraisal will:

- Identify the special character of the Conservation Area.
- Identify elements that should be retained or enhanced;
- Identify detracting elements;
- Review the existing boundaries;
- Put forward practical enhancement proposals;

1.9. The document will be prepared in partnership with the Parish Council and the local community through the consultation process.

1.10. East Herts District Council produced the Ware Character Statement in 1995 which particularly noted that *the central core of the Conservation Area despite development pressures over the intervening years, the ravages of traffic congestion, and associated road widening, still holds together remarkably well visually as a small historic market town.* **Notwithstanding further development during the 20 year period since 1995 this statement remains essentially correct.**

1.11. Acknowledgement and thanks are recorded to Hertfordshire County Council who's Historic Environment Unit has been particularly helpful.

1.12. This document 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 areas accord with the statutory definition and are not devalued by including land or buildings that lack special interest.

2.4. Planning permission is required for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area but is subject to certain exceptions. For example, it does not apply to Listed Buildings which are protected by their own legislation but is relevant to other non listed buildings in the Conservation Area above a threshold size set out in legislation*. Looking for and assessing such buildings is therefore a priority of this Appraisal.

* The demolition of a building not exceeding 50 cubic metres is not development and can be demolished without planning permission. Demolition of other buildings below 115 cubic metres are regarded as 'Permitted Development' granted by the General Permitted Development Order, subject to conditions that may require the Council's 'prior approval' regarding methods of proposed demolition and restoration.

2.5. Certain ecclesiastical buildings (which are for the time being used for ecclesiastical purposes) are not subject to local authority 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 other necessary planning permissions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2.6. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England), Order 2015 defines the range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required 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.

2.7. However, even within Conservation Areas there are other minor developments associated with many non-listed buildings 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 commonly include some developments fronting a highway or open space, such as an external porch or the demolition of some gates, fences or walls or their alteration. The removal of existing important architectural features that are important to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area such as chimneys, traditional detailing or materials, distinctive porches, windows and doors or walls or railings 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' which withdraws 'Permitted Development Rights'. The use of such Directions needs to 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 appropriate.

2.8. Works to Trees. Another additional planning control relates to trees located within Conservation Areas. Setting aside various exceptions principally relating to size, any proposal to fell or carry out works to trees has to be 'notified' to the Council. The Council may then decide whether to 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 an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, particularly when viewed from the public realm. Other trees not specifically identified may still be suitable for statutory protection. Only a few trees in the Conservation Area are protected by Tree Preservation Orders but trees make a significant contribution to certain parts of the Conservation Area, particularly along the banks of the River Lea.

2.9. 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 and extent of the hedge, its age and or its historical importance, the wildlife it supports and its number of woody species. The Regulations do not apply to domestic garden hedges.

2.10. National Planning Policy Framework. The principle emphasis of the 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.

2.11. Of particular relevance to this document, the 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 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 (sic) 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 an application affecting 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.

2.12. 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 works which result in the maintenance of listed buildings and other unlisted buildings of architectural or historic interest. [The maximum grant will not normally exceed £1,000. Details are available on the Council's web site.](#)

2.13. In respect of the above the Council has produced a number of leaflets and guidance notes that are available on line and on request. These guidance notes on the preservation and repair of historic materials and buildings' provide useful information relevant to the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. They will be updated as resources permit.

2.14. The Council also has a '[BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register', originally produced in 2006 and updated in 2012/13. [A further update is currently being undertaken in 2016.](#) This document is available on the Council's website. In relation to the Conservation Area there are three such buildings/[heritage asset](#) identified as being 'At Risk' and another [heritage assetstructure](#) exists elsewhere in the parish. Grant assistance not exceeding £10,000 may be available for necessary works that lead to such buildings' long term security. [Details are available on the Council's web site.](#)

2.15. 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 6). The Local Plan notes that Ware's medieval street pattern is of immense historical and environmental value.

2.16. 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. As currently drafted this emerging District Plan advises that development in Conservation Areas should, inter alia, conform with the content of the Appraisals. In relation to Ware the emerging DP properly advises

that its *unique market town character and the heritage qualities of the town's historic core will be maintained*. It is hoped the production of this Appraisal will assist in achieving that objective.

2.17. Ware Conservation Area was first designated in 1981 and reviewed in 1995.

Part B - APPRAISAL

3. ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1. There are about 200 records within the existing Conservation Area held by the County Archaeologist. Many of these relate to Listed Buildings, some descriptions being included later in this document. To give a flavour of the rich and diverse heritage of Ware the following provide a snapshot of the range and diversity of heritage and history. They are not arranged by date or geography. Spigot Mortar base, bank of New River; Iron Age ditches, Bury Fields; site of almshouses Priory Street (formerly Mill Lane) demolished circa 1960; possible site of Benedictine Priory near St Mary's church; evidence of Roman timber buildings, south of River Lea; Star Brewery by Caleb Hitch 1862, Watton Road; Ware railway station, attributed to Robert Stephenson; New River built by Sir Hugh Myddleton early 1600's; Roman features at Ware Locks, finds include a Roman iron shackle; Late Saxon occupation Baldock Street; Roman burials Buryfield, finds various including hobnails, bronze finger ring and 4 no. stone coffins; Roman cemetery Park Road; foundations to Medieval church and cloisters, The Priory area; Independent chapel Church street, first minister relative by marriage to the poet Shelley; site of Friends Meeting House, Kibes Lane (demolished late 1800's); 19th century gardens, The Priory, use of Pulhamite artificial stone; various gazebos; Site of Monkey Row, Baldock Street roundabout; WW2 Communications and Control post, Ware Museum.

3.2. Most of the general historical information below has been sourced from The Extensive Urban Survey Project Assessment report undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council in conjunction with English Heritage (now Historic England) in 1998. This latter document is available on line to which the reader is referred.

3.3. Prehistoric. There is evidence of habitation from the late Mesolithic period.

3.4. Roman settlement. A scheduled Ancient monument site to the south of the River Lea revealed the alignment of Ermine Street, the Roman Road from London to York. Finds included 4th century Constantinian coins and some first and second century Samian fragments. It is believed a modest Roman town may have straddled Ermine Street and is likely to have had a manufacturing base, including the possible

presence of Roman wharves at Ware Lock. Excavations at the GSK site north of the River Lea identified the Roman road to have had three distinct surfaces with wheel ruts in the topmost. The alignment of Ermine Street at Ware runs slightly north east across GKS sites.

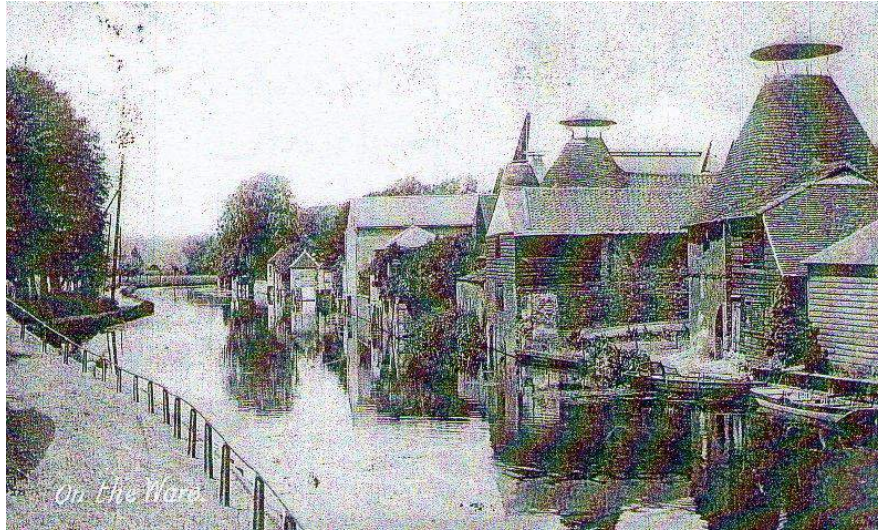
3.5. Anglo Saxon. It is believed there may have been a late Saxon settlement in the Baldock Street area.

3.6. The Domesday Book was a census commissioned by William I in 1086. In relation to Ware it states that the land was that of a Hugh de Grandmesnil who held 24 hides in Ware. *There is land for 38 ploughs. In demense 13 hides and 3 ploughs and there can be another 3. There 38 villans with a priest and the reeve of the vill and with 3 Frenchmen and 2 Englishmen have 2 1/2 ploughs and there are 27 bordars and 12 cottars and 9 slaves. There are 2 mills rendering 24s and 400 eels less 25; and other men have 3 mills rendering 10s a year. Meadow for 20 ploughs, woodland for 400 pigs. There is a park for wild beasts and 4 arpents of vineyard just planted. In all it is worth £45.* Clearly an important settlement in those days. Source: Domesday Book, a complete translation, Alecto Historical Associations Penguin Books 2002.

3.7. Interpretation: A 'Hide' was a standard unit of land measurement interpreted to be about 120 acres. A 'villan' was a peasant legally tied to land he worked on and of higher economic status than a 'bordar' or 'cottar'. The latter occupied a cottage in return for services provided. 'Demesne' essentially means land belonging to the lord of the manor. An arpent was a measure of land, interpretation of its extent varies. A Reeve was similar to a foreman but chosen from the lower ranks.

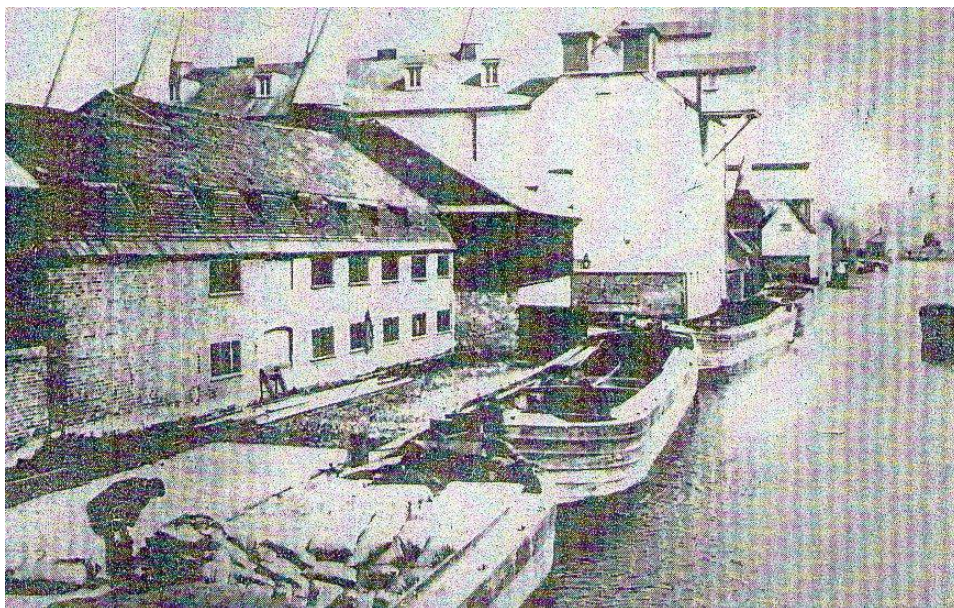
3.8. Medieval settlement. Medieval occupation had moved and was centred around High Street, the Church, the Friary (now called the Priory) and the manorial site (Place House). During this time passing trade and pilgrims travelling the route to Walsingham may have been important. It is believed there were about 20 inns in Ware by the 16th century.

3.9. The Malting industry expanded in the 18th century and in 1788 there were 33 Maltings at Ware. It is reported this number had swelled to about 65 in 1839 making it probably the most important town of this industry in the country. The Malting industry waned in the early part of the 20th century. Other industries included barge building with barges constructed here to carry ammunition to France in WW1. Brick making was also a significant industry and a notable brick maker was Calib Hitch who invented the heavy Hitch brick. Large scale brick works were located south of Park Lane.



Picture 1. Taken from postcard postmarked 1916 entitled On the Ware. Reproduced courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS).

3.10. River transport and the links between town and river have always been important although the roles have altered. At the end of the 19th century river trade was thriving with goods such as malt and bricks being transported to London.



Picture 2. Barge traffic on the river, photo believed to have been taken in the 1920's. Reproduced courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS).

3.11. A picture of the settlement as it can be recognised in part today is set out in Kelly's Directory of 1874 which refers as follows: *Ware is a Market town and head of a union...and station on the Broxbourne and*

Hertford branch of The Great Eastern railway...The town is lighted with gas. A handsome road bridge on the river Lea was erected in 1854. ..The parish church of St Mary the Virgin has undergone complete restoration at a cost of £3,810...The principal trade of the town is malt; there is some brewing, and brick making...Ware is the town to which the Danes, in the reign of Alfred, are said to have brought their vessels...The parish contained a population in 1871 of 5,403. Schools identified were as follows: Ware side - an endowed Grammar school and also a National school. The British school on Star Lane; a National school near the church and a National school on New Road. The Directory lists large numbers of about 300 commercial entries and trades carried out in the town which represented a community of wealth, diversity and self sufficiency.

3.12. Mapping from 1874 -1894 (Plan 1) identifies the location of many of the activities listed above. These include malt houses throughout the town, including a concentration on what is now Burgage Lane; a barge building yard on Star Street; the railway line and station; Water works at Amwell End south of the station; Gas Works north side of Star Street; what are interpreted as being large scale Brick works with associated engine houses south of Park Lane; a very large gravel pit north of Park Lane (now Road); the Ware Union Workhouse and Infirmary. At this time about 15 Gazebos can be seen alongside the river Lea to the south of the High Street.

3.13. Looking at mapping from the early 1920's it is interpreted that the barge building yard and large gravel pit no longer existed by this time and that the brickworks site had been significantly reduced in size, with allotments being located on a large part of it. The railway had expanded with sidings, goods yard and cattle pen. Notably by this time Ware Mills (food and drugs) was established at a large complex on Priory Street, the genesis of what is now GSK. This was clearly a time of significant change but not as dramatic as what later followed with both the ongoing decline of traditional industry and on the other hand an increasing population and economic growth.

3.14. The publication, Place Names of Hertfordshire, Cambridge University Press 1970 advises several names, a selection of which are included thus: Waras (1086), Waer (circa 1150), Warre (1255). May be derived from Old English word translated as modern day weir.

3.15. Plan 1 shows the existing Conservation Area plotted on historic map dating from 1874-1894.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS AND CRITERIA USED TO IDENTIFY OTHER IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

4.1. Scheduled Ancient Monuments. A National designation.

4.2. Areas of Archaeological Significance. Designated locally by EHDC on advice from HCC. The areas identified by this Appraisal include areas as shown either in the adopted Local Plan and/or the emerging District Plan because the identification and refinement of such areas is an ongoing process.

4.3. Listed buildings. A National designation. Individually listed buildings have been identified, plotted and a selected few are briefly described, such abbreviated descriptions being based on the national list, occasionally with additional comments *in italics* by the fieldworker. Full descriptions can be obtained on line at Historic England's website List.HistoricEngland.org.uk Listed buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension.

4.4. In total there are 202 listed buildings/listings in Ware, 180 of which are in the Conservation Area. Most of this 180 are Grade II but 14 are Grade II* and 3 are Grade I. The latter Grade I buildings are St. Mary's Church, The Priory and Place House.

4.5. Most listed buildings date from the 17th century (34%). 21% originate from the 19th century; 19% from the 16th century, 13% from the 18th century and 9% from the 15th century. The 13th/14th and 20th centuries are also represented. In relation to the 20th century there are three such listings namely a K6 telephone box, a plaque at New River and the War Memorial.

4.6. Most of the earlier listed buildings have been modified and altered in subsequent centuries, some many times. It is quite common for early timber framed buildings to have been refaced in later materials and with later facades. A key component of Ware's earlier listed buildings is steeply sloping roofs surfaced with old traditional tiles. Retention of these is key in considering any applications for alterations.

4.7. Buildings within the curtilage of listed buildings. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilage of listed buildings, if they are pre-1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings. The issue of deciding whether or not a building is 'curtilage listed' can sometimes be problematic and there is no exact legal definition of a building's curtilage. The main tests relate to the physical layout of the land surrounding the main building/s at the date of listing, the physical layout and functional relationship of structures to each other; ownership, past and present and use or function, past and present. In determining the extent of a Listed Building and its curtilage, a key assessment will be to examine the situation at the time of listing.

4.8. Non listed buildings of quality and worthy of protection. Such other non-listed buildings and structures that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area are identified by this Appraisal. The basic questions asked in assessing 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 visually important in the street scene?

4.9. Important trees and Hedgerows are identified by this Appraisal. 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.

4.10. Open spaces or gaps of quality that contribute to the visual importance of the Conservation Area where development would be inappropriate are identified by this Appraisal. The basic question asked in identifying such areas is does the open space or gap form 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.

4.11. Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution are identified by this Appraisal. In relation to walls and railings those at and above prescribed heights in a Conservation Area 1m abutting a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway, waterway or open space) or 2m elsewhere, are protected and require permission for their demolition.

4.12. Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions in justified circumstances. The Appraisals undertaken to date have identified that many historic architectural features of quality remain unaltered on some non listed buildings but, on the other hand, the exercise of Permitted Development rights has eroded other parts of some Conservation Areas. Should Members decide to proceed with such an initiative, such important historic detailing including features as identified below could justifiably be retained and inappropriate alterations to them controlled.

- Chimneys, in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property, prominent in the street scene and generally complete with chimney pots.
- Selected windows, on front or side elevations, fronting and visible from the street/s, generally contemporary with the age of the property or of a sympathetic historic design and where the majority of windows of respective elevations retain their original characteristics and have not been replaced by disruptive modern glazing units.
- Other features might include good quality architectural materials and detailing constructed of wood, metal or other materials.
- Walls or railings which make a positive architectural or historic contribution to the visual appearance of the Conservation Area.
- It may also be appropriate to introduce Article 4 Directions to retain quality buildings below the prescribed Permitted Development threshold.

4.13. Features that are out of character with the Conservation Area and detract or are in poor repair are identified.

4.14. Important views are identified.

4.15. Conservation Area boundaries. In suggesting any revisions to the Conservation Area boundaries, principal consideration is 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 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. CHARACTER ANALYSIS.

5.1. General Landscape setting. In terms of its wider setting, the Conservation Area is centrally located within a wider urban area that has a population of about 18,000. Ware's main employer is GSK whose expanding presence is most important to the local economy and beyond. The historic core is well defined with a concentration of ancient buildings, more than 50% of which date from the 16th and 17th centuries. The River Lea and New River are water features in the south of the Conservation area which make a significant contribution to the

visual and recreational qualities of the town. The relationship between river and historic built form is very special and important. A finger of the Lee Valley Regional Park extends into the south east corner of the Conservation Area along the south side of the River Lea.

5.2. For the purposes of this Appraisal the Conservation Area has been divided into four separate geographical Identity areas namely:

Area 1 principally being the central historic core essentially consisting of High Street south to the River Lea, Church Street, part Baldock Street, south part of Crib Street, West Street, East Street and Kibes Lane.

Area 2 principally being south of the River Lea consisting of Amwell End, Broadmeads, Station Road and London Road/Hertford Road, including New River and bounded in the east by Viaduct Road.

Area 3 principally being Collett Road, Musley Hill, High Oak Road, part of Baldock Street, northern part of Crib Street and New Road.

Area 4 principally being centred on Priory Street and Buryfield Recreation Ground, parts of Watton Road and Gladstone Road and bounded by the River Lea in the south.

These Identity Areas together with proposed extensions to the Conservation Area are shown on Plan no. 2.

IDENTITY AREA 1.

5.3. General overview. This central historic core contains a most important concentration of listed buildings and narrow streets such as East Street and West Street, Bluecoat Yard which are visually most attractive. The view overlooking the town from the southern path of the River Lea displaying a number of Gazebos at the waters edge represents an aspect for which Ware is properly famous. The relationship between the river and historic buildings is most important and the water features in their own right make a significant contribution to the quality of the townscape. Some interesting design solutions for modern development have been achieved representing both traditional and contemporary design solutions, respectively including Christopher Court and Swan Mews. However there are some areas that are visually less satisfactory. These include the Tesco store, also an earlier shopping complex at the eastern end of High Street at Bridge Foot and elsewhere Tudor Square for which the Town Council has recently commissioned landscape improvements. There are opportunities for improvements to shop fronts and fascia design which over a long time period and with cooperation between Councils' and shopkeepers and through the development control process could introduce significant improvements.



Picture 3. Christopher Court represents a satisfactory safe and traditional design solution. Its use of materials and surfaces is harmonious and reflects the traditional built form of some elements of its historical neighbours. However there is also a place for more contemporary solutions some would say.



Picture 4. Swan Mews represents a contemporary solution that will not be to every persons taste but history shows with such designs that as time passes appreciation grows.



Pictures 5-6. George Walk rear of High Street and between River Lea in same general location as above two examples. A traditional successful solution with use of traditional materials. Simple but effective design. Very importantly the original surfacing has been retained.



Picture 7. Prominent feature of a converted historic building prominent in the townscape. It is very important that the limited number of such symbols of Ware's past are retained.



Picture 8. The satisfactory integration of large scale commercial premises in relatively small scale historic environments will always be difficult.

5.4. Shop facias. Throughout the town centre including the High Street where the highest concentration of quality listed buildings is located there are examples of poor sign and fascia design that detract. There are District Plan policies relating to shop fronts and advertisements. Whilst the views of the shopkeeper and the planner may appear to differ this should not be the case as both parties have the same general objective of securing the viability of shopping centres which can be achieved in part by creating a high quality environment which attracts new businesses and shoppers. The Council has produced a number of Conservation Area guidance notes including a leaflet on shop fronts which is available on line. A number of Councils elsewhere in the

country have produced similar guidance and it may be worthwhile contacting a selection and exploring this subject further (see below).



Picture 9. Some shop fronts display eye catching displays that many would consider inappropriate to the historic environment. It is not only the individual property that is affected but also its historic neighbours.

5.5. Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are none in Area 1.

5.6. Areas of Archaeological Significance. The whole of the area north of the [River Lea](#) so included on the emerging District Plan.

5.7. Individually Listed Buildings. The total [isn](#) the whole of the Conservation Area has been previously provided. A selection of Listed Buildings, with abbreviated descriptions based on the National list within Area 1 is provided below. One is included on the Councils [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register being no.12 High Street. Any additional comments by the fieldworker are in italics.

5.8. Gazebo, iron gate and railings, rear of 65 - 67 High Street and boundary wall to no. 63 - Grade II. Mid 18th century, restored 1992. Single storey, timber-framed and weatherboarded. Cantled oriel bay window on brackets over river, with weatherboarded spandrel, 3 sash windows with glazing bars, separated by pilasters, moulded wood cornice and lead flat roof. 19th century extension with Welsh slated roof. Weathervane with lurcher dog motif.

5.9. Church of St Mary - Grade I. Parish church. 13th century chancel and transepts, remnants of smaller building, nave rebuilt early 15th century with clerestory, and aisles added, tower at west end circa 1330, 15th century south porch and south chapel, and north chapel, now organ chamber. Restored 1847-9 by George Godwin, who renewed the

stonework of many of the windows, and again in 1886. Fittings: font circa 1380 octagonal, stone, with figures of high relief. Mid 17th century pulpit. The church was badly damaged by storms in autumn 1703.

5.10. No.12 High Street - Grade II. Former maltsters house became shop late 19th century. Front range 3 storeys. First and second floors, 4 sash windows with glazing bars flush-set with exposed boxes, under rubbed flat arches. In the 18th century the house was the home of the Burr family, prominent Quaker maltsters, and the Friends Meeting House (demolished 1889) was directly behind. *This building remains on the Councils [Heritage Buildings](#) at Risk Register. Following recent improvements and restoration and occupation of the ground floor, upper windows appear to be in need of restoration. Need to investigate further.*



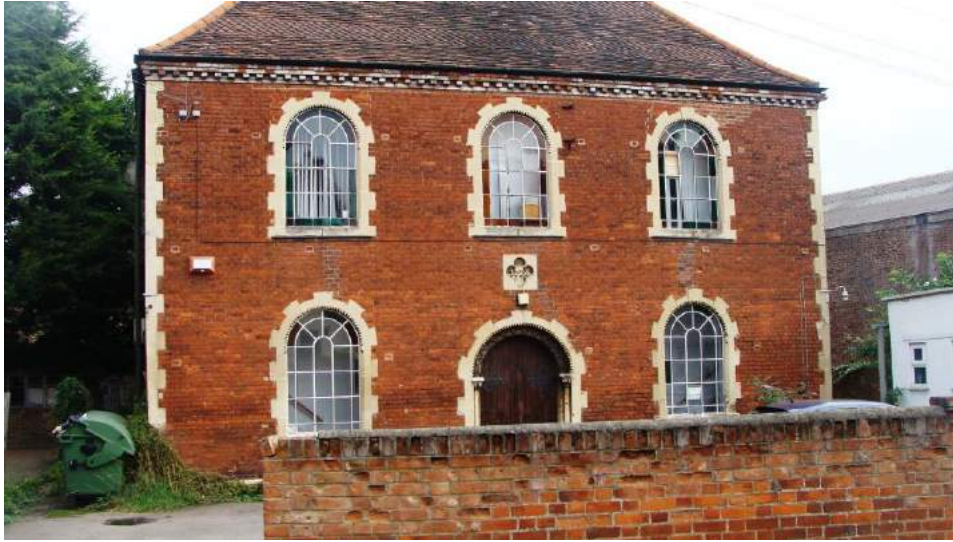
Picture 10. No. 12 High Street. Despite improvements and occupation of ground floor the building remains on the Council's [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register as condition of upper windows needs further investigation.

5.11. Nos. 3-12 Bluecoat Yard - Grade II*. Terrace of 10 houses, all one building, built as 'nurse cottages' for Bluecoat School. Circa 1687-89. Timber-framed, plastered, pebbledashed and colourwashed, old tiled roof above coved plastered eaves cornice, with one gabled casement dormer to each dwelling, 5 red brick chimneys, 2 storeys and attics. Behind each dwelling, and linked in some by a covered passageway, is a single storey continuous range of washhouses, mid 19th century. Christ's Hospital purchased the Bluecoat Yard buildings in November 1685.



Picture 11. 17th century 'nurses cottages' for Bluecoat School.

5.12. No.19 Church Street, former old independent chapel - Grade II. Chapel now subdivided as printing works and offices (*i.e. at the time of listing*). 1778, altered mid 19th century. Dark red brick with both stone dressings and quoins, old tiled roofs, hipped. Bands of fish-scale tiles. Brick dentil cornice. Central entrance with mid 19th century Neo-Norman arched surround with colonnettes and zig zag ornament. Above is stone panel, 19th century bearing date of original construction, 1778. Arched windows with glazing bars and quoin surrounds, and zig zag ornament. Built as Independent Chapel, first Minister, William Goodwin, a radical writer, who became father-in-law to the poet Shelley. The Old Independent Chapel closed in 1918, and was subsequently used as a church hall, Masonic Hall, United Services Club, auction room and printing works. *This building is in a deteriorating condition and it is proposed it should be included on the Council's [Buildings Heritage](#) at Risk Register. Maintain a watching brief. Potentially eligible for grant assistance. Seek to remedy through the planning process.*



Pictures 12-13. The high quality and deteriorating condition of no. 19 Church Street- building recommended for inclusion on the Council's [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register.

5.13. Edward Chuck tomb in west churchyard, Church Street - Grade II. 1852. In the form of a sarcophagus on a stepped plinth, all in Portland stone. Neo-classical design raised on 4 claw feet. Moulded base, coved sides with inscribed panels, overhanging top, with surround of carved leaves, and raised lid. Edward Chuck (1782-1852) was the principal maltster in Ware. For the last 20 years of his life he resided at No.87 High Street. He was killed in a carriage accident. His widow Elizabeth Moore Chuck is also interred in the tomb.



Picture 14. The Edward Chuck tomb in the west churchyard - a fine example of its type and period.

5.14. Ware Library - Grade II*. Former dwelling, now public library. Mid and late 18th with 19/20 century alterations. Hipped old tiled roof. Lead rainwater head on SE corner of 3 storey building dated 1827 with initials EC, Edward Chuck. The building stands on the historic site of The Crown Inn, demolished circa 1765 at which time it housed the Great Bed*. The present building represents a fine example of the house of a prosperous maltster, embellished with fashionable decorative features over the years. It was the home of Edward Chuck, and Henry Page, two of the town's most prosperous maltsters. *See previous entry regarding Edward Chuck's tomb. *The Great Bed of Ware is referenced in Shakespeare's 12th Night. It is rumoured that 26 butchers and their wives slept in the bed for a night to honour a wager! The bed is now in the Victoria and Albert museum.*

5.15. No. 2 West Street - Grade II*. Part mid/late 13th century, timber-framed, front bay rebuilt 18th century. Stuccoed, old tiled roof edged with Welsh slate. Surviving framing includes an open roof truss. Based on the typology of the truss, and the use of notched lap dovetail joints, a date of circa 1260 has been suggested. The smoke-blackened rafters indicate that the building was initially open to the roof, and it may have functioned as a kitchen, rather than an open hall. The front of the building was rebuilt in the early 18th century. *Description included because of its early origin.*

5.16. War Memorial - Grade II. 1921. Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield. Portland stone memorial, incorporating central 'cross of sacrifice', with octagonal shaft and arms, with bronze sword fixed to face.



Picture 15. The prominent and centrally located War Memorial, erected 1921.

5.17. Nos. 96 - 96A High Street, Rear elevation to West Street. Listed bBuildings in deteriorating conditions. Source owners and seek their co operation in carrying out remedial works. Dependant on further investigation they may be candidates for the Council's BuildingsHeritage at Risk Register.



Picture16. Nos.96 - 96A High Street facing onto Tudor Square. Remedial works required.

5.18. Nos. 77- 79 High Street, rear elevations. Listed buildings in deteriorating conditions. This issue was identified through the consultation process. The area is generally untidy and some

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deterioration of old tiled roofs was particularly noted. However an application relating to No.77 involving the conversion of the listed building with additional limited enabling development should partly resolve this issue once implemented. It may act as a catalyst to further improvements rear of No. 79. In interim source owner and seek co-operation in undertaking necessary remedial works. Maintain a watching brief.

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5.189. Leaside Methodist Church and United Reform Church, Leaside Walk - Grade II. Built as The Independent Chapel 1816, rebuilt as the Congregational Church 1858-1859. Brick with stone window surrounds, south facade coursed limestone rubble with ashlar limestone dressings, bands, quoins and ornamental window and door surrounds, Welsh slated roofs. Interior: Roof over church has exposed tie-beam trusses, braced below from corbels, with queen posts, king post, curved braces, collar and struts, supporting 3 purlins. Principal rafters, and curved bracing exposed beneath boarded ceiling. Historical note: the Independent Chapel was established by a dissenting group from the Old Independent Chapel in Church Street in 1811, and their first chapel opened 5 years later. The 1859 rebuilding was financed to half the cost by Joseph Chuck of Widbury House, a leading Ware maltster.



Pictures 17-18. Internal detailing - Leaside Methodist Church.

5.1920. Important buildings within the curtilages of Listed Building. One has been identified in Area 1. However the fieldworker has not examined the rear areas of the complex of listed buildings in great detail particularly in relation to some areas rear of the High Street, East Street and West Street. In part this was because access to some areas was not available at the time of survey. The detailed processing of future applications may reveal other such buildings. Leaside Church Hall. Interpreted as being in the curtilage of Leaside Methodist Church and United Reform Church, the latter being a grade II listed building. Stone detailing and window surrounds. Prominent central entrance. Slate roof.

5.20. Leaside Church Hall. Interpreted as being in the curtilage of Leaside Methodist Church and United Reform Church, the latter being a grade II listed building. Stone detailing and window surrounds. Prominent central entrance. Slate roof.



Picture 19. Leaside Church Hall a good quality building of its type.

5.21. Other non listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. This Appraisal identifies other buildings of high quality that are not listed but that should be retained. These principally date from the 19th century and are an important element in the high environmental quality of the Conservation Area and make a contribution to its built form and historical evolution. Any Important architectural features they possess and worthy of retention are identified.

5.22. Ware Neighbourhood Police Station and Hertfordshire Social Care, Entrance to Burgage Lane. Two storey, principally of brick construction with tiled roof. Early door detailing being entrance to the old Fire Station? Opportunities for repainting/ refurbishment. Repairs to

window/door frames. Modest expenditure and the introduction of a coordinated colour painting scheme could secure significant visual improvements to this building fronting a public car parking space. Detail administered by existing planning controls.



Picture 20. Simple building identified on modern mapping as being 'The Old Fire Station' that should be retained. Some coordinated repainting/refurbishment would be beneficial.

5.23. Group of buildings in various non residential uses, St Mary's Courtyard. Late 19th century in appearance and interpreted as having been part of former school complex that occupied the site. Flint and brick construction with tiled roofs and chimneys. Many good quality original features including fine stone window detailing to no.1 St. Mary's Court. Later plaque commemorating restoration in mid 1980's. As buildings are in commercial use retention of detail administered by normal development control.



Picture 21. Fine window detailing interpreted as being originally part of 19th century National School that existed on this site.

5.24. Andrew Pharmacy and The Lodge - High Street. Interesting range of commercial properties to ground floor, 19/20 century in appearance. Complex tiled roof structure with tall brick chimneys, some decorative ridge tiles. Oriel window detailing including circular corner detailing and turret. An unusual grouping worthy of retention. A more co-ordinated and sympathetic facia design would be most beneficial. Retention of commercial and ancillary use detail administered by normal development control.



Picture 22. Interesting commercial premises High Street where a more coordinated shopfront and facia design would be most beneficial to the townscape.

5.25. No. 92 High Street - Wok u Like. A tall building with early window detailing to first and second floors. Bay windows to first floor. In some respects a mediocre building but bay windows features worthy of retention. In need of repairs but as it is not listed it is not a candidate for the Council's [Buildings Heritage](#) at Risk Register. However the owner's cooperation in undertaking necessary repairs should be sought.



Picture 23. A prominent shop in the High Street in urgent need of restoration and improvement. The dominant nature of the fascia detracts.

5.26. Surgery building - West Street. Of red/yellow brick construction with slate roof; central plaque inscribed BCB 1879.

5.27. Former Sorting Office - south side High Street. Ground floor now Saffron Walden Building Society offices. Red brick façade above with two ranges of early/original vertical sliding sash windows with central three to first floor having semi circular red brick arched detailing.



Picture 24. Former sorting office, now ground floor occupied by Saffron Walden Building Society. A good quality non listed building of late 19th/early 20th century appearance that contributes to the quality of the street scene with features that should be retained via normal planning control.

5.28. National Westminster Bank - south side High Street. Good quality window detailing. Façade late 19th/early 20th century in appearance. Fieldworker unable to make any further observations due to scaffolding and plastic sheeting obscuring view of structure at time of survey. However despite this, the building is clearly of quality with architectural features worthy of retention.

5.29. Commercial properties (Bailey Gomm) to rear of High Street. A range of commercial properties constructed of brick tiled roof and some weather boarding. Presumed to be former 19th century malt houses,

whose historic presence and linear form dominated this area. Distinctive gate providing access to the river Lea beyond.



Pictures 25-26. Former Maltings buildings linked by distinctive archway and gate, providing access to river Lea beyond, probably of 19th century date.

5.30. Ware Dental building - Star Street. Tall narrow painted brick two storey late 19/early 20th century building with slate roof chimneys with pots. Adds to quality of the street scene in this location and identified to be included within the Conservation Area.



Picture 27. Ware Dental building Star Street, a small extension to the Conservation Area is proposed to include this building.

5.31. Nos. 5 - 10 Leaside Walk. Group of two storey yellow brick with tiled roof. Probably early 20th century. Common window and door detailing throughout. Later porch additions but to common design. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.32. Nos. 22 - 24 Church Street. -19th century of earlier. Rendered two storey building with dormers in slate mansard roof. Vertical sliding sash window detailing to common design. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 28. Nos 22 - 24 Church Street. An interesting building whose common window design to ground and first floors is harmonious.

5.33. Nos. 14 - 15 Bluecoat Yard. Two storey cottages of early 20th century date of yellow brick construction with slate roof and chimneys with pots. Early/original windows. Original street lamp attached? An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 29. Early 20th century pair of cottages - Bluecoat Yard, -worthy of retention adding to the general visual and historic interest of this most important area.

5.34. AJ's Pet Store corner of East Street/New Road. Small 19/20th century commercial building with slate roof. Provides a different style and scale in comparison with adjoining listed properties on East Street, thus adding interest and diversity to the street scene in this location.



Picture 30. Small scale commercial building whose different scale and historic detailing adds visual interest and diversity to the street scene.

5.35. Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution. Walls and railings so identified are protected to varying degrees virtue of exceeding specified height relevant to the Conservation Area legislation or by being within the curtilage of a Listed Building unless otherwise noted.

5.36. Impressive tall red brick wall to west of no. 87 High Street forming boundary with The Priory.



Picture 31. Tall red brick wall to west of no. 87 High Street forming boundary with The Priory.

5.37. Contemporary bridge over river inscribed with maker's name, Tubewrights Ltd. Newport Mon.



Picture 32. Fine contemporary footbridge. Modern architectural solutions certainly can be appropriate in an historic location.

5.38. Tall wall approximately 3m in height to south of George Walk, rear of High Street and between River Lea.

5.39. Red brick wall less than 2m in height between High Street and River Lea and to west of no. 27a. If considered within curtilage of a listed building it is thus protected.

5.40. Boundary walls to Tesco car park. Two walls forming northern and eastern boundaries to car park. Of red brick construction height varies some being below 2m and thus unprotected; some above 2m. Rebuilt in places. An important enclosing feature. Judicial removal of selected vegetation may be appropriate. Consideration for additional protection via an Article 4 Direction is an option available for consideration.

5.41. Important Open Spaces. Western churchyard - an important open space flanked by War Memorial and containing listed tomb to Edward Chuck. (See picture above).

5.42. Tudor Square. An important central square. A rather desolate paved area in a key location in the historic core. It is understood the Town Council have commissioned a landscaping scheme; one the fieldworker agrees is much needed.

5.43. Malt makers Garden (Margaret Davenport Garden of Remembrance). This garden provides an important and pleasant open space with seating in a key location. It is maintained by the District Council who perhaps might consider whether further improvements can be achieved.



Picture 33. What is the general opinion of the quality of this important open space in a key historic location?

5.44. Main churchyard. A fine open space providing a setting for one of the principle historic buildings in the town. A formal avenue of Lime trees traditional to churchyards adds real quality. The area adjacent to Church Street requires some attention including the permanent removal of self set sycamores. In landscape terms the presence of Rose bushes is questioned on two counts. Firstly there is the issue of high maintenance and incidence of a large weed presence in their earth beds. Secondly there is a question mark about the visual contribution they make to the essential open nature of the churchyard. Perhaps when they reach the end of their lives thought can be given as to the wisdom of replacing them.



Picture 34. Rose bushes in the churchyard. Would not a simpler and easier solution be to replace them and problematic earth beds (seasonally weedy) [seeded](#) with grass at their eventual demise?

5.45. Former Quaker burial ground Kibes Lane. This is an important open space located between two areas of car parking. It is laid out in a formal manner with good quality seating provided by the Ware Society. However it lacks a sense of enclosure and the rather bedraggled boundary hedging does not formally define the edge in a fitting manner. It is suggested landscape advice be sought. Also small area of open space with trees, corner Kibes Lane/Bowling Road.



Picture 35. Former Quaker burial ground - Kibes Lane. It is considered this generally attractive and historically important open space lacks a sense of enclosure and could be improved by a more satisfactory and effective boundary treatment.

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5.46. Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Those trees that are most important are shown very diagrammatically on the accompanying plans. Trees on the banks of the River Lea, within St Mary's churchyard are particularly important.

5.47. Important views. A selection is shown on accompanying plans.

5.48. Elements out of character with the Conservation Area. Upper windows to no. 12 High Street located on a building entered on the Council's [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register - further investigation needed. No. 19 Church Street - important Listed Building in decline - recommend its inclusion on the Council's [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register - untidy site - potentially eligible for grant assistance. Poor condition to front elevation to no. 92 High Street - Wok u Like. Poor condition to rear elevation of listed building 96 - 96A High Street (see photos above in respective sections). [Poor condition to rear elevations of listed buildings No.77 and No. 79 High Street.](#)

5.49. Strategic corner east end of High Street /Bridge Foot. A poor quality mid 20th century development with car park to rear located in a key historic location backing on to the river. It detracts from the high quality neighbouring buildings. Perhaps the identification of this site in the Appraisal may generate interest for appropriate redevelopment.





Pictures 36-37. Modern mid 20th century development in strategic historic location at east end of High Street whose scale and quality detracts. Should there be future interest in redevelopment great care will need to be exercised in achieving a satisfactory design solution.

5.50. Sites south side of Star Street including Ware Bathroom Centre and adjacent building including Beds to Go etc. The Bathroom Centre building has a more recent extension to the rear but this aside, the remainder of these buildings are visually unattractive with their shallow pitched roofs and advertising. The area in whole or part could be a candidate for future redevelopment.



Picture 38. Large commercial site south side of Star Street which detracts from the quality of the Conservation Area and which may be a suitable candidate for future redevelopment.

5.51. Modern 20th century telephone kiosk - car park area corner Kibes Lane/New Road. Telephone kiosk in poor condition and of poor appearance. Missing glass panel. It should either be repaired or if not in active use, consideration given to its removal.



Picture 39. Modern 20th century telephone kiosk, vandalised and in poor condition. Its repair or removal if no longer in active use recommended.

5.52. Poor quality wall forming northern boundary to EHDC car Park, Kibes Lane/New Road. Consider options to make improvements.

5.53. Opportunities to secure improvements. Minor improvements and coordinated repainting scheme of elements of The Old Fire Station building etc., Burgage Lane. Improvements needed to land and building at no. 19 Church Street. Improvements to various shopfront facias in the main central commercial areas. Improvements to rear elevation of [Nos. 96- 96A High Street](#) [and Nos. 77 and 79 High Street](#). Repair/ remove telephone kiosk corner of Kibes Lane/ New Road. Consider options to improve poor quality wall northern boundary to EHDC car park, Kibes Lane/New Road.

5.54. Facias and shop fronts. As a general principle throughout principal commercial area consider means of securing improvements to facia and signage improvements to commercial premises. Options available are consideration of best practice nationally, enhance existing leaflet on 'shopfronts', involve local community and increase awareness both of the commercial sector and the public decision making bodies.

5.55. Suggested boundary changes. In Identity Area 1 it is proposed to Include Ware Dental building, no. 6 Star Street, as this building is considered to make a positive visual contribution at this entrance point to the Conservation Area.

5.56. Other actions. Consider long term future of rose bushes in churchyard. Inform Historic England regarding inaccurate plotting on their system of Place House.

IDENTITY AREA 2.

5.57. General overview. Bounded by the River Lea, Viaduct Road and London Road, Area 2 at the southern extremity of the Conservation Area is characterised by a grouping of listed buildings on the east side of Amwell End and others on Station Road and London Road. New River and its associated historic railings are features of significant environmental value. The area is traversed east to west by the main railway line. There are areas of other development some of which are best described as being neutral in quality, an extensive car parking area at Broadmeads and a large open unkempt low lying field at the junction of London Road and Viaduct Road. The latter area is a gateway to the Conservation Area and perhaps more generally to the town. There are many features which contribute to the quality of the Conservation Area and many opportunities to initiate further improvements which are referred to below.

5.58. Within Area 2 there are several modern developments and conversions which the fieldworker considers to be most appropriate.



Picture 40. Successful conversion of non listed Ware Flour Mills buildings corner of Amwell End and Viaduct Road. The visual impact of modern window detailing is limited and works relatively well because of its repetitive design.

5.59. Commercial buildings on the western side of Amwell End are modern and in combination they make little or no visual contribution to the Conservation area. In addition to the condition of some individual buildings referred to below there is a lack of co-ordination in the shop front and fascia designs. In relation to shop fronts and fascia design there are proposals set out in the Management Section to which the reader is referred. As a whole Amwell End would benefit from general environmental improvement. In this respect it may be appropriate to consider obtaining the views of a landscape consultant.



Picture 41. The whole of Amwell End would benefit from general improvements. This is particularly the case in respect of the western side which is composed of later ranges of properties.

5.60. Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are none in Area 2.

5.61. Areas of Archaeological Significance. Most of Area 2 is so designated, the exceptions being the low lying field at the junction of London Road /Viaduct Road and an area to the west of Amwell End. The designation as shown is that as identified on the emerging District Plan.

5.62. Individually Listed Buildings. The total in the whole of the Conservation Area has been previously provided. A selection of Listed Buildings with abbreviated descriptions based on the National list within Area 2 is provided below. One of these, 19 Amwell End, is considered to be 'at risk'. Many listed buildings are located on the east side of Amwell End and many date from the 17th century. Any additional comments by the fieldworker are in italics.

5.63. Bridge over New River on north side of Hertford Road - Grade II. One of a series of prefabricated bridges over the New River. 1817 Formed of cast-iron girders, with perforated spandrels, ornamental keystones with date inscribed New River Co, 'Priestfield Iron Works near Bilston' (Staffordshire). This bridge now carries a flat concrete slab for the roadway. *Surface vegetation should be removed and the structure examined to assess its stability and integrity.*



Picture 42. Vegetation on surface to listed bridge Hertford Road in need of removal. It is hoped it remains structurally sound?

5.64. Amwell House, Hertford Regional College, Hertford Road - Grade II*. Formerly known as: Ware Grammar School for Girls now part of Hertford Regional College. Early 18th century, extended circa 1740, remodelled late 19th century, altered 1973 when wings truncated for road widening. Red and plum coloured brick with cherry red dressings, Flemish Bond. Welsh slate gabled roof, hipped Welsh slate roofs. Historical note. Amwell House identified with residence of John Scott (1730-83), the Quaker poet, from circa 1750 to his death. His father, Samuel Scott, moved to Amwell in 1740, and may have built the west wing. He reputedly paid for improving the Amwell to Hertford Road which passes the house, and later came under the Cheshunt Turnpike Trust. After Scott's death, his daughter remained in the house until 1863. Acquired by the Tite family, the interior was embellished in the late 19th century. In 1906 the house became the Ware Girl's Grammar School,

5.65. Railings north side of London Road - Grade II. Mid 19th century. Cast-iron railings forming southern boundary to New River Company land, running along back of footpath, north side of London Road. Standard pattern of railing with pointed shafts in lengths between square uprights, with acorn finials, and curved braces, set on cast-iron saddleback copings, and a yellow-brown stock brick base with buttresses. *(There is a similar grouping of listed railings nearby and to the west alongside Hertford Road).*



Picture 43. Fine listed railings believed to be owned by Thames Water which make a very positive contribution to this part of the Conservation Area.



Picture 44. Detail of railings some of which are in need of repair and or repainting. In some areas removal of self set sycamores would be beneficial.

5.66. Main Goods Shed at Ware Railway Station, Station Road. (*now converted to residential - The Carriages*) Grade II. Former railway goods shed incorporating granary. Mid 19th century. Main front of 9 bays: semicircular windows set back under round gauged brick arches, alternate with high-level rectangular windows with glazing bars set in the top of tall recessed panels under camber bricked arches, each with a parapet above. Simple brick eaves cornice.



Picture 45. Former Goods Station now most satisfactorily converted.



Picture 46. Surface detail adjacent to former Goods Station - a small but important detail.

5.67. Weight Restriction Plaque, New River - Grade II. Weight restriction plaque. Circa 1908. Lozenge-shaped cast-iron plaque bolted to timber post attached to railings, (north of Hertford Road) to give warning of weight limits on adjacent bridge. Raised lettering records that the plaque was erected by the Metropolitan Water Board to advise of weight limits under the Motor Car Acts, 1896 and 1908, three tons registered axle weight, or aggregate axle weights of five tons.



Picture 47. Most interesting and unusual listed weight restriction plaque.

5.68. Amwell End Pumping Station - Grade II. Pumping station, circa 1867 with 20th century alterations. The earliest pumping station to be erected on the New River was at Amwell Hill in 1847, followed by Amwell End in 1867. The latter consists of an Italianate single T-shaped building, in yellow-brown stock brick, with a Welsh slated roof. Pediment gables to ends of cross-wing, eaves cornice, and building terminates in a low square tower, with one semicircular headed tall small paned window in each side, below brick band, cornice and parapet concealing roof.

5.69. The Drill Hall Amwell End - Grade II. Built in 1899, with late 20th century alterations. Designed by Vivian Young of Westminster and built by J Simpson and Son of Paddington. Built of brick with a slate roof. It

has a roughly rectangular plan and can be divided into two distinct parts: a front section providing ancillary accommodation and the drill hall behind. The drill hall is formed by elliptical cross-braced iron girders and is of a particularly elegant and unusual design. History: the idea of building a drill hall in Ware came initially from Dr A J Boyd who was also concerned with the unsanitary slum conditions of the narrow yards and courts in Amwell End, which he wished to see demolished. Money for the clearance of 27 cottages and the building of the drill hall was provided by Edmund Smith Hanbury, who was the grandson and heir of Robert Hanbury, a wealthy brewer and evangelical churchman who had previously financed the building of a Mission Hall, which once stood on the west side of Amwell End.

5.70. Chadwell Lodge. Mid 19th century stone-built, with squared, coursed rubble, and ashlar plat band, window surrounds and quoins. Broad-eaved Welsh-slated roof with moulded fascias and barge boards. Elaborate stone chimneys.



Picture 48. Chadwell Lodge an unusual mid 19th century building.

5.71. No.19 Amwell End - Grade II. 18th century front to earlier building, 20th century alterations. Stucco, with plat band at second floor level and moulded cornice, parapet partly conceals corrugated asbestos roof. 3 storeys, 2 sash windows, with divided glazing, and horns, on first floor; 2 sash windows, with small panes on second floor, all recessed with concealed boxes, within stucco reveals. Modern shopfront on ground floor. *This building is in poor condition and included on the Council's [Buildings Heritage at Risk Register](#).*



Picture 49. No.19 Amwell End, a building in need of repair and occupation and one that is included on the Council's [Buildings Heritage](#) at Risk Register.

5.72. Important buildings within the curtilages of Listed Building. None have been identified in Area 2. However the fieldworker has not examined the rear areas of the complex of listed buildings at Amwell End where the detailed processing of future applications may reveal such buildings.

5.73. Other non listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. This Appraisal identifies other buildings of high quality that are not listed but that should be retained. These principally date from the late 19th early 20th century and are an important element in the high environmental quality of the Conservation Area and make a contribution to its built form and historical evolution. Any Important architectural features they possess and worthy of retention are identified.

5.74. The Maltings Surgery. Simple rendered three storey commercial building with slate roof and central chimney. Three range early window detailing. Building contributes to the variety of the street scene. Features protected by existing controls.

5.75. Station Building. 19th century yellow brick with slate roof and 2 no. chimneys with pots. Platform area with wooden canopy above supported by 6 no. decorative metal supports. An important building

representative of the town's industrial heritage and diversity. Features protected by existing controls.



Picture 50. 19th century station part of the industrial heritage of the town. Canopy and cast iron supports are typical.

5.76. No. 18 London Road. Simple two storey rendered building with slate roof and tall chimney probably dating from the late 19th century. Modern windows. Despite this the building adds to the quality and diversity of the street scene and is worthy of retention.

5.77. Converted 19th century Maltings buildings, Hoe Lane - now used as Fitness Club. A number of original features add considerably to the quality of the roofscape in this location. Others however, such as a repetitive series of roof lights are less satisfactory.

5.78. Converted Ware Flour Mill buildings - Viaduct Road. A good and successful conversion to flats. In respect of the latter normal planning controls over detailed features exists. Retention of original lettering most satisfactory (see previous illustration).

5.79. Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution. Walls and railings so identified are protected to varying degrees virtue of exceeding specified height relevant to the Conservation Area legislation or by being within the curtilage of a Listed Building unless otherwise noted.

5.80. Boundary metal railings west side Viaduct Road and north bank of New River. The low railings less than 1m in height abutting road or waterway (and so exempt from Conservation Area control relating to demolition) are assumed to date from the late 19th/early 20th century and are of robust construction and are of environmental merit and historic interest. Their extent (both within and beyond the Conservation Area)

makes them features of considerable visual interest and add to the environmental quality of New River. Constructed of horizontal rails supported by metal posts. Several sections are in need of repair and removal of vegetation. Careful consideration needs to be given as to the potential of making them subject to an Article 4 Direction. However in the first instance the issue should be discussed with the owners who are believed to be Thames Water. Ideally an incremental ongoing programme of maintenance repair and repainting needs agreeing.



Picture 51. Low railings less than 1m in height and thus unprotected from demolition within the Conservation Area. Potential candidates for formal protection by Article 4 Direction. Need to remove vegetation repair and repaint. In first instance need to discuss issue with Thames Water if indeed they are the owners.

5.81. Yellow brick wall South side of London Road. Approximately 2m in height. Probably of late 19th/early 20th century date. Together with fine conifer and trees of other species to the south it forms an interesting historic and visually important feature at this gateway entrance to Ware.

5.82. 19th century three bay bridge carrying Viaduct Road over railway line.

5.83. Important Open Spaces. Low lying field untended and unkempt and not in agricultural use. Junction London Road/ Viaduct Road. The

field can be regarded as a gateway to Ware in this location and is properly designated as Green Belt. It is bounded by a hedge and tree screen on Viaduct Road and by fencing and New River on London Road. It is not known if the field is subject to flooding. The area is surrounded by modern neutral development beyond the Conservation Area which heightens its importance as an open space that should remain as such.

5.84. It would be of considerable benefit if the site could be improved and landscaped appropriately. Ideal if it could be made accessible for to the public. Resolution of this issue is regarded as being most important and discussions with the owners who are believed to be Thames Water would be an essential first step.



Picture 52. Low lying field junction London Road/ Viaduct Road. It is most important this field remains as open land and its visual appearance improved. Public access would be a real bonus.

5.85. New River and parallel open space, north of Hertford Road and south of railway line. Important landscape feature called New River Path. Display board need cleaning.



Picture 53. New River Path, an important open space of considerable visual quality.

5.86. Wildlife sites. The eastern extremity of a narrow finger of the Meads Wildlife site intrudes into the western part of the Conservation Area.

5.87. Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Those trees that are most important are shown very diagrammatically on the accompanying plans. Of particular note are conifer and other species proposed for inclusion within the Conservation Area between London Road and Grange Gardens. Elsewhere trees alongside New River, the River Lea and Viaduct Road are also important.

5.88. Important views. A selection as shown on accompanying plans.

5.89. Elements out of character with the Conservation Area. The poor condition of no. 19 Amwell End (picture above). Vegetation on listed bridge, Hertford Road (picture above).

5.90. Temporary building on EHDC car park. This temporary structure detracts to a degree and its continued future needs consideration. In the short term some repainting is required.



Picture 54. Temporary structure on EHDC car park Broadmeads which detracts. Should be removed or replaced. As a short term measure it needs repainting.

5.91. Prefabricated buildings for Scouts and Air Training Corps. This group of buildings both within and beyond the Conservation Area detracts from the quality of the area. The long term future of this site is unknown but it might represent a redevelopment opportunity.



Picture 55. Prefabricated buildings (Scouts and Air Training Corps) Broadmeads. This site detracts from the quality of the Conservation Area and needs improvement.

5.92. In addition to the overall and generally less than satisfactory appearance of Amwell End there is an unoccupied building centrally located on the western side that detracts and one in particular at the end of north western corner overlooking the River Lea. As previously suggested it may be appropriate to seek the advice of a landscape consultant to devise a schedule of improvements.



Picture 56. Poor quality building at strategic north western corner of Amwell End whose appearance seriously detracts from the Conservation Area.

5.93. Information board relating to Gazebos. Corner of Amwell End/River Lea. This most informative and interesting information board is currently was thought to be suffering from damp penetration which needs resolving-but the Ware Society advise this is not moisture ingress but the effect of background shading of the main drawing.

5.94. Vandalised notice board containing no information. Consider its removal.



Picture 57. Vandalised information Board that probably should be removed unless it is to be refurbished.

5.95. David Collier Autos - corner Amwell End/Station Road. A vehicle sales area where an accumulation of parked cars is visually disruptive. Do some of the parked vehicles intrude onto the highway?



Picture 58. David Collier Auto site. Does this site have a more visually acceptable long term alternative ? Are the cars intruding onto public highway space?

5.96. Display board at New River Path. Informative display board needs improvement/replacement. Damp penetration?



Picture 59. Information Board on New River Path in need of improvement/replacement.

5.97. Opportunities to secure improvements. Enter negotiations with Thames Water and consider initiating repairs to a number of identified railings adjacent to New River. Similarly discuss with Thames Water condition of listed bridge on Hertford Road and removing vegetation. Source owner of no.19 Amwell End and seek improvements to property sufficient to remove from Council's [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register. Consider future of prefabricated buildings and site at Broadmeads occupied by Scouts and Air Training Corps. Consider opportunities for general visual improvements to Amwell End. Consider respectively improving and or removing 2 no. information boards corner of Amwell End, River Lea. Also notice board, New River Path. Improve site corner of Amwell End, Station Road.

5.98. **Suggested boundary changes.** Councils have a responsibility to ensure such areas justify Conservation Area status and are not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

5.99. In Area 2 it is proposed to extend the Conservation Area to remove ambiguity relating to the status of the wall (i.e. is it [currently](#) in or beyond the Conservation Area) and to include an area of trees of conifer and other species between London Road and Grange Gardens. Both the boundary wall and trees to the south represent an important feature at this gateway entrance to Ware whose protection by Conservation Area status is justified.



Picture 60. Fine wall and trees proposed for inclusion within the Conservation Area at this London Road gateway entrance to the town.

5.100. **Other actions.** Inform Historic England that listed building 'Station Hotel' is wrongly plotted on their system.

IDENTITY AREA 3

5.101. **General overview.** Principally being Collett Road, Musley Hill, High Oak Road, part of Baldock Street, northern part of Crib Street and New Road. Within this northern part of the Conservation Area there is only a scattering of listed buildings most notable of which is the former Ware Union Workhouse off Collett Road. A large central part of Area 3 consists of neutral quality 20th century buildings of limited architectural or historic interest in which location there formerly existed many groups of 19th century Malshouses. However elsewhere there are concentrations of later non listed buildings of considerable architectural and historic interest dating from the late 19th/ early 20th century. Such

concentrations are located along New Road, the south part of Milton Road and Coronation Road areas.

5.102. *Scheduled Ancient Monuments* There are none in Area 3.

5. 103. *Areas of Archaeological Significance*. Most of Area 3 is so designated.

5. 104. *Individually Listed Buildings*. The total [isn](#) the whole of the Conservation Area has been previously provided. A selection of Listed Building abbreviated descriptions within Area 3, based on the National list is provided below. Any additional comments by the fieldworker are in italics.

5.105. Christ Church, New Road - Grade II. Anglican church. Constructed 1858- 59 to serve new parish east of New Road. Architect Nehemiah Edward Stevens of Tunbridge Wells. Kentish Ragstone squared coursed rubble, with Bath stone dressings and windows, Welsh slated roof. Early English style.

5.106. Boundary wall and gate to Christ Church, New Road - Grade II. Embattled and buttressed wall, with offset caps and splayed copings. 1858. Kentish ragstone. Sections of cast-iron railing originally filled embrasures, but were removed for salvage in World War II. In need of repair.



Picture 61. Mid 19th century boundary wall to Christ Church in need of repair.

5.107. Western House, Collett Road - Grade II. Former workhouse of the Ware Poor Law Institution, now flats. 1839-40, now converted to flats 1993-4. Designed by Brown & Herman (London). Stucco front block has Welsh slated roof behind parapet. Single storey with plinth, frieze and cornice. Central pedimented portico has outer Doric pillars flanking

Greek Ionic columns, all on plinth broken by central flight of steps. *The 1897-1898 mapping shows two pumps and a well within the complex and an Infirmary for infectious diseases to the North east. Now called The Old Boardroom and The Octagon.*



Picture 62. Western House (The Old Boardroom and Octagon) former workhouse originally with attached infirmary for infectious diseases.

5.108. Thunder Hall and boundary wall, Wadesmill Road - Grade II. Late 17th century, extended later and converted to flats 1972. Architect John Snellgrove Associates for 1850-52 remodelling, George Godwin. Interior: Fireplace in south-east room on ground floor contains mid 19th century arched fireplace, with marble tablet inscribed 'This marble from the room in which the Emperor Napoleon died was brought from St Helena by Capt. Amb. Fred. Proctor, AD 1833'. Grounds and land to north altered by modern residential development of Thundercourt in early 1970s, extinguishing original road access from The Bourne. Boundary wall to Wadesmill Road partly in red and yellow Hitch patent brickwork, with Hitch coping bricks. *The exterior of the building appears in poor condition in several locations and in need of refurbishment. A potential candidate for the Council's [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register. Vegetation should be removed from the listed wall.*



Picture 63. Thunder Hall, Wadesmill Road - a listed building in need of renovation and potential candidate for the Council's [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register.

5.109. Maltings and Kibes Lane Art Centre, New Road - Grade II. Range of 3 large maltings. Early 19th century with modern alterations. Yellow-grey stock brickwork, Flemish bond, part colour washed and part rendered. Roof of corrugated asbestos to N and S range. 3 storeys. Each malting has 3 floors, and 3 double kilns, and malt stores at east end. The South range, converted to an art centre, has cast-iron circular tie plates, by 'Chas. Wells Ware'. *The north maltings has now been converted to residential use, the central building presently remains in commercial use and the south maltings is being marketed. The future use of the southern Maltings building is a matter of concern for some residents of the town. The fieldworker has not undertaken an internal inspection and cannot comment on its condition. However the illustration below shows its poor visual appearance when viewing its northern elevation.*



Picture 64. Original surface to Maltings access which is important to retain.



Picture 65. South Maltings building whose future use is a matter of concern to some residents. The visual appearance of the building and its surrounds are less than satisfactory. It is hoped an acceptable use can be found which results in its significantly enhanced visual appearance.



Picture 66. North Maltings now converted to residential use.

5.110. Milestone in verge east of Fire Station, Baldock Street - Grade II. Circa 1810-1820. Erected by Cheshunt Turnpike Trust. Cast-iron with semicircular top, and splayed faces. Raised lettering, 'Ware Parish', 'Wadesmill 2' 'London 21'. Appears to have been resited back from its original position in 1960's road widening. *This milestone marker is on the Council's [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register and is in need of repair. The iron work of the top panel is punctured and rusty in part.*

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Picture 67. 19th century milestone on Baldock Street that is of early transportation interest and in need of repair.

5.111. Important buildings within the curtilages of Listed Building.

Several have been identified in Area 3 assumed to be within the curtilage of Christ Church. However the detailed processing of future individual applications may reveal other such buildings.

5.112. Frontage building Christ church C of E Primary School. Identified as School on mid/late 19th century mapping for Boys Girls and Infants. Red brick with decorative window dressing detailing. Circular window to front. Cupola atop slate roof.

5.113. Christ Church Memorial Hall. Single storey red brick with tiled roof. Stone window detailing. Central plaque reads Christ Church Memorial Hall 1895.



Picture 68. Good quality window and other detailing to Christ Church Memorial Hall, rear of Christ Church, New Road.

5.114. Other non listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. This Appraisal identifies other buildings of high quality that are not listed but that should be retained. These principally date from the late 19th/early 20th century and are an important element in the high environmental quality of the Conservation Area and make a contribution to its built form and historical evolution. Any important architectural features they possess and worthy of retention are identified.

5.115. Properties on both sides of High Oak Road. These properties date from the 19th century. Despite some areas having been considerably altered by permitted development e.g. later doors, windows, porches and satellite dishes, some original features remain on some properties. An essential common denominator of environment merit is the roofscape which predominately consist of slate roofs and chimneys. It is considered appropriate for High Oak Road as designated remains within the Conservation Area.

5.116. (a) Nos. 69-83 west side. Two storeys of yellow brick construction with slate roofs and chimneys with pots. Various window and door replacements detract as do satellite dishes and variety of walls/fences/railings to front.

(b) Nos. 53-67 west side. Two storey of yellow brick construction with slate roofs and chimneys with pots. Various window door and replacements detract as do porches, satellite dishes and roof light.

(c) Nos. 35-51 west side. Two storeys of yellow brick construction with slate roofs and chimneys with pots. Some window and door replacements and satellite dishes detract but not to same degree as elsewhere in the street.

(d) Nos. 27-29. Of yellow brick construction with pyramidal tiled roof with central chimney with pots and vertical sliding sash windows. Bay window to ground floor to no.29. Later extension to no.27.

(e) Nos. 2-62 east side. A miscellany of 19th century buildings, principally residential, of varying quality and various design including terrace and semi detached two storey development. Some original features including bay window detailing and date plaque of 1894. Original chimney detailing and predominately original slate roofs. Includes the High Oak PH.

5.117. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features in relation to the properties collectively described on High Oak Road may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 69. Typical terrace development at High Oak Road. The continuous slate roofs and repetitive chimneys particularly add character to this 19th century street despite inappropriate other alterations principally brought about by the exercise of Householder Permitted Development Rights.

~~5.116. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features in relation to the properties collectively described on High Oak Road may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.~~

~~5.117. Hillview Care Home for the Elderly, Collett Road. Tall 19th century front with later extensions. Some good ground to first floor bay window detailing with columns worthy of retention. Modern window detailing detracts. Protected by existing planning controls.~~

5.118. Nos.18-19 Collett Road. Tall 19th century yellow brick building. Would appear no. 18 is in single residential use whilst no.19 is flats - the latter being protected by existing planning controls. Fine bay window detailing to both floors. Good barge board detailing. Slate roof with central chimney with pots. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features in relation to no.18 may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 70. Nos. 18-19 Collett Road - a tall 19th century pair with good quality external features worthy of retention.

5.119. The Rifle Volunteer PH corner Collett Road/Musley Hill. Dating from the 19th century painted brickwork slate roof, various chimneys with pots. Identified as a PH on late 19th century mapping. Later windows detract but nevertheless an interesting building of visual and historic importance on an elevated corner position.

5.120. Nos. 1- 45 and Nos. 2- 56 Musley Hill (proposed to be included in an extended Conservation Area) - see below. A 19th century street consisting of two storey terraced housing generally of original brick and slate roofs. Although there are some later additions and façade treatments/ material changes and inappropriate window/door/porch changes the overall street scene is visually attractive particularly with long stretches of slate roofs and chimneys at regular intervals that results in a street scene that is pleasantly composed and seen as an architectural entity. Because of proximity of buildings to road there is limited off street car parking that can be so visually disruptive. The brick walls of various heights to frontages enclose the street scene although some have been modified. Date plaques Mount Ephraim erected 1849 and Skippers Row Constitution Hill erected AD 1850 noted. Early street sign. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Pictures 71, 72 and 73. Musley Hill - a 19th century street with a number of original features that, despite changes, essentially remains a compact visual entity and is of historical importance in the later development of the town. Pictures 71 -72 show interesting steps and access detail and the importance of chimneys in the street scene respectively.

5.121. Nos. 50 - 54 New Road. Yellow brick and brickwork painted. No. 54 has early vertical sliding sash window and possibly [also early](#) door detailing, slate roof and 2 no. chimneys with pots. Nos. 50-52 has central classical entrance detailing although modern windows detract. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.122. No. 48 New Road. Former Chapel now in residential use (shows on 1874-1894 mapping as Zoar Chapel Par. Bapt. Catholic Apostolic Church). Typical Victorian stone/window dressings, good buttress detail, tall central slate finial. Advised now 3 separate dwelling units. If considered as flats protected by existing planning controls otherwise an Article 4 Direction may be appropriate.



Picture 74. No. 48 New Road - Former chapel now in residential use.

5.123. No. 40 New Road. House in large plot, probably late 19th century. Pebble dash with tiled and slate roof. Some original windows; good barge board detailing. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.124. No.36 New Road. 19th century two storey painted brickwork with tiled roof chimney with pots. Centrally located entrance in classical style. A building whose pleasing simple design contributes to the street scene in this location. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.125. Roman Catholic Church corner of New Road/St. Edwards Road. The fieldworker was informed by a representative of the church that the present church was built in the early to mid 20th century. Of flint with

stone window and door surrounds; tiled roof. A much smaller building shows as a RC Church on mapping dating from 1920-1924.



Picture 75. Roman Catholic Church corner of New Road/ St Edwards Road believed to have been constructed in the 1930's.

5.126. No. 83 New Road. Two storey yellow brick residence with slate roof and 4 no. chimneys with pots. Probably of early 20th century date. Central recessed doorway flanked either side by bay windows to both floors. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 76. No. 83 New Road - a good quality residence probably dating from the early 20th century, one off many quality buildings to be found in this part of New Road.

5.127. Nightingale Nursery- New Road. Tall red brick building, probably early 20th century. Tiled roof chimneys, boxed window detailing, central door. A striking large building that adds variety in the street scene. Protected by existing planning controls.



Picture 77. Nightingale Nursery - a striking early 20th century building.

5.128. Nos. 89 - 91 New Road. Late 19th century white render, slate roof central chimney. Good quality decorative detailing. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.129. Nos. 93- 95 New Road - late 19th century. No. 93 inaccessible at time of survey, constructed of yellow brick with red brick banding; tiled roof and chimney. No. 95 has pebble dash frontage with fine window and stone quoin detailing. Central porch entrance with classical columns. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 78. Fine architecture detailing no. 95 New Road.

5.130. No. 97 New Road. Probably of late 19th century date. Render/ashlar and semi circular bay window detailing to ground floor.

Central entrance. Yellow brick to first floor with prominent centrally located window and 2 no. pairs of windows above each bay window. Deep eaves with good wood detailing. Flats and thus protected by existing planning controls.

5.131. Nos. 105a-105b New Road. No. 105a appears to be in commercial use (NJS Designs Ltd). Tall prominent and finely detailed building with semi circular bay windows to ground floor. Painted brickwork above. High quality decorative detailing including quoins, cornice and pediments above upper windows. A building whose visual contribution to the street scene is most important. Those elements in commercial use are protected by existing planning controls. Further investigation regarding residential use needed concerning potential of Article 4 Direction.



Picture 79. Nos. 105a- 105b New Road. A finely detailed building that makes a significant visual contribution to the street scene.

5.132. Nos. 26-28 New Road. Pair of semi detached houses dating from the early 20th century. Brick and pebble dashed; tiled roof with large chimneys. Bay window detailing to both floors, many original features worthy of preservation including barge boarding and stone window detailing. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.133. No.14 New Road. White painted brickwork and slate roof. Two storeys central 'window' to upper floor blocked. Likely to be of late 19/early20th century date and may have been a PH at one time? Appears

to be in commercial use and thus protected by normal development control administration.

5.134. Nos. 73 and 75/77/79 New Road. Group of 19th century dwellings. Of yellow brick construction with hipped slate roofs. Nos. 75/79 have bay windows to ground floor and recessed central entrance. Rubbed brick window detailing. No. 73 similar with bay windows to both floors and metal finials on roof. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Pictures 80-81. Attractive 19th century residences with detailed features worthy of additional protection. Lower picture demonstrates the important visual role chimneys play in adding character and interest to the roofscape, not only here but also in many other streets elsewhere in the Conservation Area.

5.135. Nos. 69-71 New Road. Although much altered with modern windows and doors, the slate roof and chimneys contribute to the street scene and an Article 4 Direction to provide additional protection to these features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.136. Nos. 31-59 New Road. A 19th century terrace of yellow brick construction, principally with slate roofs and chimneys. Rubbed brick

lintels. Many original details replaced including doors and windows, occasional replacement roofing materials and painting of brickwork. Nevertheless the terrace makes a positive contribution to the street scene and certain original features notably the slate roofing and chimneys are candidates for additional protection. An Article 4 Direction to provide additional protection to these features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 82. Nos. 31-59 New Road make a positive and worthwhile contribution to the street scene despite many detailed features having been altered.

5.137. Springs Christian Fellowship and hall to rear. Shows on 19th century mapping as a Methodist Chapel. Constructed of red brick with central entrance and fine window detailing above, this building makes a significant contribution to the street scene. Would appear to have original window glass. Interesting initialled bricks presumably commemorating patrons.





Picture 83-84. Springs Christian Fellowship building south end of New Street. It makes a significant contribution to the street scene. Upper picture shows interesting inscribed brick.

5.138. Nos. 27 - 29 New Road. Fine late 19th century three storey building of yellow brick construction with slate roof and 2 no. chimney pots. Central carriage entrance with plaque above reading *Christ Church School House 1884*. Good quality bay windows to ground floor. Above two ranges of 3 no. vertical sliding sash windows. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 85. Nos. 27 - 29 New Road an imposing three storey building set back from the road with central carriage entrance.

5.139. Nos. 9 - 25 New Road. A 19th century terrace of two storey buildings principally residential in use. Of yellow brick construction generally with slate roofs and good chimney detailing. Despite some exercise of Permitted Development Rights the terrace and its general mass and roofscape makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Thus an Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on residential properties may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 86. Nos. 9 - 25 new Road an attractive 19th century terrace where the exercise of Permitted Development Rights has been more restrained than other examples elsewhere.

5.140. Nos. 3-15 Collett Road. A 19th century terrace of seven where the original unity and architectural cohesion has been compromised by the exercise of Householder Permitted Development Rights. These include application of render, different roofing materials and various windows and doors. Satellite dishes also detract. Nevertheless the buildings are worthy of retention and represent part of the historical development of the town.



Pictures 87-88. Nos 3-15 Collett Road. Upper shows the impact of individual householders' exercise of Permitted Development Rights. Lower photo shows quality of original brickwork detailing.

5.141. Nos. 1-2 Little Horse Lane. Probably early 20th century. Pair of yellow brick cottages with shallow arched red brick lintels, two storey with slate roof and large central chimney. Early and matching replacement windows [to-match](#). An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.142. No. 1 Bourne Cottage (between Orchard Close and Little Horse Lane). Of 19th century date, two storey brick residence with tiled roof and chimneys. Modern windows but overall mass and appearance pleasing.

5.143. Nos. 6-8 Milton Road. 19th century pair of two storey yellow brick with pyramidal roof of slate with large central chimney and pots. No. 8 has early windows whilst no. 6 has replacements that are unsympathetic in design. Central plaque reads The Firs 1885. On balance an Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features original may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.144. No. 10 Milton Road. 19th century painted brickwork with pyramidal slate roof. Central entrance and 4 no. early/original windows. A pleasing symmetrical property. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.145. Nos. 9-19 Milton Road. Three pairs of late 19th/early 20th century dwellings. Constructed of yellow brick with slate roofs and chimneys with pots. Nos. 9-11 and 17-19 have recessed entrances. Nos. 17-19 have decorative bay windows to both floors; Nos. 9-11 have bay windows to ground floors. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 89. Nos. 9-19 Milton Road, pleasantly proportioned late 19th and early 20th century properties which are visually pleasing and historically important.

5.146. No. 62 Baldock Street. Two storey painted brickwork with hipped slate roof. Probably dates from late 19th century and surviving building of dense grouping at that time, now all replaced. Its simple historic design adds to the quality of the street scene in this immediate location.



Picture 90. No 62 Baldock Street, solitary historic building remaining in this immediate part of the street.

5.147. Nos. 63-65 Crib Street. Diminutive pair of 19th century two storey of brick construction with tiled roof and central chimney with pots. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.148. Nos. 67-69 Crib Street. Pair of two storey houses of brick construction with slate roof and central chimney stack. Notwithstanding detracting modern windows the mass and general form of the pair and their historic interest make them worthy of retention. Central plaque reads Albert Cottages.

5.149. Nos. 1- 6 Century Road and Nos. 1- 10 and Nos. 11- 22 Coronation Road. Three groups of simply designed early 20th century pebble dashed properties all with slate roofs and repetitive chimneys with pots. Despite some modern windows and doors and render/painted surfaces their simplicity and uniformity and historical interest make them most worthy of retention. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 91. Typical early 20th century terrace properties at Century Road and Coronation Road whose simplicity form and roofscape add to the quality of the environment despite the exercise of some Permitted Development rights.

5.150. Nos. 29-35 Crib Street. 19th century cottages. Painted brickwork and individual windows and doors detract. Nevertheless the group with

its common chimney detailing worthy of additional protection by an Article 4 Direction is worthy of retention.

5.151. No. 42 Crib Street. Yellow brick 19/early 20th century two storey building whose gable end fronting the road adds interest and diversity to the street scene generally and to the attached group of listed buildings to its north.

5.152. Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution. Walls and railings so identified are protected to varying degrees virtue of exceeding specified height relevant to the Conservation Area legislation or by being within the curtilage of a Listed Building unless otherwise noted.

5.153. Wall forming boundary between Christ Church and converted Maltings building. Of various heights, some parts exceeding 2m. Some newly constructed.

5.154. Tall brick wall in two lengths forming south eastern boundary of Western House (now The Old Boardroom and the Octagon) of varying height exceeding 2m, red and yellow brick.

5.155. Wall to frontage of Nos. 40-45 New Road. Exceeds 1m. Frontage to no. 40 consists of metal railings on dwarf wall.

5.156. Front boundary wall to Nos. 93- 95 New Road. Height exceeds 1m. Some repair work would be beneficial.

5.157. Wall at eastern boundary to EHDC season ticket holder's car park, south end of New Road. Red brick 19/20th century, exceeds 2m.

5.158. Wall in deteriorating condition to rear of South Maltings, New Street.



Picture 92. Wall in deteriorating condition to be retained; to rear of South Maltings, New [StreetRoad](#).

5.159. Wall adjacent to public footpath 5 - Little Horse Lane. Probably of late 19th/early 20th century date. A short but visually important length of wall adjacent to a public footpath and thus protected as it exceeds 1m. Careful removal of vegetation would be beneficial.



Picture 93. A short but important length of wall adjacent to footpath 5 Little Horse Lane, most worthy of retention.

5.160. Wall south of junction Thunder court/south end of Milton Road. Prominent yellow brick wall probably dating from late 19/early 20th century. Height varies but exceeds 2m in the main.

5.161. Wall to front of no. 21 Crib Street. Of red brick construction up to 2m in height and visually prominent in the street scene.



Picture 94. Restored and prominent wall which adds visual interest to this part of Crib Street.

5.162. Brick wall corner Crib Street/Coronation Road. Of 19th/20th century date. Up to about 2m in height, mostly rebuilt but a good feature worthy of retention.

5.163. Yellow brick wall to north side of Deerfield Close; exceeds 1m in height.

5.164. **Important Open Spaces.** Open space surrounding Christ Church, New Road. This open space is a most important feature in New Road characterised elsewhere nearby by high density urban built form. Together with its traditional trees it makes a significant visual contribution to the street scene. It is well kept and cared for.

5.165. Open space to front of The Old Boardroom and The Octagon. A small but important open space that provides a fine setting for the listed building and a much needed 'breathing space' in this dense urban area.



Picture 95. Open space and formal tree planting provides a fine setting for the listed building and a 'breathing space' in this dense part of town.

5.166. Open space to front of Fire Station, Baldock Street. An elevated open space with trees that makes an important contribution to the street scene in this location. Also narrow triangle of open space opposite Fire Station site, east side of Baldock Street.



Picture 96. Narrow triangle of open space Baldock Street, is there opportunity to plant a few additional trees?

5.167. Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Those trees that are most important are shown very diagrammatically on the accompanying plans. Planting along parts of Baldock Street is particularly important. Individual trees within modern development areas at Crib Street, Princes Street and Francis Road are also important and where opportunities may be found to plant additional ones.

5.168. Important views. A selection as shown on accompanying plans.

5.169. Elements out of character with the Conservation Area. Area around Goldstone Close. Mid/late 20th century housing that does little to contribute to the quality of the Conservation Area. Wooden fences and small gardens to front of Nos. 1-5 capable of being enhanced by hedge planting.

5.170. Also in the same general area there is a small communal sitting area that is shabby and weed infested and uncared for. Self set sycamores are establishing and these need removing before they become established. An old millstone feature has been displaced from its original position. The whole area represents an opportunity for improvement.



Picture 97. Housing corner of High Oak Road where hedge planting would significantly improve the general quality of the Conservation Area in this location. Is this possible?



Picture 98. Communal sitting area at Goldstone Close in real need of improvement.

5.171. Roundabout at junction of Watton Road/Baldock Street. This roundabout is a key entrance point to the historic town. It is a large open space rather desolate in appearance, planted with various flower beds and consisting of grass with some centrally located trees. Roundabouts are difficult areas to satisfactorily landscape and high quality design solutions are the exception but not impossible to attain. However in this key location it is considered worthwhile to explore the potential of making significant improvements and this Appraisal recommends, if there is support for the idea, that a landscape consultancy be appointed to prepare an uplifting design worthy for this important entrance to a most important historic town. Solutions noted elsewhere in the country range from sensitively designed low maintenance soft landscape treatment to hard landscape solutions and other schemes involving sculpture of either a traditional or contemporary nature.



Pictures 99-100. The roundabout at Watton Road/ Baldock Street is a key entrance point to the historic town and would benefit from the preparation and implementation of a landscape uplift worthy of the historic qualities of Ware.

5.172. Corner of The Bourne/ Baldock Street. A corner on which is a small accumulation of signage and redundant posts. Explore potential of rationalisation.

5.173. Opportunities to secure improvements. Consider appointing an experienced consultancy to prepare an uplifting landscape solution for the Watton Road/ Baldock Street roundabout, a key entrance point to the historic town. Repair frontage wall to Christ Church, New Road. Undertake refurbishment to Thunder Hall, a listed building; also remove vegetation from attached listed wall. Consider hedge planting, corner of High Oak Road. Initiate improvements to sitting area at Goldstone Close. Seek to remove vegetation from wall adjacent to footpath 5 Little Horse Lane. Consider the potential of additional tree planting, triangle of open

space east side of Baldock Street. Explore potential of rationalising signage corner of The Bourne/ Baldock Street.

5.174. Wider area including parts of The Bourne that extends eastwards along Collett Road including the north part of Crib Street, Princes Street and Francis Road. This mid/late 20th century group of housing forms a large island of relatively neutral and undistinguished development whose varied housing types includes large blocks of flats. The undistinguished designs of some developments would not today be considered appropriate for a Conservation Area. Removing this area from the designated Conservation Area is not appropriate as it would leave a curious administrative island within which different development controls would operate.

5.175. Within this area there is a large desolate parking area that the fieldworker considers to be underused. Nearby the concentration of parked cars on the road may be an issue of highway safety concern. It is advertised as being run by PCM (UK) Ltd and assumed to have been provided for the residents nearby.



Picture 101. Large desolate car parking area off Crib Street. What options, if any, are there to make improvements here?

5.176. The whole area contains some trees but there may be opportunity to provide additional ones. Perhaps the opportunity exists to plant additional trees within highway areas subject to consent from the Highway Authority or there may be other opportunities to improve the environment by planting in private front gardens to improve the setting (e.g. front gardens to Nos.14-32 The Bourne).



Picture 102. Large scale development off Crib Street. Here it would seem there is opportunity to plant additional trees, subject to services.

5.177. It is therefore suggested this area is identified for further consideration by the three councils to identify opportunities to improve the general environment. In this respect surface improvements and tree planting may be options.

5.178. **Suggested boundary changes.** Councils have a responsibility to ensure such areas justify Conservation Area status and are not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

5.179. In Identity Area 3 it is proposed to extend the Conservation Area to include Nos. 1- 45 and Nos. 2- 56 Musley Hill, an important 19th century street that retains a number of original features that are both visually and historically important. See description and illustrations above.

5.180. **Other actions.** Contact Hertfordshire County Council and seek their co- operation in repairing milestone marker, Baldock Street.

IDENTITY AREA 4.

5.181. **General overview.** Area 4 is principally centred on Priory Street and Buryfield Recreation Ground, parts of Watton Road and Gladstone Road (parts of which are now proposed for inclusion in the Conservation Area) and bounded by the River Lea in the south and including the western edge of Baldock Street. There is a concentration of listed properties along Baldock Street which principally date from the 16/17th centuries; also former Maltings to the east of Buryfield Recreation Ground and a scattering along Priory Street including the grade I Priory.

5.182. There are numbers of non listed properties most worthy of retention dating from the 19th and early 20th centuries. In respect of the latter converted Mill buildings along Priory Street are very fine. The south of Area 4 is dominated by the River Lea and the open area (Lock keepers Island) enclosed by its arms. Open space and gardens around The Priory and Buryfield Recreation Ground play important visual, communal and land use roles.

5.183. Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Within Area 4 there is one such designation. Ware Friary (*Now called the Priory - the description following is based on Historic England text but very much abbreviated*). A friary is an institution housing a community of friars. Owing no property of their own, they lived by moving from community to community begging for alms and gifts. By the time of the dissolution in the 1530's *about 190* friaries had been founded, each with their individual missions. The sites chosen were usually within towns, often in the less valuable marginal areas. The buildings were centred on a church and a cloister and usually contained a refectory, a chapter house and an infirmary.

5.184. At the time of its foundation, the Franciscan Friary at Ware was one of only three such houses to the north of the Alps. The monument includes the known extent of the buried remains of the Franciscan friary founded in 1338. The religious house was largely demolished after its suppression in 1538. The buried evidence and other features of the friary now lies within the grounds of this house, misleadingly termed 'The Priory'.

5.185. The Priory is a Grade I Listed Building (see below). The west wing contains evidence of a free standing hall, the earliest known building on the site. The central part and eastern wing of the house includes sections of the cloister walk. The roof structure consisting of scissor based rafters is thought to be substantially 15th century in date. The Priory, which houses offices is excluded from the scheduling although the ground beneath it is included.

5.186. The plan of the demolished friary buildings, which were noted as being 'not altogether beaten down' in 1631, has been partly identified through small scale excavations and chance discoveries within the grounds. The full extent of the friary precinct is not known. The friary enjoyed fishing rights on the adjoining section of the river and it is probable that this privilege was of long standing. Osier beds were mentioned by Thomas Birch, yeoman of the Crown, following the Dissolution. By the late 14th century there was some conflict with the Franciscans of Cambridge concerning their respective begging and preaching rights within the district.

5.187. From Thomas Birch, whose family may have played a part in the suppression, the property passed through various owners and the house saw periods of major refurbishment - most notably in the 1850s

when the architect George Godwin inserted copies of the 15th century windows alongside the surviving originals and his own 'Gothick' additions to the building. Residential use ceased during the First World War when the house served as a Red Cross hospital, and in 1920 the owner effectively gave the house and the grounds to the people of Ware through a 999 year lease to the Urban District Council.

5.188. Just beyond the Conservation Area to the south of the River Lea is another Scheduled Ancient Monument site of Roman significance (See previous reference above under 'Origins and Historical Development' section).

5.189. Areas of Archaeological Significance. Most of Area 4 is so designated.

5.190. Individually Listed Buildings. The total isn the whole of the Conservation Area has been previously provided. A selection of Listed Buildings within Area 4 with abbreviated descriptions based on the National list is provided below. Any additional comments by the fieldworker are in italics.

5.191. South Maltings Watton Road- Grade II. Circa late 1840s. Flemish bond yellow stock brick, east and west ends weatherboarded timber frame. Pantile roof with gabled ends. *This building forms part of one of the few complexes of Maltings buildings remaining. In the 19th century until the early 20th century as previously mentioned, there were large numbers of such complexes throughout the town located both within what is now the Conservation Area and beyond.*

5.192. No. 3 Baldock Street - Grade II. 17th century and 18th century, with 19th and 20th century alterations. Timber-framed, plastered, with modillioned eaves cornice and old tiled roofs. Of 2 heights, Cruciform narrow-brick chimneystack at right, set diagonally above base with moulded cornice and offsets also serves No.5. Ground floor detailing has replaced 19th century shopfront. Together with No.1 Priory Street and Nos. 1 and 5 Baldock Street possibly formed the site of The Griffin Inn in mid 17th century. *Included to typically demonstrate the alterations that have occurred quite commonly to many early listed buildings throughout the Conservation Area.*

5.193. The Priory, Ware Town Council Offices - Grade I. Medieval Franciscan friary, later house, then local government offices, restored as Ware Town Council Offices. 14th and mid to late 15th century, becoming a private house 1544 after dissolution, altered mid 18th century, rebuilt after 1849 and extended late 19th century. Converted to offices for the former Ware Urban District Council 1920s. Chalk blocks, stucco covered, part flint rubble with ashlar quoins, gabled and hipped roofs, covered with old tiles in part. Brick chimneystacks, 18/ 19th centuries. Ware Priory is an 18th century misnomer for the Franciscan house, given to Friars Minor of Ware by Thomas, Lord Wake of Liddell in

1338. The situation of Ware on the historic Ermine Street brought travellers and mendicant friars seeking lodgings (see above). The complex probably included a Friary church. The Duke of York, father of Edward IV and Richard III lodged in the Friary after the Battle of St Albans in 1455. During the Commonwealth, the building was leased to Sir Richard Fanshawe, Secretary of War to the Prince of Wales, later Charles II. In 1913 the building was acquired by Mrs Elizabeth Anne Croft, the only child of Ware's richest maltster, Henry Page. The setting of The Priory includes a reach of the River Lea, and grounds laid out in the picturesque Loudon style in the early 19th century.

5.194. Nos. 44 - 45 Priory Street - Grade II. 16th century, altered 17th and later, extended in 18th century. Timber-framed, stucco faced, stuccoed brick ground floor under building former jetty, old tiled roof, central yellow brick chimney, with oversailing course and 4 pots. 2 storeys. Timber-framing visible internally. No.45 appears to be a 2 bay structure, originally with jettied front, with a braced tie-beam truss, and a pegged collar roof, without purlins.

5.195. Important buildings within the curtilages of Listed Building. None have been identified in Area 4. However the fieldworker has not surveyed the rear of Baldock Street where detailed processing of future individual applications may reveal other such buildings.

5.196. Other non listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. This Appraisal identifies other buildings of high quality that are not listed but that should be retained. These principally date from the 19th and 20th centuries and are an important element in the high environmental quality of the Conservation Area and make a contribution to its built form and historical evolution. Any Important architectural features they possess and worthy of retention are identified.

5.197. Nos. 1 - 18 and Nos. 21 - 33/33a/34/34a Gladstone Road. Interesting late 19th century properties located in a street part of which is proposed to be included within the Conservation Area. Properties are generally two storeys and of yellow brick construction with slate roofs and chimneys with pots. Many windows and doors and the occasional replacement of roofing material has occurred. Despite this the overall visual and historic importance of the street remains largely intact. The Royal British Legion is an interesting building with curved (asbestos?) roof. Some properties have original bay window detailing and some successful modern development has taken place at the southern end of the street. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on historic buildings may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 103. It is proposed to extend the Conservation Area to include some of Gladstone Road, a late 19th century street whose overall visual and historic importance of the street remains largely intact. Note successful modern development on bottom left of picture.

5.198. No. 4 and Nos. 6- 8 Watton Road. No.4, Cambridge Villa - two storey yellow brick with slate roof and 2 no. chimneys with pots; bay windows to ground floor. Decorative canopy to ground floor entrance. Wooden barge board detailing with finials. Plaque reads Cambridge Villa 1880. Nos.6- 8 of similar late 19th century date. This property has prominent barge boarding detail, a central chimney with pots and bay windows to ground floor. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on both may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 104. No.4 and Nos. 6 - 8 Watton Road. Late 19th century houses with good quality architectural detailing.

5.199. Nelson Court, Watton Road several commercial activities occupy. East corner of Watton Road/Gladstone Road. Fine late 19th century building that shows as Police Station (?) on 1897-1898 mapping. Of brick construction with tiled roof. Semi circular rubbed brick and other good quality brick detailing. Finely detailed chimneys with pots. Many features worthy of retention including tall window detailing and governed by existing planning controls.



Picture 105. Nelson Court, a fine group of late 19th century buildings with architectural features most worthy of retention, interpreted as originally having been a Police Station.

5.200. Nos. 2 - 26 Park Road. Late 19th century terrace. Despite usual exercise of Permitted Development Rights including replacement windows and doors and painted/ rendered surfaces this grouping on the edge of the Conservation Area retains sufficient qualities to remain within the Conservation Area. Its slate roofscape and good quality chimneys makes a worthwhile visual and historic contribution. Plaque reading Palmerston Cottages to Nos. 8 - 10 noted. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on both may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.201. Nos. 45 - 47 Park Road. Pair of early 20th century single storey brick and tiled cottages. Recessed entrances with original wooden detailing above. 2 no. chimneys. Plaques read Harrison [RB](#)quest; erected AD 1908. Despite modern windows a charming pair and good representatives of their type and period. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on both may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture106. Nos. 45-47 Park Road. Pair of single storey charming early 20th century bungalows retaining many original features.

5.202. Withers Thomas and Chequers House, south side of Watton Road. Small scale attractive two storey building in commercial use. Painted brickwork and render, slate roof and central chimney with pots. Traditional historic feature that makes an important contribution to the street scene. Former PH shown on 19th century mapping; McMullen Ales and Stout sign to side. Detail protected by existing planning control.

5.203. Salvation Army Hall, west side Baldock Street. Two storey red brick construction with unusual parapet detailing. Dating from the early 20th century with plaque of 1907. An unusual building that adds variety to the street scene and which should be retained. Identified on 1920-24 mapping as S.A. Hall. Detail protected by existing planning control.



Picture 107. Early 20th century Salvation Army Hall of architectural and historic interest that adds variety to the street scene.

5.204. Nos. 35 - 37 Priory Street. Interesting grouping of late 19/early 20th century residential properties of yellow and red brick construction. Tiled roofs/ chimneys. Decorative barge board detailing to both and impressive vertical hung tiles to no. 37. Many original features although exercise of some Permitted Development rights has interrupted the buildings' original harmony. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on both may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.205. Commercial building abutting the highway, located between Buryfield Terrace and Maplethorpe Court. -Simple red brick with slate roof; metal windows. Adds interest and diversity to street scene and should be retained.

5.206. No. 46 Priory Street. Interesting late 19th century building of brick with decorative timber detailing to first floor. Also cast iron Arts and Crafts windows to first floor. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on both may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 108. No. 46 Priory Street, interesting late 19th century building.

5.207. Nos. 1- 5 Buryfield Terrace and adjacent barn to south. 19th century two storey terrace of yellow brick construction with continuous slate roof and chimneys with pots. Set back from Priory Street. Adjacent single storey red brick with pantiled roof to south. Modern windows of common design. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features on both may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.208. Long range of industrial building three storeys in height constructed of yellow brick, now occupied by GSK, north side of Priory Street. Fine entrance detail includes clock and date plaque 1911. Part of building complex shown on 1920-24 mapping as *Ware Mills (Food & Drugs)*. Detail protected by existing planning control.



Picture 109. A most satisfactory adaptation of an earlier industrial building of fine proportions.

5.209. Similar building range occupied by GSK on south side of Priory Street of yellow brick with decorative brick detailing. Detail protected by existing planning control.

5.210. Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution. Walls and railings so identified are protected to varying degrees virtue of exceeding specified height relevant to the Conservation Area legislation or by being within the curtilage of a Listed Building unless otherwise noted.

5.211. Early street signs. Several of these have been noted and it is important they are retained and where appropriate restored. The one illustrated below is attached to a listed building and in need of restoration.



Picture 110. Early Street sign. One of several. This one located on the Worppell PH.

5.212. Bridge over River Lea. Date unknown to the writer without research but probably from the 19th century. Metal bridge with handrails and decorative triangular central supports. Certainly a bridge appears in this position on 1874-1894 mapping.



Picture 111. Bridge over the River Lea, a fine feature of considerable interest. Is there any knowledge regarding the date of its construction?

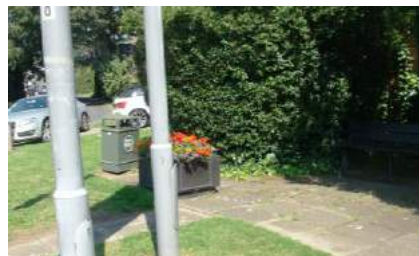
5.213. Traditional metal railings along side River Lea, Priory Street. These railings make a very visual positive contribution and are of historic interest. Below 1m in height and thus unprotected by Conservation Area legislation. Some repairs necessary. As discussed earlier in this document in relation to similar railings elsewhere in the town the issue should be discussed with the owners who are believed to be Thames Water. Ideally an incremental ongoing programme of maintenance repair and repainting regarding all such railings in the town needs agreeing. Potential control by Article 4 Direction.





Pictures 112-113. Quality railings of historic importance contribute to the street scene; some sections are in need of repair.

5.214. Important Open Spaces. Small but strategically located green with sitting area, Watton Road, west of Gladstone Road. This small sitting area houses various street furniture including litter receptacles, signage, flower box and seat. In parts concrete slab surface uneven. Some minor rationalisation/ improvements would be beneficial.



Picture 114. Sitting area Watton Road where some improvements and or rationalisation could be carried out.

5.215. The Buryfield Recreation Ground. An extremely important open space well used for walking sitting and sports activities. Located in a key location and surrounded/ contained in part by former Maltings buildings and with views across to the church. Its essential quality is its openness which should not be compromised. At the northern end of the site there is a raised display illustrating a brief Roman history and finds from the adjacent GSK site. Metal railings would benefit from repainting. Litter bins could perhaps be sited so as to be less visually intrusive.



Picture 115. Buryfield Recreation Ground. Its open nature and views it provides must not be compromised.

5.216. The Gardens around The Priory, those to the south of The Priory, Lockkeepers Island, the main arm of the River Lea westwards and upstream on the southern extremity of the Conservation Area and its northern arm adjacent to Priory Street. The significant environmental qualities of this area are dominated by the River Lea and associated water features. The river in this area is most picturesque and its slow flowing water is enhanced by boats and wildlife and most importantly lined with trees. The complex lock and weir system at the western end can be a hive of boating activity and onlookers.



Picture 116. The picturesque locks, Priory Street.

5.217. Nearby is the Priory and its well maintained grounds which are accessible to the public. Elsewhere is the Bowling Green to the west of which is a large GSK car park. To the west of the latter is an area of private land.

5.218. The south bank of the River Lea is well used by pedestrians, cyclists and those exercising. The access path on the north bank is not well used and is ended abruptly by fencing denying access to the short distance needed to reach the lock area.

5.219. The presence of mature trees lining the river in most important and with this in mind it is proposed to extend the Conservation Area slightly in a southerly direction to remove any ambiguity regarding the Conservation Area status of those on the existing boundary and to include others on the school playing field and King's Meads nature reserve to the south.



Picture 117. The importance of trees and the visual contribution they make to the River Lea.

5.220. It is also suggested the potential of extending the access path on the north side of the river be explored although this may be difficult.

5.221. **Wildlife site.** There is a Nature Reserve to south of the River Lea into which the proposed extension to the Conservation Area extends. The latter is described as being thus *part of an extensive area of common land on the old flood plain of the River Lea.*

5.222 **Historic Parks and Gardens.** The gardens around the Priory are described in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Historic Parks and Gardens' thus *Founded by the Franciscans in the 14th century, but dissolved in 1535. It was presented to the town by a local benefactor, Mrs Croft. It remains a public park with a strong Victorian flavour.*

5.223. **Particularly important trees and hedgerows.** Those trees that are most important are shown very diagrammatically on the accompanying plans. Those around The Priory and on the banks of the River Lea are

most important. Also trees and hedges around Buryfield Recreation Ground.

5.224. **Important views.** A selection as shown on accompanying plans.

5.225. **Elements out of character with the Conservation Area.** Travis Perkins site, south of Watton Road. This industrial complex hemmed in by two important groupings of listed buildings could be a candidate for appropriate future redevelopment.



Picture 118. Travis Perkins site, contained by two groups of listed buildings this site could be a candidate for appropriate future development.

5.226. **Crook Brothers site.** Adjacent to Travis Perkins site. Potential candidate for future redevelopment. Contains one single storey brick building with pyramidal tiled roof and good quality circular arched rubbed brick detailing. This building may be worthy of retention subject to further investigation (access to site not available on day of survey).



Picture 119. Crook Brothers site. Potential site for appropriate redevelopment. The building with the arched entrance may be worthy of retention subject to further consideration.

5.227. Opportunities to secure improvements. Consider improvements/ rationalisation of street furniture on small sitting area on Watton Road to west of Gladstone Road. Repaint railings north boundary to Buryfield Recreation Ground.

5.228. Suggested boundary changes. These details are shown on accompanying plans. Councils have a responsibility to ensure such areas justify Conservation Area status and are not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest. It is proposed to add the following areas.

5.229. In Identity Area 4 it is proposed to extend boundary to include nos. 1-18 and nos. 21 - 33/33a/34/34a Gladstone Road. This street is typically representative of the 19th century and retains a number of original features that are both visually and historically important. See description and picture illustration above.

5.230 It is also proposed to extend boundary to include area to the south of the River Lea with purpose of removing ambiguity regarding status of trees on its boundary and also to include other trees, such trees significantly adding to the character of the area in this location.

5.231. Other actions. Explore the possibility of extending access path on north side of River Lea westerly to lock area.

6 OVERALL SUMMARY

6.232. Overall Summary. Ware's Conservation Area is expansive and its large area is an urban environment which is this Appraisal concludes is of '*special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance*'.

6.233 In relation to the requirement relating to conserving the character of Ware's Conservation Area one very significant asset is the concentration of listed buildings of the highest quality, principally concentrated in the historic core. The special relationship this area enjoys with the River Lea and New River is particularly important and where the processing of new proposals needs particular care and attention.



6.234. Ware's history and character until the beginning of the 20th century was formed and dominated by the malting industry and the many unique buildings whose distinctive features and cowlings would then have dominated the skyline. Sadly there are only few of these left and any proposals affecting the remaining features need particular care and attention.



6.235. The concentration of listed buildings in the historic core is generally ancient with over 60% dating from the 16th and 17th centuries and earlier. This is considerably higher than the similar national figure which Historic England advise is 34%. Of course most of Ware's early buildings have been altered over the centuries and many have later facades. Nevertheless their variety and the contribution they make to the townscape associated with burgage plots and narrow streets is very considerable.



6.236. A few such listings are already entered on the Councils [BuildingsHeritage](#) at Risk Register and this Appraisal has identified a few others which the Council is particularly concerned about.



6.237. Most importantly this Appraisal has identified many late 19th/early 20th century buildings that add considerably to the town's heritage and which are most worthy of protection from demolition. Their spread and variety is considerable with one particular concentration of residences being located on New Road. Elsewhere there are commercial and institutional and religious buildings. Their retention through the planning process is essential. Some are modest in size and simple in design but that is part of their charm.



6.238. Many have architectural detailing and features worthy of protection and preservation, some by the possible use of Article 4 Directions, principally removing Householder Permitted Development Rights. Such Directions are proposed to be applied selectively and sparingly and could, inter alia, protect windows, chimneys and other selected architectural detailing following notification of owners and further consideration. It is thought that such a procedure is well justified in Ware as 'Permitted Development' executed in some areas has eroded the architectural qualities of some buildings. This is particularly the case in relation to some 19th century terraces.



6.239. There are also a considerable number of other features of importance that should be retained. These include railings and walls that add to the quality and diversity of the Conservation Area. In this respect and of particular note are significant lengths of railings, some listed, others not, that define the edges to the New River and River Lea. Elsewhere brick wall make worthwhile visual contributions and both are often reminders of Ware's industrial and transportation heritage. Additionally there are other features of note that should be retained.



6.240. Open spaces that are important to retain have been identified and set out in summary form in the Management section below. Their scale and the contribution they make vary but it is important that those identified are retained as they all make important visual and recreational contributions to a generally tightly packed urban area. Of particular importance is the low lying field at the junction of London Road and Viaduct Road, properly protected by Green Belt designation. If carefully considered landscape improvements could be implemented this would be a most satisfactory outcome.



6.241. In relation to the requirement to enhance many such improvements have been identified which are set out in summary tabular form in the Management section below. Some strategic objectives such as the potential comprehensive development of large scale visually intrusive sites and improvement to the gateway roundabout at Watton Road/Baldock Street have been suggested, whilst at the other end of the scale more modest improvements are identified. The suggested improvements, both large and small, will principally be implemented by the goodwill and with the co-operation of individual owners. However the Council may be able to offer advice and guidance and, subject to staff resources will be prepared to do so, as and when appropriate. Some improvements are very minor indeed but each single visual improvement will be worthwhile. The quality of shop fronts and

associated fascia signage varies considerably and there are some sites where it detracts; this Appraisal suggests further consideration be given to this issue and discussions take place locally and best national practice researched and where there is accord, implemented.





6.242. There is one large area of neutral development around Crib Street in the north of the Conservation Area where opportunities to create an improved environment should be explored.



6.243. New development. The design solutions of new development in the Conservation Area vary considerably. As demonstrated earlier some are tradition whilst others are more contemporary. Some conversions using contemporary materials have been most successful.



6.244. Several extensions to the Conservation Area have been proposed and these are identified immediately below.

PART C - MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS.

7. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS.

7.1. *Revised Conservation Area Boundary.* The revised boundary is shown on the accompanying Management Plan to which the reader is referred and includes the following amendment/s.

(a) Extend the Conservation Area to include trees of conifer and other species between London Road and Grange Gardens.

(b) Extend the Conservation Area to include Nos. 1- 45 and Nos. 2- 56 Musley Hill, a 19th century street of visual and historic importance.

(c) Extend the Conservation Area to include Nos. 1-18 and Nos. 21 - 33/33a/34/34a Gladstone Road, a late 19th century street of visual and historic importance.

(d) Extend the Conservation Area on south side of River Lea to include important trees in general vicinity of Kings Meads Nature Reserve (up to edge of pathway) and school playing fields.

(e) Extend the Conservation area to principally include Ware dental building no. 6 Star Street.

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 currently against this document and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPP) that the District Council will process applications. The NPP is supplemented by Planning Practice Guidance. One such guidance note of particular relevance is 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'. In due course the 2007 Local Plan will be replaced by the District Plan whose policies will then be relevant.

7.3. Applicants considering submitting any application should carefully consider the relevant policies and if necessary contact Officers to seek pre-application advice.

Telephone 01279 655261 (For development proposals ask for Development Management. For general conservation advice ask for a Conservation Officer).

E-mail: planning@eastherts.gov.uk

Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk

Or write to Development Management, East Herts District Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

7.4. Applicants may also wish to refer to one of the several Guidance Notes previously referred to which will be updated as resources permit.

7.5. *Planning Control - Potential need to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation.* Within the sites designated as being a Scheduled Ancient Monument or within an Area of Archaeological Significance (as shown on either the adopted Local Plan and/or emerging District Plan), 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.

7.7. Listed Buildings are a significant asset in contributing to the quality of the Conservation Area. It is essential that their architectural detailing is not eroded nor their other qualities and settings compromised.

7.8. *Planning Control – Other Unlisted Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.* Within the existing and proposed extensions to the Conservation Area this Appraisal has identified [about](#) 70 unlisted buildings/ groups of buildings that are considered to have sufficient qualities to be described thus. These are:

7.9. Identity Area 1. In Identity Area 1 these unlisted buildings are: Ware Neighbourhood Police Station/Hertfordshire Social Care building Burgage Lane; group of 3 buildings, St Mary's Courtyard; on the High Street , Andrew Pharmacy/The Lodge, Wok u Like (no.92), Saffron Walden Building Society, National Westminster Bank, Bailey Gomm buildings r/o High Street; on West Street - Surgery; nos. 5-10 Leaside Walk; 22-24 Church Street; 14-15 Bluecoat Yard; AJ's Pet Store, corner East Street/New Road; in the proposed extension to the Conservation Area - Ware Dental building, Star Street.

7.10. Identity Area 2. In Identity Area 2 these unlisted buildings are: Maltings Surgery, Amwell End; Railway Station building; no. 18 London Road; converted Maltings buildings, Hoe Lane; converted Ware Flour Mill buildings, Viaduct Road.

7.11. Identity Area 3. In Identity Area 3 these unlisted buildings are: on High Oak Road - nos. 27-29, 35-83 and 2-62; on Collett Road - [Hillview Care Home for the Elderly](#), nos.18-19, Rifle Volunteer PH and nos. 3-15; on New Road - nos. 50-54, no.48, no.40, no.36, the RC church, no.83, Nightingale Nursery, nos. 89-91, -nos. 93-95, no. 97, nos. 105a-105b, nos. 26-28, no.14, nos. 73 and 75-79, nos. 69-71, nos. 31-59, Springs Christian Fellowship and hall to rear, nos. 27-29 and nos. 9-25; on Little Horse Lane, nos. 1-2; off Orchard Close, no.1 Bourne Cottage; on Milton Road, nos. 6-8, no.10 and nos. 9-19; no 62 Baldock Street; on Crib Street - nos. 63-65, nos. 67-69, nos. 29-35 and no. 42 ; nos. 1-6 Century Road; nos. 1-

10 and 11- 22 Coronation Road; in the proposed extension to the Conservation Area - nos.1- 45 and nos. 2- 56 Musley Hill.

7.12. Identity Area 4. In Identity Area 4 these unlisted buildings are: on Watton Road - no.4 and nos.6-8, Nelson Court and Withers Thomas/Chequers House; on Park Road, nos. 2-26 and 45- 47; Salvation Army Hall, Baldock Street; on Priory Street, nos. 35-37, commercial building to street frontage between Buryfield Terrace and Maplethorpe Court, no.46, nos.1-5 Buryfield Terrace, GSK industrial range north side and GSK industrial range south side. In the proposed extension to the Conservation Area - nos. 1-18 and 21-33/33a/34/34a Gladstone Road.

7.13. Any proposal involving the demolition of these buildings is unlikely to be approved.

7.14. *Planning Control – Other unlisted distinctive features that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.* This Appraisal has identified a number of railings and walls that make a particular contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Some are protected from demolition virtue of exceeding the specified heights relevant to Conservation Area legislation or by Listed Building legislation. Any proposal involving their demolition is unlikely to be approved. Removal of other PD rights involving alteration is also an available option. Walls and railings that are unprotected from demolition are potential candidates for protection an Article 4 Direction (see below). Other distinctive features that contribute to the quality of the environment are also identified. These should be protected within the parameters of existing legislation.

7.15. There are other distinctive features that are integral to some of the important unlisted buildings identified above that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including selected chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing. In some situations protection already exists through existing planning controls but in other cases protection could only be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via an Article 4 Direction. The associated 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.

7.16. Improvement of features and architectural detailing. This Appraisal has noted the diminishing quality of several 19th century terraces principally damaged by the exercise of Permitted Development Rights. If there is support for the idea one initiative could be the preparation of an improvement scheme for a specific terrace whereby Council officers in association with residents, would draw up improvement proposals to be implemented on a voluntary basis over a long period. This could involve

the replacement of inappropriate architectural items such as windows and doors or non traditional materials such as inappropriate roofing.

7.17. Planning control - Wildlife Sites. Any development that adversely affects wildlife species occupying such a Wildlife site will not normally be permitted and would need clear justification. King's Meads Wildlife site extending in easterly direction to Amwell End is so identified. Proposals will be considered against Policies ENV 14 and ENV 16.

7.18. Planning Control – Important Historic Parks and gardens. EHDC Supplementary Planning Document 'Historic Parks and Gardens' has identified The Priory Gardens as being locally important. Proposals that significantly harm such gardens special character will not be permitted and will be considered against Policy BH16.

7.19. Planning Control – Important open land, open spaces and gaps. This Appraisal has identified the following particularly important open spaces: the River Lea and New River; western churchyard and main churchyard; Tudor Square; Malt Makers Garden; former Quaker burial ground - Kibes Lane and small area nearby - corner Kibes Lane/Bowling Road; low lying field - London Road/Viaduct Road; parallel open space to New River north of Hertford Road; Christ church churchyard; open space to front of The Old Boardroom/Octagon; open space to front of Fire Station Baldock Street and narrow triangle opposite; small sitting area Watton Road/Gladstone Road; Buryfield Recreation Ground and gardens around and to the south of The Priory. These open spaces will be protected.

7.20. Planning Control – Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Only the most significant trees are shown diagrammatically. It has not been possible to plot trees on inaccessible land. 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. Trees alongside both banks of the River Lea are particularly important.

7.21. Planning Control - Important views. A selection of general views is diagrammatically shown. Policy BH6 is particularly relevant.

7.22. Large scale sites that detract. The schedule of Enhancement Proposals below identifies a number of large scale sites where opportunities may exist to secure improvement through possible future redevelopment. These are Travis Perkins and adj. Crook Bros site south of Watton Rd; commercial site south of Star Street; shopping to ground floor site east end of High Street/ Bridge Foot and site south side of Broadmeads, including several prefabricated buildings. Should redevelopment proposals emerge there will be a need to ensure that any

such proposals are appropriate in land use terms and represent real visual improvements relating to scale and design, particularly in relation to nearby historic buildings.

7.23. Enhancement Proposals. The Appraisal has identified a number of elements that detract which are summarised in the Table below together with a proposed course of action; other actions are also identified. Within the staff and financial resources available, Council Officers will be pro-active and provide assistance. It must be recognized that such improvements will generally be achieved only by the owner's co-operation.

Detracting element	Location	Proposed Action.
Selected commercial signs and shop front facias.	Throughout but concentrated in main commercial locations.	Consider means of securing improvements. Such options could include the investigation of best practice elsewhere and supplementing advice currently available. Increase awareness at local level by liaising with local shopkeepers and interested parties and through the determination of applications.
Large scale sites where opportunities may exist to secure improvement through possible future redevelopment.	Travis Perkins and adj. Crook Bros site south of Watton Rd; commercial site south of Star Street and shopping to ground floor site east end of High Street/ Bridge Foot. Site south side of Broadmeads including several prefabricated buildings.	Ensure that any redevelopment proposals that come forward are appropriate in land use terms and represent real visual improvements in terms of scale and design, particularly in relation to nearby historic buildings.
Poor overall quality of general street scene.	Amwell End.	Consider obtaining professional advice to draw up enhancement

		proposals. These could include references to street furniture landscaping and shop front and facia improvement.
Poor environmental quality of main entrance point to historic Ware.	Roundabout at Watton Road/ Baldock Street.	If there is agreement suggest appointment of experienced consultancy to draw up landscape proposals that introduce significant improvements consist with road safety.
Mediocre overall quality of general street scenes.	Large area of 20th century residential developments centred along The Bourne and Collett Road and Crib Street, Francis Road and Princes Street.	A joint cooperative exercise between the three councils and private landowners is suggested to consider means of securing general landscape improvements, including tree planting and determining alternative future (if any) of desolate parking area off Crib Street.
Diminishing quality of several 19th century terraces principally damaged by the exercise of Permitted Development Rights	Various locations.	If through the consultation process there is support, consider an initiative whereby Council officers in association with residents draw up proposals to improve one such terrace. Such proposals to be implemented by residents on a voluntary basis.
Minor repainting/refurbishment.	The Old Fire Station building, Burgage Lane.	Seek to secure minor visual improvements including preparation of coordinated repainting scheme.
Damaged listed railings.	London Road and Hertford Road. Also	Enter negotiations with Thames Water with view of initiating

	Viaduct Road. Also Priory Street.	appropriate repair/maintenance works.
Listed bridge.	Hertford Road.	Enter negotiations with Thames Water with view of initiating removal of surface vegetation and any other possible repair/maintenance works.
Temporary structure.	Broadmeads car park.	Ideally remove/replace. In interim repaint.
Gazebo information board.	Corner Amwell End/River Lea.	Retain/ resolve damp penetration <u>improve appearance</u> .
<u>BuildingsHeritage</u> at Risk in deteriorating condition.	19 Amwell End.	Source owner and seek improvements to property sufficient to remove from Council's <u>BuildingsHeritage</u> at Risk Register. Without prejudice grant assistance from EHDC may be available.
Vandalised information Board.	Similar location as above.	Consider removal in absence of resolution.
Information board.	New River Path, Hertford Road.	Replace/resolve damp?/ faded information.
Listed front boundary wall in need of repair	Christ Church, New Road.	Contact owner with view of securing repairs. Grant assistance potentially available.
Listed building and attached listed wall in need of refurbishment.	Thunder Hall-, Wadesmill Road.	Contact owner/ <u>s</u> and seek cooperation in undertaking necessary refurbishment to building and removal of vegetation from wall. Grant assistance potentially available. Potential candidate for Council's <u>BuildingsHeritage</u> at Risk Register.

Poor quality environment in strategic corner location.	Corner High Oak Road/Collett Road.	Source owner/s and discuss potential of improvements; possible hedge planting?
Poor quality environment in strategic corner location.	Corner High Oak Road/ Goldstone Close.	Source owner/s and discuss potential of improvements; minimum - regular weed control; reset ancient stone milling wheel feature.
Vegetation on wall.	Adjacent footpath 5 Little Horse Lane.	Contact owner and seek careful removal of vegetation.
Highway signage.	The Bourne/ Baldock Street.	Explore potential of rationalisation and removal of any redundant items.
Historic street name plates.	Various. Two noted Park Rd and Musley Hill.	Identify candidates and discuss with owners potential for restoration. If there is owner interest officers draft schedule of restoration.
Boundary railings.	North boundary to Buryfield Recreation Ground.	Undertake their repainting.
Deteriorating Listed Building and untidy site.	No. 19 Church Street.	Contact owner and discuss options. Potentially eligible for grant assistance (also see below).
Deteriorating front elevation of prominent commercial building.	No. 92 High Street - Wok u Like.	Contact owner and discuss options for improvements.
Deteriorating rear elevation of prominent commercial listed buildings.	Nos. 96 - 96A and No.77 and No. 79 High Street.	Contact owner and discuss options for improvements.
Modern telephone kiosk, vandalised.	Corner Kibes Lane/ New Street.	Contact BT - repair/restore or consider its removal.
Poor quality wall - visually unattractive.	North boundary to EHDC car park Kibes Lane.	Consider options for its improvement.
Other Actions.		

On a general issue the question is raised as to whether there is any interest or opportunities to develop partnerships involving the Councils and/or the Water Authority and/or the largest employer in the town in developing and implementing any of the more strategic recommendations of this Appraisal.
Of high importance discuss the potential of improving the visual appearance of the low lying field at the junction of London Road and Viaduct Road with an aspiration of making it accessible to the public. Its long term retention as open land is considered most important.
Discuss possibilities of long term future of car sales site corner of Amwell End/ Station Road. Any issues of intrusion onto public highway land?
Contact County Council and seek their co-operation in repairing listed milestone marker Baldock Street.
Consider potential of additional tree planting, small triangle of open space, east side of Baldock Street.
Consider potential of improving small sitting area at Watton Road to west of Gladstone Road.
Consider extending access path on north bank of River Lea westerly to the lock area although it is accepted this may be difficult.
Contact owner of no. 12 High Street and investigate condition of upper windows further. Building is currently included on the Council's BuildingsHeritage at Risk Register. Considerable improvements to ground floor now occupied by shop.
19 Church Street - include on Council's BuildingsHeritage at Risk Register.
Discuss potential of landscape improvements Malt makers Garden maintained by EHDC.
Discuss potential of landscape improvements and providing an enhanced sense of enclosure in respect of the former Quaker burial ground at Kibes Lane, maintained by EHDC.
Consider long term future of Rose bushes in main churchyard; remove self set sycamores in same location adjacent to Church Street.



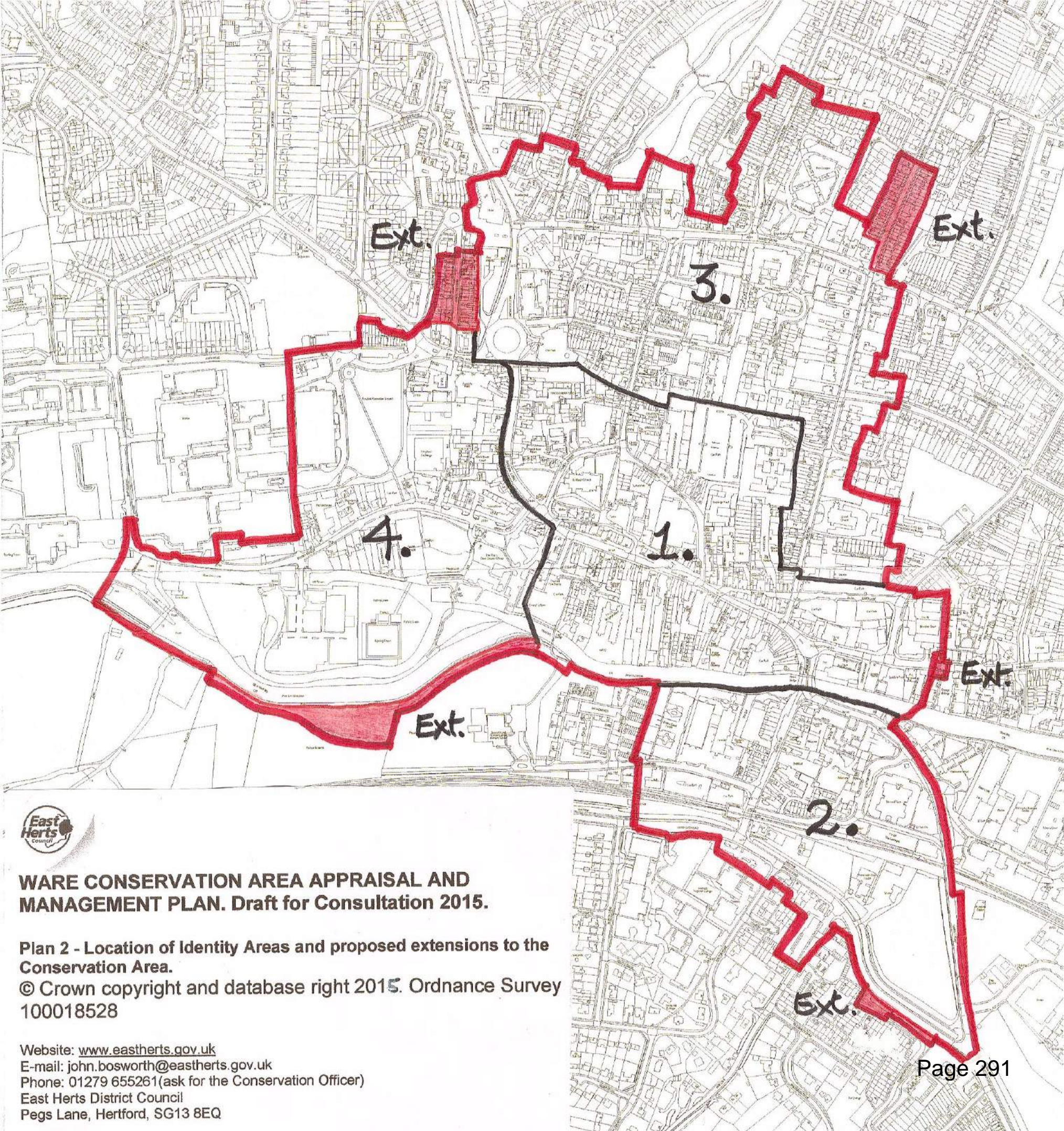
WARE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN. Draft for Consultation 2015.

Plan 1 - Existing Conservation Area on historic map dating from 1874-1894.

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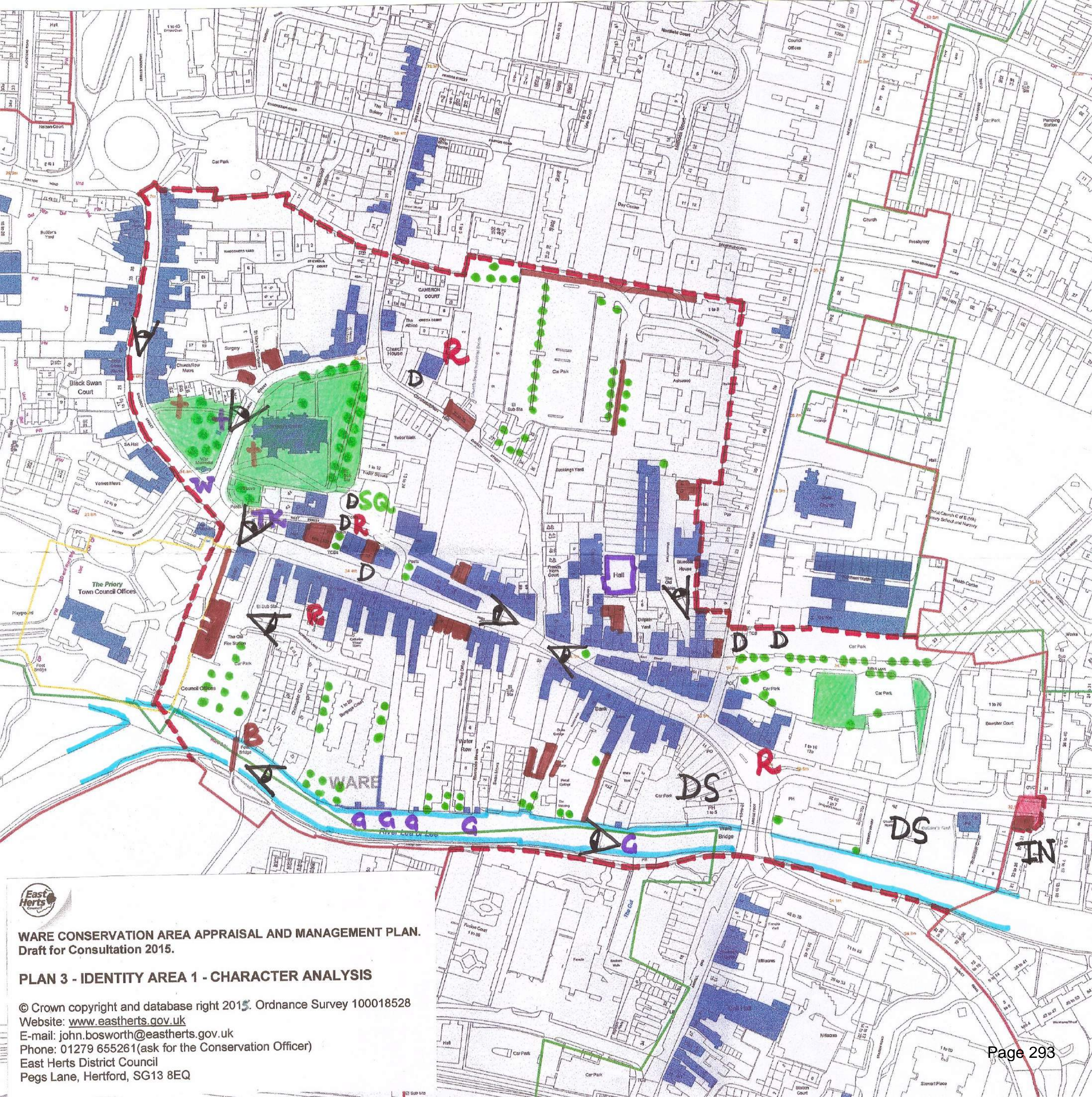
**WARE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND
MANAGEMENT PLAN. Draft for Consultation 2015.**

**Plan 2 - Location of Identity Areas and proposed extensions to the
Conservation Area.**

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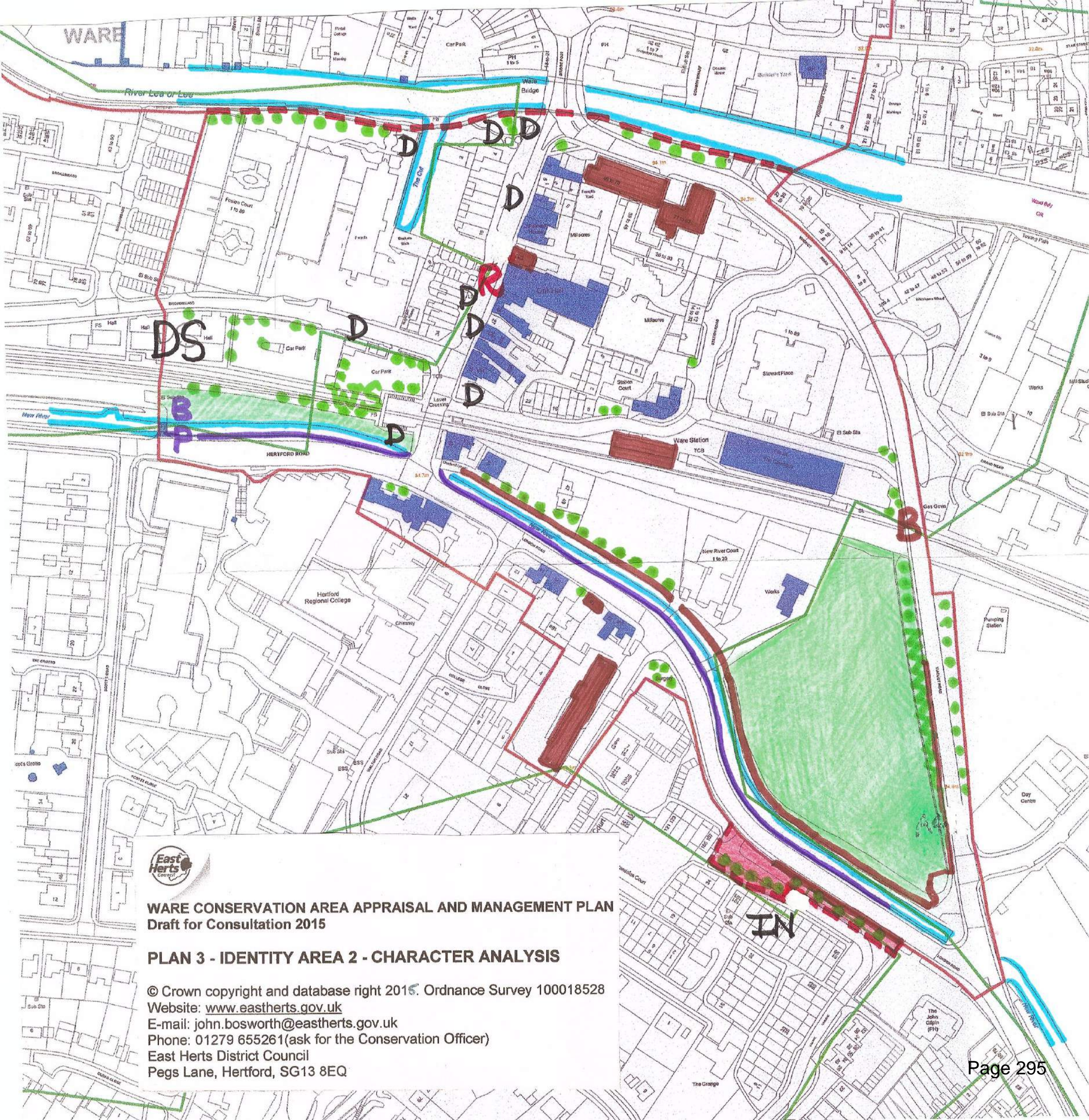


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PLAN 3 - IDENTITY AREA 1 - CHARACTER ANALYSIS

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PLAN 3 - IDENTITY AREA 2 - CHARACTER ANALYSIS

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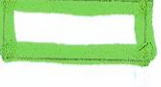











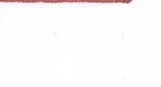





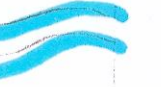







PLAN 3 - IDENTITY AREA 3 - CHARACTER ANALYSIS

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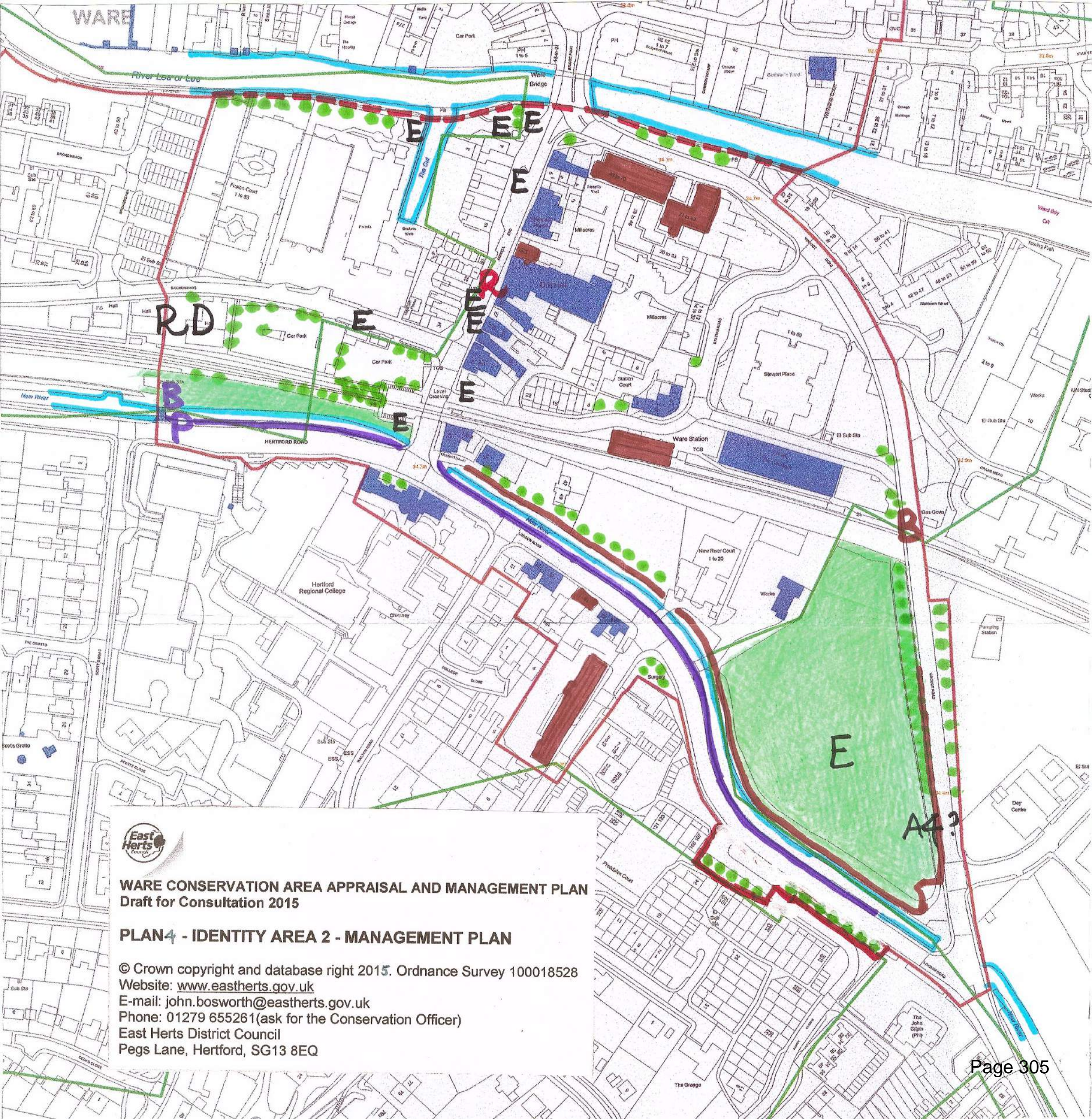
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CHARACTER ANALYSIS KEY

EXISTING CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY	
PROPOSED EXTENSIONS TO THE CONSERVATION AREA	IN 
SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT	
AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE	
INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES	
OTHER INDIVIDUALLY LISTED FEATURES	
Walls/railings	
Tombstone	
Gazebos	
Bridge	
Plaque	
War Memorial	
Telephone Kiosk	
Milestone Marker	
LISTED BUILDINGS 'AT RISK' OR POTENTIALLY AT RISK 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	
Bridges	
Street signs	
IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES (Including Tudor Square)	
IMPORTANT WATER FEATURES	
GENERAL LOCATION OF IMPORTANT TREES/HEDGEROWS	
WILDLIFE SITE	
IMPORTANT HISTORIC PARK AND GARDEN	
IMPORTANT VIEWS	
LARGE SCALE SITES THAT DETRACT	
OTHER ELEMENTS OUT OF CHARACTER WITH THE CONSERVATION AREA	
LARGE SCALE NEUTRAL AREA OF MODERN DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD BENEFIT FROM LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS	

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PLAN4 - IDENTITY AREA 2 - MANAGEMENT PLAN

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PLAN 4- IDENTITY AREA 3 - MANAGEMENT PLAN

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MANAGEMENT PLAN KEY

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

A new District Plan (DP) is being prepared that when adopted will contain the relevant DP planning policies.

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

SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT: Local Policies BH1- BH3 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

- Walls/railings
- Tombstone
- Gazebos
- Bridge
- Plaque
- War Memorial
- Telephone Kiosk
- Milestone Marker

LISTED BUILDINGS 'AT RISK' OR POTENTIALLY AT RISK 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
- Bridges
- Street signs

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

UNPROTECTED 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

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

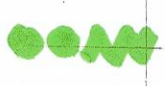
IMPORTANT HISTORIC PARK AND GARDEN TO BE PROTECTED: Local policy BH16 particularly applies

SELECTED IMPORTANT VIEWS TO BE PROTECTED

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

GENERAL LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT AREA

OTHER PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS



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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND COUNCIL SUPPORT

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT, PROACTIVE SERVICE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To enable the Executive to consider the case for the introduction of a pro-active element to the planning enforcement service

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> That:	
(A)	the introduction of a pro-active element to the planning enforcement service, to the extent and on the basis of the costs set out in this report, be endorsed.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Environment Scrutiny Committee set up a Task and Finish Group to consider the operation of the planning enforcement service during the last civic year (2015/16). The Group met a number of times toward the end of 2015 and concluded its work in early 2016.

1.2 A number of recommendations were made by the Group to improve the service and these were reported back to the Environment Scrutiny Committee at its meeting of 23 Feb 2016 and to the 5 April 2016 meeting of the Executive. These recommendations, relating to the delivery of the service and performance management, are being implemented from the new civic year.

1.3 This report addresses the recommendation of the Group that a business case be formulated and considered that relates to the

introduction of a proactive element to the enforcement service. The Executive at the meeting of 5 April 2016 asked that the case be formulated and reported back to it.

2.0 Current service

- 2.1 The number of cases that the service deals with fluctuates over time, however, on average over the last few years this has amounted to 400 – 500 cases per year. Many cases will be resolved quickly and require minimal investigation and assessment. A number however will result in formal enforcement action, the service of notices and appeal cases.
- 2.2 The resources available to deliver the service are 3 Enforcement Officer posts (one in a lead role) and one administrative/ technical support role. The service currently operates in a reactive way, responding to requests that are submitted to it, to undertake the investigation of potential breaches of planning control.
- 2.3 There has been no capacity in the service to undertake a proactive role – visiting and inspecting known active development sites, to pick up any potential breaches in control before they are reported to the service – and identifying those which may not otherwise be identified.

3.0 The case for proactive enforcement

- 3.1 The benefits of a proactive service can generally be summarised as follows: identifying otherwise unreported breaches – where development sites are more remote from or do not have a relationship with adjacent development, visual on site breaches of permissions which have been granted would be unlikely to be identified by a reactive only service.
- 3.2 Where breaches may not have a visual impact, for example a condition relating to a permission has not been dealt with, this would not necessarily be identified by a reactive service only.
- 3.3 Proactive action enables any potential breaches to be identified early in the life of a development and therefore also potentially resolved earlier, reducing resources which may be required to resolve them if they are identified later. This has the potential to free up some capacity in the service dealing with the remaining enforcement work.

- 3.4 Proactive action serves to set a good example to regular developers in the District. Setting a benchmark that they can expect their development sites to be visited and assessed and thereby encouraging compliance with all relevant controls on both current and future sites.
- 3.5 Level of service: There is extensive potential for proactive work. An appropriate balance needs to be achieved between greater activity, and undue scrutiny that does not result in any greater overall value. The Task and Finish Group proposed that an additional 0.5FTE Enforcement Officer resource be employed in order to deliver the proactive element of the service. It was considered that this would achieve a good balance. It would not enable all active development sites across the District to be investigated, but would enable a significant number of selected sites to be monitored.
- 3.6 The selection and monitoring arrangements would be established by Officers, in consultation with the Executive Member, if that is required. This could be through a process of selection of sites at random – or by assessment given the knowledge of sites at the application stage. The level of service that could be provided will depend on the extent of resource and a 0.5FTE role is considered to represent a good basis on which to assess the impact of this role. Officers will be able to provide further information to Executive on this point at the meeting.
- 3.7 Costs of this level of service: Against the benefits it is necessary to identify the additional costs of delivering the service. At the appropriate Officer grade, the 0.5FTE post would result in additional salary costs of £20,000. Given that the Officer would be required to regularly travel around the District to monitor sites an additional amount of £2,000 would be required to cover travel allowances. Other costs would be met from within existing operational budgets.
- 3.8 Officers have considered the potential for these additional costs to be offset by the generation of additional income. There appears very limited potential for this. At present the planning enforcement service operates as a budget cost to the Council, without the generation of any regular income. Occasionally cases that have resulted in prosecution or other legal action can result in some payments being made to the Council, but these only reflect the significant input in Officer resources, that has been made to

those cases in advance. There appears little reasonable prospect that these circumstances will change.

- 3.9 It is appropriate to also consider a non monetary implication of greater proactivity. This is likely to generate a greater case load for the service overall. After initial investigation, it would be necessary for any cases identified to be passed to the current service Officers, otherwise there is the potential that the proactive element of the service is quickly lost. At this stage it is difficult to predict the impact that this may have on the service overall.

4.0 Implications/Consultations

- 4.1 Executive are asked to reach a view on the introduction of this element of the service. Your Officers are of the view that the benefits of early identification of potential planning breaches and the wider site scrutiny message that the service would give are of a value that warrants the additional costs. As a result, it is recommended that the service be introduced as proposed.

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

Background Papers

Reports to the Environment Scrutiny committee of 23 Feb 2016 and the Executive of 5 April 2016

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=154&MId=2692>

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=119&MId=2635&Ver=4>

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy
Consultation:	This proposal has arisen from a consideration of the planning enforcement service by a Task and Finish Group established by the Environment Scrutiny Committee
Legal:	None
Financial:	Introduction of this element of the service does result in additional costs as set out in the report. These would be permanent additional revenue costs
Human Resource:	Additional recruitment required to introduce the service
Risk Management:	None of any significance
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	The proactive service would monitor all elements of development schemes, including those which have the potential to impact on health and wellbeing issues.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To consider changes to the level of discount granted on empty homes.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:	
(A)	the recommendations of the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee be received; and
(B)	the options detailed within this report be considered and option XXXX be approved.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. A report was considered by Corporate Business Scrutiny on 22 March 2016 in respect of consideration of options for the Council Tax Support scheme for 2017/18. It included details about the availability of changing the level of discounts granted on empty properties.

1.2. It was determined that these subjects would best be considered in two separate reports. This report addresses the Council Tax discounts on empty homes.

2. REPORT

2.1. Council Tax discounts

2.1.1. As part of the Government's localism agenda, Councils were given discretion to change the level of discount on a small range of reliefs from April 2013.

2.1.2. This new discretion related to second homes, empty and substantially unfurnished properties and uninhabitable empty properties.

2.1.3. Council considered a report in December 2012 and determined to remove discounts for second homes, and reduce to 50% the discount available on each of the empty property discounts. No changes were made to the qualifying conditions or duration of the discount.

2.1.4. The council chose not to utilise a new option of adding a 50% premium on long term empty properties, which have remained empty for over 2 years.

2.1.5. In 2015/16 these discounts cost £440,000, and the premium could have generated in the region of £118,000 additional revenue. This is based on assumption that all properties were Band D value.

2.1.6. The loss of income is shared by East Herts, the County Council, Police Authority and Town and Parish Councils pro rata to each authority's rate of council tax.

2.1.7 There were 4421 awards of relief on empty and unfurnished properties and 128 awards on empty and uninhabitable properties in 2015/16.

2.2 Options

2.2.1 Corporate Business Scrutiny recommended that proposals be made which discouraged empty properties, with a phased approach to reducing discounts.

2.2.2 Introducing the empty homes premium from 1st April 2017 would generate additional income in the region of £118,000 based on 2016/17 council tax levels.

2.2.3 The following tables demonstrate the current number of reliefs for empty and substantially unfurnished homes, and empty uninhabitable homes.

Table 1. Number of reliefs granted for each duration in 2015/16 for empty and uninhabitable property

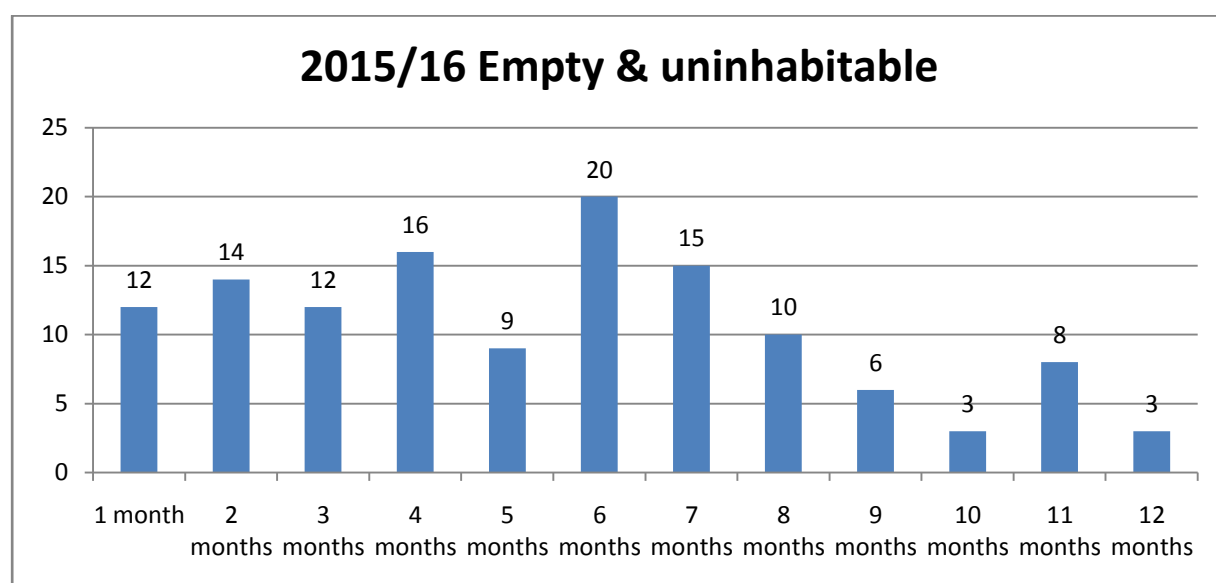
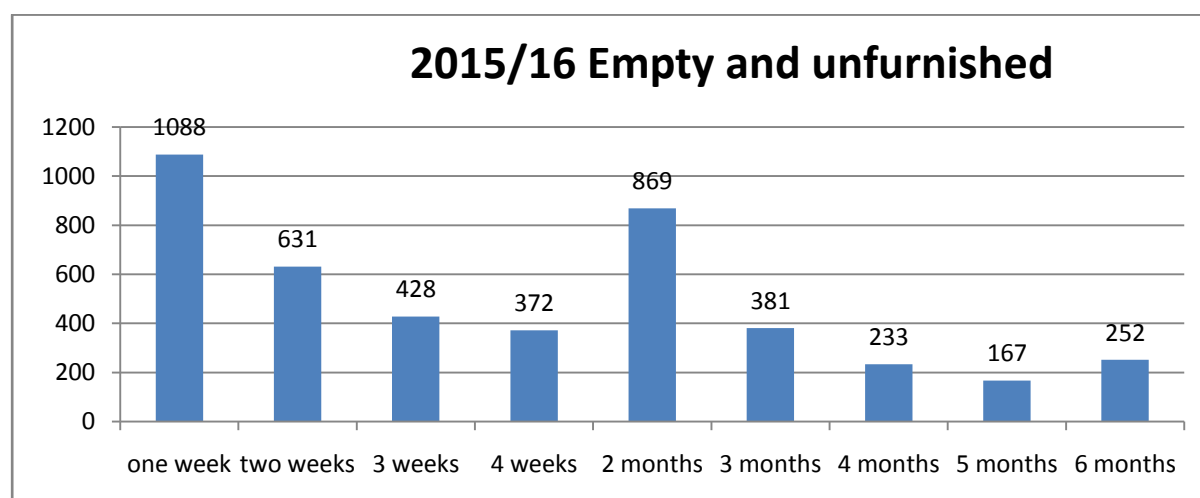


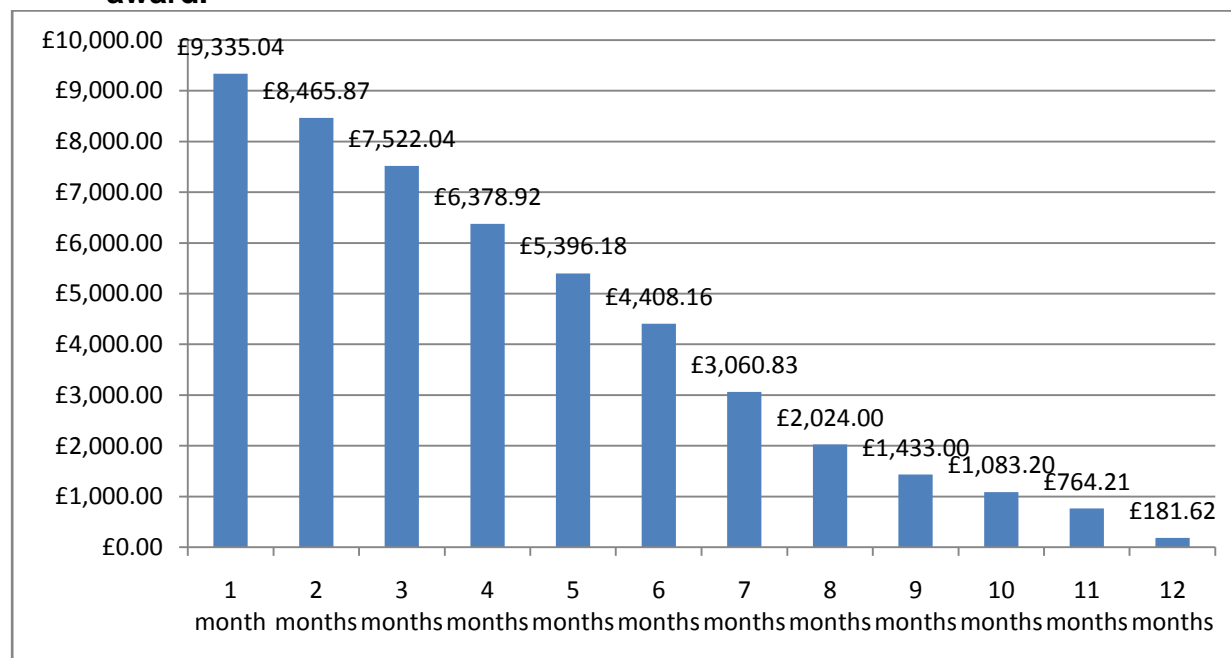
Table 2: Number of reliefs granted for each duration in 2015/16 for empty and unfurnished property.



2.2.4 It should be noted that the level and duration of awards within the schemes vary each year.

2.2.5 The following tables demonstrate the cost and duration of awards.

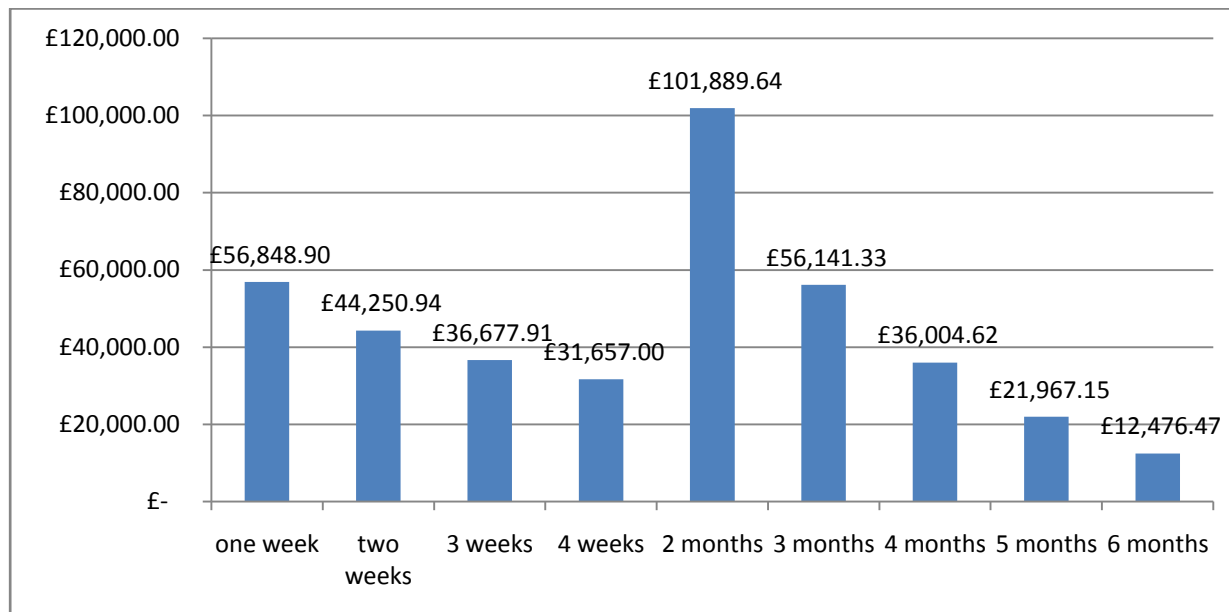
Table 3: Empty and uninhabitable 2015/16 cost of scheme per month of award.



2.2.6 The table below summarises the potential savings achieved by reducing the periods of the reliefs for empty and uninhabitable properties

Reduce scheme to	Potential savings
1 month	£40,718
2 months	£32,252
3 months	£24,730
4 months	£18,351
5 months	£12,955
6 months	£8,547
7 months	£5,486
8 months	£3,462
9 months	£2,029
10 months	£946
11 months	£182

Table 4: Empty and substantially unfurnished, 2015/16 cost of scheme per period of the award.



2.2.7 The table below summarises the potential savings achieved by reducing the periods of the reliefs for empty and substantial unfurnished properties.

Reduce scheme to	Potential savings
1 week	£ 341,065
2 weeks	£ 296,814
3 weeks	£ 260,136
4 weeks	£ 228,479
2 months	£ 126,590
3 months	£ 70,448
4 months	£ 34,444
5 months	£ 12,476

2.2.8 Alternatively the percentage of relief could be increased and the period reduced. 38.8% of all awards for empty and unfurnished properties in 15/16 were for a period up to 2 weeks. The table below shows the impact of increasing the award to 100% for this period and removing it for all periods thereafter. This would be beneficial to those people living in rented accommodation who have an overlapping tenancy when moving home.

period	100% up to two weeks only
one week	£ 113,697.80
two weeks	£ 88,501.88
3 weeks	-£ 36,677.91
4 weeks	-£ 31,657.00
2 months	-£ 101,889.64
3 months	-£ 56,141.33
4 months	-£ 36,004.62
5 months	-£ 21,967.15
6 months	-£ 12,476.47
Saving	-£ 94,614.44

2.3 Other Local authority decisions.

2.3.1 Local Authorities in the area have responded differently to the capability to vary these discounts, depending on their circumstances and policy objectives.

	Premium charged on Long Term Empty properties?	Discount for 'empty and unfurnished'	Discount for Empty-uninhabitable
East Herts	No	50% for 6 months	50% for up to 12 months
Stevenage	No	10% for 6 months	10% for up to 12 months
North Herts	Yes	100% for 28 days only	Zero
Hertsmere	Yes	100% for up to 2 months	50% for up to 12 months
Welwyn	Yes	100% for one month	Zero
St Albans	Yes	50% for 6 months	Zero
Dacorum	Yes	100% for up to 3 months	100% for up to 3 months
Three Rivers	Yes	Zero	Zero
Watford	Yes	Zero	Zero
Central Beds	Yes	Zero	Zero
Bedford	Yes	Zero	Zero
Luton	Yes	Zero	Zero

2.4 Protections

2.4.1 In addition to the discretionary reliefs detailed above, the Council Tax regulations include provision for other categories of relief to be granted when properties are empty. These are statutory exemptions over which the billing authority has no discretion. These include where the property has been left empty by a deceased person, in which case no council tax is charged until probate or a letter of administration is granted or for a period of up to six months after the date when probate or a letter of administration is granted.

3. Summary

3.1 There are three areas under consideration.

- The addition of a 50% Council Tax premium on properties which have been empty for 2 or more years
- Changing the period or percentage of relief granted to properties which are classified as empty and uninhabitable from 50% for up to 12 months to a period not exceeding 6 months at 50%
- Changing the period or percentage of relief granted to properties which are classified as empty and substantially unfurnished from a period of up to 6 months at 50% to a period not exceeding 2 months at 50%.

3.2 These changes would be introduced no earlier than 1 April 2017.

4. Implications

4.1 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:	Enhance the quality of people's lives Future development best meets the need of the district and its residents
Consultation:	N/A
Legal:	N/A
Financial:	Only as referenced in the report
Human Resource:	N/A
Risk Management:	Only as referenced in the report.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	N/A

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2017/18

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To consider the latest available information around the current local Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme at East Herts and whether any changes to the scheme should be considered for 2017/18.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> that	
(A)	the recommendations of the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee be received; and
(B)	the Executive consider whether other options around scheme design should be explored further for East Herts' local Council Tax Support scheme for April 2017.

1. 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.

- 1.2. If the Council were to choose to consider any material revisions to the scheme, this would be the subject of public consultation, which would need to be considered by both those entitled to receive support as well as the general Tax payers of East Herts.
- 1.3. It may appear early to consider a scheme for 17/18 but bringing forward this report offers an opportunity to:
 - 1.3.1. Allow enough time for careful consideration by members.
 - 1.3.2. Deliver meaningful consultation with those affected and the public.
 - 1.3.3. Consider fully the implications of any changes on the wider financial health of the organisation.
 - 1.3.4. Ensure that our partners who are financially affected by any changes (the county council, police, and all town and parish councils) can plan for any impacts.
 - 1.3.5. A report was taken to Corporate Business Scrutiny on 22 March 2016 which detailed the background to the introduction of CTS, the current position and potential changes that could be made.
 - 1.3.6 Attention was drawn to the ongoing welfare reforms and the potential impact on our residents. There remains uncertainty around implementation and roll out of some reforms.
 - 1.3.7 CBS resolved to support the status quo for 2017/18

2. REPORT

2.1. The origins of Council Tax Support (CTS)

- 2.1.1. Before April 2013, we administered Council Tax Benefit on behalf of the Government. This national scheme was specified in legislation and we were reimbursed by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) through a subsidy claim submitted annually and subject to audit.
- 2.1.2. Clients fell into one of two groups, “Passported” and “standard claimants”. A passported claim was one in which the DWP had already carried out a means test and then notified us that the

customer's income was at or below the minimum income level for their household composition. They would be automatically entitled to 100% of their Council Tax to be paid by Council Tax Benefit. A deduction would however be made from this entitlement where there were non-dependants living in the home.

2.1.3. The second group were called 'standard claims'. These customers had their means testing undertaken by the council and were awarded Council Tax benefit in accordance with the national scheme criteria. These customers had income above the minimum requirements and were required to pay something towards their council tax liability. A deduction would also be made from this entitlement where there were non-dependants living in the home.

2.1.4. In very general terms the full expenditure on the scheme was reimbursed by the DWP.

2.2. The impact of changes from 1st April 2013

2.2.1. From April 2013, the national scheme for Council Tax Benefit ceased, and Councils had to devise their own "Council Tax Reduction Schemes" for working age claimants. The Government continues to set a national scheme for Elderly customers.

2.2.2. Instead of the local scheme being funded on the basis of actual expenditure, the Government moved the funding into the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) settlement (one of the strands of central government grant that councils currently receive), fixing it at only 90% of the subsidy paid in a prior year. RSG is the amount of grant that Government give to Councils to support their wider service delivery, and makes up one part of the income of the Council in addition to Council Tax receipts, fees and charges and an element of Business rate collection. However the move away from RSG makes this funding link less obvious.

2.2.3. Each Council had to devise a way to fund 100% of the cost of the Elderly 'national' scheme and provide a Working age scheme, whilst receiving 10% less funding.

2.2.4. 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 current East Herts scheme complies with this statement.

2.2.5. Local Authorities must also 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.

2.3. Other Council Tax discounts and premiums

2.3.1. The report to CBS on 22 March 2016 included consideration of potential changes to council tax discounts for empty properties. It was determined that these should be in a separate report for consideration by the Executive and Council.

2.4. East Herts' Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTS)

2.4.1. The Council initially devised a scheme which replicated the previous national scheme but limited the Council tax liability that was used to assess entitlement to 90% for working age customers. In effect this required working age customers to pay at least 10% of their council tax bill. The Government subsequently offered a one off transitional grant to Councils who restricted the reduction to 91.5%, and accordingly the Council amended the proposal and took the one off transitional grant. The Council has maintained this position for the first 4 years of the scheme. Therefore working age customers are currently liable for at least 8.5%.

2.4.2. The cost of the scheme is reflected in the tax base, and the income from the Government coming through the RSG. For 2013/14 the expected and actual positions are shown below.

2013/14

Precept	Government Grant & one off transitional grant	Expected expenditure 2013/14	Actual Expenditure 2013/14
75.29% HCC	£ 4,843,880.00	£ 4,922,208.27	£ 4,855,027.60
9.95% Police	£ 640,074.00	£ 650,497.71	£ 641,447.03
14.76% EHC/Parish	£ 950,247.00	£ 964,959.41	£ 952,320.15
	£ 6,434,201.00	£ 6,537,665.39	£ 6,448,794.78
Grant Shortfall		-£ 103,464.39	-£ 14,593.78

2.4.3. The Government require that major preceptors (County and Police) are consulted each year, and if there is any change to the scheme a full consultation open to all tax payers in the district is required. There is no specific timescale prescribed but the period must allow for meaningful consultation.

2.4.4. Currently (2015/16) 75.6% of the Tax base income is precepted by Herts County and Council and 9.8% by the Police, and accordingly they have a vested interest in the value of the CTS scheme as it directly impacts on their ability to raise funds.

2.4.5. Before the introduction of CTS there had been a number of years of constant case load increases. The caseload has since stabilised and begun to reduce the impact on the cost of the scheme is demonstrated below.

Year	Cost of the CTS scheme		
2013/14	£	6,448,794.78	Actual
2014/15	£	6,066,188.65	Actual
2015/16	£	5,807,049.37	Actual
2016/17	£	5,841,915.70	Estimate*

2.5. East Herts Customers

2.5.1. A large proportion of customers affected by the introduction of the CTS scheme had not previously had to pay anything towards their Council Tax bill. If they had been 'passported' under the Council Tax Benefit scheme their liability would have been discharged in full by a credit transfer onto their Council Tax account. Under the new arrangements all working age customer had to pay at least 8.5% towards their bill.

2.5.2. It continues to be a challenge to support and educate these customers into a regular payment arrangement, and arrears of Council Tax for these customers is increasing. We have;

- Offered flexible repayment options
- Given more time to pay in the first year of the scheme
- Initiated a project with the Citizens Advice Bureau to support customers with repeated arrears

- Promoted other debt and advice agencies.

2.5.3. The in-year collection rate for working age claimants who had only the minimum 8.5% liability to pay was 67.49% in 2014/15 and 71.4% in 2015/16,

2.5.4. The overall in-year collection rate for all working age CTS customers was 77.43% in 2014/15, and 80% in 2015/16. In contrast to the '*all tax payers*' in-year collection rate, which for 2014/15 was 98.2%, and 98.4% in 15/16.

2.5.5. This means that despite improved in year collection rates across each group, there is an increasing level of arrears to be collected from CTS customers. At 31.3.2015, 447 Working Age (WA) CTS households had a balance outstanding at the end of the year (2014/15) greater than their initial net liability, indicating that they had not paid their liability and had incurred additional costs of recovery. At 1.2.2016, there are 405 working age CTS households where the outstanding liability exceeds their initial net liability.

2.5.6. There are 213 accounts which appear in both the 2014/15 and 2015/16 lists which have outstanding balances greater than their net liability, indicating that they have not paid for these two years. A similar breakdown is not available for the 2013/14 year.

at 31.3.15	WA CTS
2013/14 liability outstanding	£ 171,139.95
2014/15 liability outstanding	£ 325,723.43
at 1.3.16	
2013/14 liability outstanding	£ 102,321.84
2014/15 liability outstanding	£ 179,622.41
2015/16 liability outstanding	£ 303,605.24

2.5.7. Many of these same customers were affected by other welfare reforms introduced at the same time including;

- The spare room subsidy scheme
- The Benefit cap
- Reviews of disability benefits etc.

2.5.8. Many families find that they have increasing debts with their councils and landlords for bills that were previously paid for them.

2.6. 2016/17 onwards

2.6.1. The new welfare reforms being introduced from April 2016 will see some of these same households experience further reductions in their incomes. The DWP advise that the new lower Benefit cap is expected to affect up to 199 households in the East Herts area, and is due for roll out in the autumn of 2016.

2.6.2. Consideration of any variations to the existing scheme needs to consider;

- The continued reduction in the Council's funding from central government
- The reducing cost of CTS from falling caseload and reduction in entitlement levels
- The impact of other welfare benefits reforms on the ability to pay
- The cost of increasing arrears and recovery costs
- The buoyancy of the tax base generally

2.6.3. 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. The financial impact of any decision also needs to be included when setting our budget and Council tax. An equality impact assessment will be carried out on any proposed changes for consideration.

2.6.4. The CTS scheme for 2016/17 can be summarised as follows:

- 2.6.4.1. That the CTS scheme for all working age claimants will be based on 91.5% of their council tax liability;
- 2.6.4.2. All local discretions currently in place will continue e.g. war pension disregards;
- 2.6.4.3. All other aspects of the new Council Tax Support scheme to mirror the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme.

2.6.5. 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 2015/16.

2.7. Options that could be considered in redesigning a scheme

2.7.1. There are a number of options that could be considered when redesigning the scheme, although all revisions would affect working age customers only, given that pensioners have to be fully protected by our scheme.

2.7.2. Most recently the Government has introduced changes to the Housing Benefit regulations which are not currently mirrored in the CTS regulations. This means the schemes are no longer aligned. These changes include reducing the period that a claim can be backdated, removing the family premium for new claims, and changes to self employed claims. The financial implications across the caseload will be small, but changing the scheme so that these rules apply equally would reduce confusion for our customers. These changes would need to be consulted on.

2.7.3. Our caseload for CTS indicates that the proportion of working age customers compared to pensioners is approximately an equal share, (52% WA :48% Elderly) although this does change over time, especially given the national age threshold for becoming a pensioner is increasing.

2.7.4. The type of changes that could be made can be summarised as follows:

2.7.5. Changing the level of “minimum payment” for all working age customers

2.7.6. The current scheme assumes that all working age customers are asked to pay at least something towards their Council Tax, and as described earlier the minimum payment is 8.5% of liability. The Council could consider making a change to that amount either by:

2.7.6.1. Increasing it (for example to 10%)

2.7.6.2. Reducing it

2.7.7. Increasing the amount customers are required to pay would risk the need for further bad debt provision – those customers who are currently struggling to pay would be unlikely to pay more.

2.7.8. Reducing the amount customers are required to pay would create a funding gap that the council – and other precepting bodies – would have to fill. It would also add administrative costs.

2.7.9. Introducing a band cap (so limiting the amount that we would pay to a value of a lower property band, for example Band D)

Table 1: Number of properties by band at 1.2.2016

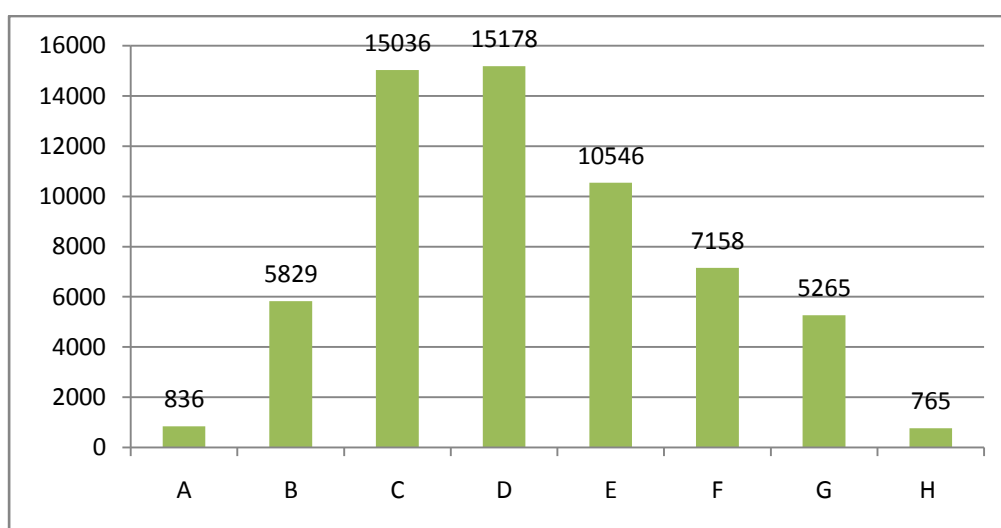
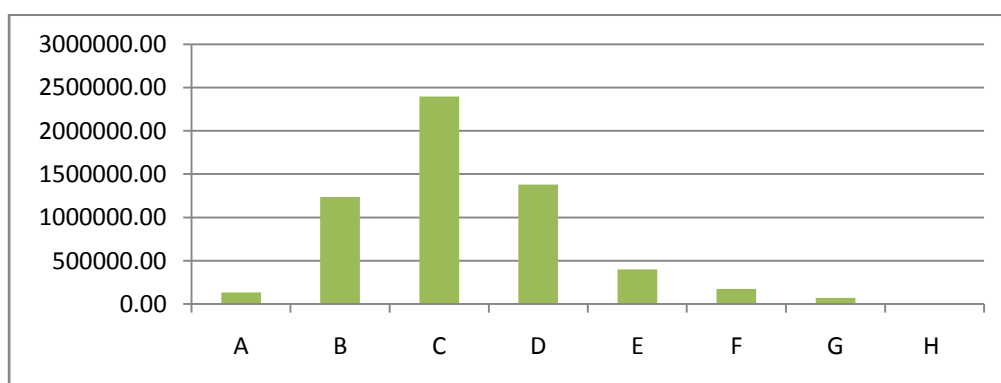


Table 2: CTS spend by band at 1.2.2016



2.7.9.1.1. The above table demonstrates that a band cap at D is unlikely to make significant changes to the overall cost of the scheme as the majority of those entitled will be within Band A-D properties anyway.

2.7.9.1.2. This could also disproportionately affect those with a requirement for a larger property as they have children, other dependents due to caring responsibilities or a disability. These groups could already have been hit by other areas of Welfare reform including the Benefit Cap and the Spare Room subsidy limitation.

2.7.10. Introducing a minimum amount that the council would fund

2.7.10.1. Some Councils have introduced a minimum level at which they will support residents. An example is that you have to be entitled to at least £5 a week to be supported. This means someone who is currently entitled to a lower amount, would not receive it, despite the fact that we have assessed them as currently requiring support. There are no real savings in terms of administrative costs because we would still have to undertake an assessment in order to find out that we wouldn't award. In addition, the fact that they are currently entitled to support indicates that they are financially vulnerable and the likelihood of being able to collect that additional amount from those residents is low. Therefore the potential reduction in costs overall is minimal and outweighed by an increase in bad debt provision and recovery costs.

2.7.11. Changes around discretions for Disability, Children and other Dependents

2.7.11.1. This would change the nature of the scheme overall. East Herts councillors, when setting the original scheme were clear that all would contribute equally as the core scheme already differentiates preferentially to those with disabilities, children etc.

2.7.11.2. Any complexity that is added to the way in which we calculate entitlement, will make the administration of the scheme both more complex for our officers to manage both in terms of calculation but more importantly, to explain to our residents.

2.7.11.3. This would also mean that the general working age population may need to pick up an even greater share of the cost if the scheme is to remain affordable and equitable.

2.7.11.4. The example below demonstrates how the scheme already differentiates between those with and without disabilities.

Couple, with two children – one of which is entitled to Disability living allowance, with a weekly income of £496.70, made up of

earnings and disability benefits, would qualify for £22.63 per week CTS if living in a band D property. The same household without a disability with the same income, would not qualify for any help. This is because the scheme disregards more of the income as well as using higher applicable amounts for the disabled household.

	Disabled	Not disabled
Income		
Earnings	380	462.3
DLA @ high rate	82.3	
Child benefit	34.4	34.4
Gross Income	496.7	496.7
Income disregarded	141.7	59.4
Net income used in assessment	355	437.3
Applicable Amounts	334.2	224.35
Income in excess of applicable amounts	20.8	212.95
Council Tax liability	29.28	29.28
91.5% of liability	26.79	26.79
taper	4.16	42.59
Weekly entitlement	22.63	0

2.7.12. Other adjustments

- 2.7.12.1. There are a number of other component elements of the scheme that could be adjusted including income tapers, non-dependent deductions, income disregards etc. but all would carry the same risk to bad debt provisions, potential recovery costs and costs of administration. The more complex the scheme, the more difficult it is to comply with and customers' levels of understanding could be compromised.
- 2.7.12.2. Finally, the intention 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. However, given we already have to operate a means tested Housing benefit scheme, the CTS calculation is produced simultaneously and minimised the duplication of effort of officers as far as possible, changing to a discount scheme would introduce a new process and

administration costs.

2.7.12.3. Officers are keen to explore developments nationally in this area and will keep members informed of any developments. However, at this time there are no such schemes in existence which demonstrates the challenge that this presents.

Table3: The costs and savings of various options based on current caseload

	Consult on changes to the CTS scheme as follows;	Costs & Savings (-)		EHC share @10.04%	
a	Reduce the maximum liability to 90%	-£	81,165	-£	8,149
b	Reduce the maximum liability to 85%	-£	264,767	-£	26,583
c	Reduce the maximum liability to 80%	-£	446,396	-£	44,818
d	Reduce the maximum liability to 75%	-£	625,608	-£	62,811
e	Increase the maximum liability to 100%	£	288,427	£	28,958
f	Increase the maximum liability to 95%	£	103,447	£	10,386
g	Retain maximum liability at 91.5% but Cap this at a Band D property	-£	95,763	-£	9,615
h	Retain maximum liability at 91.5% but Cap this at a Band C property	-£	214,631	-£	21,549
i	Retain maximum liability at 91.5% but introduce minimum award at £5	-£	51,914	-£	5,212
j	Retain maximum liability at 91.5% but remove second adult rebate	-£	34,171	-£	3,431
k	Retain maximum liability at 91.5% but cap savings at £8k	-£	69,089	-£	6,937
l	Retain maximum liability at 91.5% but introduce new non dependant deductions	-£	88,277	-£	8,863

Table 4: The changes to Non dependant deductions for option L above.

Non-Dependant's Circumstances	Current Weekly Deductions	Proposed weekly Deductions
	CTS	CTS
Not in Remunerative Work		
• Under 18 - regardless of income	NIL	NIL
• Under 25 - on IS/JSA(IB)/UC	NIL	5.00
• 25 or over - on IS/JSA(IB)/UC	NIL	5.00
• Getting PC (GC +/- SC)	NIL	5.00
• Getting Main phase ESA(IR)	NIL	5.00
• 18 or over - not on IS/JSA(IB)/GC/UC	3.77	5.00
In Remunerative Work and:		
• Getting PC (GC +/- SC)	NIL	£5
• Over 18 and gross weekly income is:		
▶ Under £133.00	3.77	10.00
▶ £133.00 - £194.99	3.77	10.00
▶ £195.00 - £252.99	7.58	15.00
▶ £253.00 - £337.99	7.58	15.00
▶ £338.00 - £419.99	9.56	25.00
▶ £420.00 or over	11.45	25.00

2.8. Welfare Reform

- 2.8.1. We know that further Welfare Reform will impact upon our residents, but at the time of writing this report we do not have any more details about who, or how, people will be affected. We had expected more details but some Government initiatives have been delayed. The earliest indication of actual numbers of customers affected by the latest Benefit cap, for example, will not be known until data samples are received after April.
- 2.8.2. We would need to consider the impact of any of those changes on the ability of our residents in receipt of Council Tax Support to pay their liability. This could impact upon collection rates,

costs of recovery etc. Remembering the need for full consultation on any proposed changes.

2.8.3 The following table details the schemes in operation around the county.

Local authority	Scheme
Watford	Default national scheme ie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No band capping • Maximum benefit is 100% of liability • Second adult rebate retained
St Albans	Default national scheme ie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No band capping • Maximum benefit is 100% of liability
Welwyn/Hatfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum benefit is 75% of liability • 100% to protected groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Disability premium ➢ Enhanced disability premium ➢ Severe disability premium ➢ Disabled child premium ➢ Child under 5 ➢ ESA support group ➢ DLA/PIP ➢ War widow/ers
North Herts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum benefit is 75% of liability • 100% to protected groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Disability premium ➢ Enhanced disability premium ➢ ESA support component ➢ Disabled child premium • Earnings disregard increased to £7.50 (single); £15 (couple); £30 (disabled/carer/auxiliary occupation); £37.50 (lone parent)
Dacorum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restriction of liability to Band D • Protected groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Disabled child premium ➢ Disability premium or underlying DP for those with limited capability for work ➢ ESA work related activity group ➢ ESA support group ➢ Child under 5 ➢ War widow/ers or war disablement pension • Maximum benefit is 75% of liability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 100% to protected groups as above • Non dependant deductions modified • Second adult rebate - those over pension credit age only • Backdating - 3 months for pensioners and 1 month for everyone else
Three Rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restriction of liability to Band D • Capital limit reduced to £8,000 • Non dependant deductions increased • Second adult rebate – those over pension credit age only
Hertsmere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restriction of liability to Band D* • Protected groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Claimant, partner or child gets DLA, AA or PIP ➤ ESA support group ➤ Lone parent with child under 5 • Maximum benefit is 80% of liability* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 100% of liability to protected groups as above • Non dependant deductions modified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Protection from non dependant charges to groups as above <p>*ie liability is actually restricted to 80% of Band D or 80% of actual liability (whichever is lower) except for protected groups</p>
Stevenage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum benefit is 91.5% of liability
East Herts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum benefit is 91.5% of liability
Broxbourne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restriction of liability to Band E • Protected groups – claimant, partner, child or non-dependant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disability premium ➤ Enhanced disability premium ➤ Severe disability premium ➤ Carer premium ➤ DLA/PIP ➤ ESA support component ➤ CTR support component ➤ Incapacity benefit long term rate ➤ War disablement pension ➤ War widow/ers • Maximum benefit is 80% liability • 100% of liability to protected groups as above • Income taper increased from 20-25% • Protected groups as above • Non dependant deductions modified • Earnings disregard increased to £10.00 (single); £15 (couple);

	<p>£25 (disabled/carer/auxiliary occupation); £30.00 (lone parent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to work 'run on ' increased from 4-6 weeks • Backdating replaced by automatic 3 month start date prior to claim if satisfies rules in that period
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3. Implications

- 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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Contact Officer: Su Tarran – Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service, Tel 2075
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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	- Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Support for our vulnerable families and individuals
Consultation:	May be required if Executive determine that changes should be considered.
Legal:	N/A
Financial:	Only as referenced in the report.
Human Resource:	N/A
Risk Management:	Only as referenced in the report.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	N/A

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND COUNCIL SUPPORT

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT: PRE APPLICATION REVISED SERVICE AND CHARGES

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To allow Executive to consider proposed revision to the service and charges.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL</u> That:	
(A)	the ‘in-year’ revision to charges for the Development Management pre-application advice service be adopted as set out in this report.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Pre-application charges were first introduced by the Council in April 2007. A review undertaken toward the end of last year concluded that the service to customers should be improved with regard to both quality and timescale. The review also concluded that the cost of providing the service is not met by the fees currently charged.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that additional and dedicated planning officer resources be provided to deliver the service. This will ensure that acceptable turnaround timescales can be achieved. A dedicated resource for the majority of submissions will also ensure consistency. Additional senior officer checking will be introduced into the process in order to maintain and improve the quality of

output. It is necessary however to increase the fees charged for some elements of the service in order to secure these improvements.

- 2.2 The proposed revisions to charges are set out in the following table:

Category of development	Charge from 1 April 2016 (£)	Proposed charge (£)
Householder	30	130
Heritage Advice	50	130
Major development proposals	Fee between £840 and £1,200 depending on the scale of the proposals	Individually quoted fee in all cases
Adverts	50	100
Proposed Lawful Development	50	130
Affordable Housing advice	105	No fee (costs to be included in the individual quote for major schemes)

No changes are proposed to the fees for other categories of development.

- 2.3 Secondary Fees – these are charged when an applicant returns for further advice relating to a scheme amended after their first submission. This will remain for the high volume cases – householder and heritage advice. For major developments it will be factored into an individual quote. No other secondary fees would be charged.
- 2.4 Meetings - are currently offered only for major and minor development types. This would continue (included within the initial fee). In relation to all other development types they would be offered at £25 per hour per officer. The Council would have the discretion to withdraw the offer of a meeting for clearly unacceptable proposals where detailed engagement is inappropriate.
- 2.5 Urgent Advice – the Council often receives requests for advice to be provided urgently, usually associated with a land or house

sale. It is currently unable to respond to requests of this nature. It is proposed that premium fee levels be introduced for the provision of urgent advice to test the market as part of these proposals. For all fee types it is proposed that the fee (all elements including any meeting requests) be increased by 100% if a response is required in 5 working days or less.

- 2.6 Charities and Parish and Town Councils - A 25% reduction in the relevant fee is currently allowed for submissions made by registered charities and Parish and Town Councils. No change to this allowance is proposed.
- 2.7 The Executive is requested to consider and endorse these revised service and fee proposals. The operation of the service will continue to be monitored and any further appropriate consequential changes (to service) would be introduced after consultation between Officers and the Executive Member.
- 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	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy
Consultation:	Only with the current planning officer and performance teams. A publicity launch for revised fees will be undertaken setting out the proposed service improvements planned
Legal:	None
Financial:	Additional fee income will be generated from the revised fees. This will be invested into the service to secure service improvements.
Human Resource:	Additional resources would be required to deliver the improved service
Risk Management:	Risks are considered to be minimal, however, the revised service will be monitored and any mitigation actions taken as appropriate
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	Part of the service role is to identify the health and wellbeing impacts of proposed developments at an early pre-application stage.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

THE EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2015/16

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To advise the Executive on the Net Cost of Services Revenue Outturn for 2015/16 and provide explanations for significant variances against the approved Budget.
- To advise Members of the financing arrangements for the 2015/16 Capital Outturn and the planned financing of the updated 2016/17 capital budget allowing for the approved slippage from 2015/16.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE:</u> that:	
(A)	The Net Cost of Services Revenue Outturn as detailed in paragraph 2.2 for 2015/16 be noted;
(B)	The transfer of the underspend in Contingency budget for 2015/16 to the Transformation Reserve as detailed in paragraph 2.6 be agreed;
(C)	The transfer of fund to reserves as detailed in paragraph 2.4 be agreed;
(C)	The level of General Reserve Balances at 31 March 2016 as detailed within the report be noted;
(D)	The carry forward requests from 2015/16 to 2016/17 budgets as detailed in paragraph 3.7 be agreed;
(E)	The Capital outturn for 2015/16 as detailed in paragraph 4.2 be noted;

(D)	Capital slippage as set out in paragraph 4.3 be approved;
(E)	The Capital Programme for 2016/17 to 2019/20 as detailed in paragraph 4.5 be noted;

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The 2015/16 Budget was approved by Executive on 3 Feb 2015. The Net Expenditure Budget approved was £14.476m with a contribution from reserves of £1.687m of which £555k contributes to Net Cost of Services. Budget growth and savings of £277k were also approved as part of the Budget report in Feb 2015. Carry forward requests of £129k were subsequently approved through the Healthcheck process resulting in a 2015/16 budget for net cost of services of £14.882m.
- 1.2 In year budget monitoring and management actions have sought to deliver the spending plans approved by Council. Members have been kept updated throughout the year through the Healthcheck reports where significant variances have been reported.
- 1.3 During the year Council decided to purchase the Old River Lane site in Bishop's Stortford for £19.55m plus associated purchase costs. This investment opportunity presented itself during the 2015/16 financial year as so wasn't included in the original budget. This report sets out the in-year revenue and capital impact of the investment.

2.0 Revenue Outturn

- 2.1 The final outturn for the year detailed in this report is still subject to external audit and the final audited accounts will be presented to the Audit Committee in September.
- 2.2 The Council net expenditure outturn position of £14.449m represents an underspend of £433k. This is summarised in the table 1 below and **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

Table 1: Summarised 2015/16 Outturn Position

	2015/16 Original budget £'000	2015/16 Outturn £'000	Contingency Funding £'000	NHB Priority Spend £'000	Reserve Funding £'000	2015/16 Outturn Position £'000	Overall Variance £'000
Customer and Community Services	6,574	6,004	(7)	(50)	196	6,143	(431)
Neighbourhood Services	3,053	3,153	(13)	(19)	(217)	2,904	(149)
Finance and Support Services	5,255	5,557	(26)	-	(129)	5,402	147
Total:	14,882	14,714	(46)	(69)	(150)	14,449	(433)

2.3 The outturn position for each Directorate shows the total expenditure throughout 2015/16 including expenditure over and above the original budget where funding has been agreed through the Healthcheck reporting process. The additional funding has been allocated from the Contingency budget, the Priority Spend budget and the use of Earmarked Reserves.

2.4 Where a major variation from the original budget has occurred, this is described in the paragraphs below:

Environmental Services

2.4.1.1 An increased customer base in Commercial Waste has resulted in additional income of £42k in 2015/16.

Customer Services and Parking

2.4.1.2 An additional £205k pay and display income is reported due to increased usage of the Council car parks.

2.4.1.3 When the Causeway Car Park, in Old River Lane, Bishop's Stortford, was sold in 2008/09 a lease agreement was entered into which provided a rent free period of 2 years within the total lease period of 35 years. The accounting treatment applied to the lease costs was to create a long term liability to smooth the rent free period over the whole term of the lease. When the Council acquired the Causeway Car Park as part of the Old River Lane investment this liability has been unwound resulting in a credit balance of £393k. This will be transferred to the Commercial Property Fund reserve to fund future development costs and is reflected in table 1 above.

Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services

- 2.4.1.4 Income from ticket sales at Hertford Theatre (Pantomime and cinema) and private hire has exceeded budget by £173k, offset by a corresponding increase in costs of £113k, resulting in net £60k underspend.

Business Development

- 2.4.1.5 Following the community right to challenge the management fee to Bishops Stortford Town council for running the Market has exceeded the approved budget by £47k.
- 2.4.1.6 The NGMP Graduate programme and the Corporate Project Coordinator post are funded from reserve contributions totalling £96k.

Community Safety and Health

- 2.4.1.7 Disabled Facility grant income £118k higher than budget, grant allocation determined by HCC.

Housing Services

- 2.4.1.8 Expenditure of £33.5k relating to Housing condition survey and single person homelessness funded through use of reserves

Democratic and Legal Services

- 2.4.1.9 A group of Property Search Companies sought to claim refunds of fees paid to the Council to access land charges data. The parties have reached a confidential agreement on the claims which this council has funded through the use of the general reserve.
- 2.4.1.10 The Council has also funded the cost of elections in May 2015 through the use of reserves.

Revenues and Benefits

- 2.4.1.11 Following an increase in housing benefits overpayments the provision for bad debts has increased by £124k above budget.

Strategic Finance

- 2.4.1.12 The purchase of the Old River Lane site in Bishop's Stortford has resulted in unbudgeted net income of £477k in 2015/16. As this was not included in the original budget this balance will be transferred to the Commercial Property Fund reserve to fund future development costs and is reflected in table 1 above.

- 2.4.1.13 There was also lower than expected use of the consultant costs budget of £30k in 2015/16 in Property and Asset Management.

Corporate Service Budgets

- 2.4.1.14 A collective agreement was reached with Unison in September 2015 on the proposed changes to the employee expenses policy with respect to car mileage rates, removing the essential lump payment of £1,239 per annum and reducing the mileage rate from 65p per mile to the HMRC rate of 45p per mile. To reach this agreement a compensation payment was made to employees in January 2016. This has been approved by both Local Joint Panel and HR Committee. The cost of the compensation payment is £238k which was approved by Executive on 1 December 2015, to be funded from the Transformation Reserve, will now be met from existing revenue budgets.
- 2.4.1.15 A number of redundancy payments have been agreed during the year totalling £486k. These costs will be funded from the Transformation Reserve with no impact on in-year service budgets.

Other Corporate Budgets

- 2.5 The total Priority Spend budget for 2015/16 is £697k. The purpose of this budget is to fund initiatives that promote the economic prosperity of the District. As per Table 1 the use of the priority spend budget is £69k. Therefore the budget remaining unallocated is £610k. This has been transferred into the New Homes Bonus priority fund reserve as agreed by Executive on 8 June 2015, please see **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** for a breakdown of what the funding was spent on in 2015/16.
- 2.6 The original Contingency budget for 2015/16 is £370k, which allows for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. The call on this funding as per Table 1 is £46k, with a remaining balance of £324k. Details of the items funded from the contingency budget can be found in **Essential Reference Paper 'D'**.
- 2.7 The 2015/16 budgeted investment and interest income figure was £867k. Due to improved rates on direct property investments the 2015/16 outturn figure for investment income is £1,089k. The £222k difference will not impact on Revenue budgets as this will be transferred to the Interest Equalisation Reserve.
- 2.8 Recharges of central support services such as Human Resources, Strategic Finance, and IT to the users of these services, such as

Neighbourhood Services are the total cost of these central support services. These recharges are simply a re-distribution of these costs with a net zero effect on the net expenditure figure shown above. There is a revenue budget to recharge salary costs to capital projects of £25k which has been utilised in full and is included in the table above.

- 2.9 Capital charges are 'notional' charges for the use of capital assets and are not 'real' cash-backed payments requiring a source of financing. They are required primarily for producing the annual Statement of Accounts. The charges are excluded from the net expenditure figure shown above as they have a net zero effect.
- 2.10 Pension Fund £1m funded from reserve.
- 2.11 The funding from Earmarked Reserves within the Net Cost of Services of £220k represents an underspend of £335k compared to the budgeted contribution to reserves of £555k.
- 2.12 The net expenditure underspend outlined above has resulted in an outturn underspend of £433k as shown in the table below. This balance will be added to the Council's reserve balances in the Transformation Fund reserve.

Table 2: Outturn variance summary

	Variance £'000
Net Cost of Services	(168)
Contingency Budget	(46)
Priority Spend budget	(69)
Reserves	(1.020)
SUBTOTAL:	(1,303)
ORL Additional income	870
TOTAL:	(433)

- 2.13 Any ongoing implications of 2015/16 variances will be taken into account in future financial planning. Further scrutiny of the areas where significant variances have been identified will take place as part of the 2016/17 integrated financial and service planning process.

3 Reserves/Balances

- 3.2 The Council is generally well placed with regard to establishing appropriate Earmarked Reserves and Balances.
- 3.3 The Executive meeting on 2 February 2016 reviewed the Councils earmarked reserves in support of the MTFP.
- 3.4 A significant risk is posed by potential budget reductions and changes in the allocation of funding to Local Government. There is significant uncertainty with respect to the future New Homes Bonus allocations and Non Domestic Rates income. The DCLG have already consulted on proposed changes to the New Homes Bonus, the results of which are still to be published. A number of working groups have been set up by the DCLG and LGA to discuss future changes to Non Domestic Rates.
- 3.5 The following tables show the appropriations during the year together with the level of funds which will be available at 31 March 2016:

Table 3: General Reserve balances

	Balance at 1 Apr 2015 £'000	Contribution to/(from) reserve £'000	Balance at 31 Mar 2016 £'000
General Fund Balance	3,854	-	3,854
General Reserve	1,313	(123)	1,190
Total General Reserves	5,167	(123)	5,044

- 3.6 The current MTFP, which was approved by Executive on 2 February 2016, anticipated a total General Reserve balance of £5.04m at 31 March 2016. The General Reserve balances are in line with the MTFP projections.
- 3.7 The balance at 31 March 2016 does not reflect any provision for carry forward the approval of this report.
- 3.8 It is proposed to add £53k to the General Reserve to fund the following carry forward requests from 2015/16 to 2016/17:
- 3.8.1.1 The Head of Revenues and Benefits has requested that £43k of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service salary budget be carried forward to 2016/17 to cover two fixed term contracts of 8 month duration. These posts will work exclusively on a business rates project to verify reliefs for East Herts properties only.

3.8.1.2 The Parking Services Manager has requested £10,000 of the one-off revenue budget for Southmill Road Residents Parking Scheme be carried forward to 2016/17. Implementation of the scheme was delayed in 2015/16 meaning the intended six month review has not yet taken place and will do so in 2016/17. Modifications are often required at this point and must be funded.

3.9 The balances on earmarked reserves are being finalised as part of the annual statement of accounts process. A full breakdown of these reserve balances will be presented in the draft (unaudited) accounts presented to the Audit Committee for consideration at their June meeting.

4 Capital Outturn

4.2 The progress of the capital programme for 2015/16 has been reported to the Executive throughout the year as part of the Healthcheck process.

4.3 The 2015/16 outturn total capital expenditure is £22,446m. The outturn position is summarised in the table below:

Table 4: Capital Outturn Summary

	2015/16 Original Budget £'000	2015/16 Revised Budget £'000	2015/16 Outturn £'000	(Under)/ Overspend £'000	Slippage to future years £'000
Customer & Community	782	638	588	(74)	25
Neighbourhood Services	928	845	580	(290)	24
Finance & Support Services	1,009	20,661	21,278	374	243
TOTAL	2,719	22,144	22,446	10	292

4.4 The movement from the revised budget as at December 2015 of £22,144m to the outturn total of £22,446m is made up of:

4.4.1 A net £10k underspend, where schemes are complete and funding is longer required.

4.4.2 £292k slippage recommended to be carried forward into the 2016/17 capital programme. The slippage is detailed in the paragraphs below for approval:

4.4.2.1 Refuse containers replacement programme, £19k slippage to 2016/17.

- 4.4.2.2 Replacement litter bins, £2.8k slippage to 2016/17.
- 4.4.2.3 Commercial waste bins, £11k slippage to 2016/17, to fund the potential purchase of trade waste recycling containers. A feasibility report is being completed to ascertain if this is a viable option.
- 4.4.2.4 Hartham Pavilion refurbishment, £1k to slippage to 2016/17. This scheme is currently being reviewed following a contract specification review, £57.6k of this budget has previously been approved to slip to 2016/17 capital programme.
- 4.4.2.5 Installation of play equipment at Buryfield Recreation ground, £2.7k slippage to 2016/17. This scheme is complete, the slippage relates to the retention which is due to be paid in September 2016.
- 4.4.2.6 Community Capital grants, £24.5k negative slippage from 2016/17. Expenditure against this scheme is dependent on successful applicants completing their projects within the 1 year time frame. Based on officers experience £81k was approved to slip to the 2016/17 capital programme during 2015/16. However, some organisations have claimed their grants quicker than anticipated, therefore negative slippage will apply.
- 4.4.2.7 Historic Building grants, £1k negative slippage from 2016/17. Due to lower take up of grants during the first part of 2015/16 £36.7k was approved a slippage to 2016/17. However increased take up during the latter part of 2015/16 has resulted in £1k of negative slippage from 2016/17.
- 4.4.2.8 River and watercourse structures, £7.8k slippage to 2016/17. Flood alleviation works have been identified during 2015/16 and work is ongoing in 2016/17.
- 4.4.2.9 Air quality capital grant scheme, subway improvements, 1.1k slippage to 2016/17. Works on both the subways are complete, the remaining budget of £1.1k to slip to 2016/17 to fund information signage.
- 4.4.2.10 Air pollution monitoring equipment, £20k slippage to 2016/17. This scheme is fully funded by a contribution from HCC, the scheme is not completed in 2015/16.
- 4.4.2.11 Replacement of chairs and desks, £5.6k negative slippage to apply. This is a demand led budget, due to a significant increase in demand for specialist chairs negative slippage from 2016/17 is requested.

- 4.4.2.12 ICT – replacement infrastructure, £12.1k slippage to 2016/17. The 2015/16 schemes have been completed, the balance is to slip to 2016/17 rolling programme to fund schemes in 2016/17.
- 4.4.2.13 ICT – merging licensing and environment health IT systems, £8.9k slippage to 2016/17. The licensing system is now live, the timescales for Environmental health are being reconsidered.
- 4.4.2.14 Establishment of LES and internet links to replace MPLS, £24k slippage to 2016/17. The wide area network is complete, work continues to relocate the Telephony infrastructure. Work scheduled to be completed in quarter 2 2016/17.
- 4.4.2.15 Service desk and utilities, £25k slippage to 2016/17. Work to harmonise security software is ongoing into 2016/17 with implementation expected March 2017.
- 4.4.2.16 Rolling programme – ICT projects, the balance unspent of £171k is to slip to 2016/17 to fund appropriate ICT schemes, based on provision of a business case.
- 4.5 The 2015/16 capital programme has been financed from the following sources:

Table 5: Capital Financing

	£'000
Capital Receipts	2,151
Government Grants	318
Third Party Contributions	161
Revenue Contribution	18,815
Internal Borrowing	1,001
Total Capital Financing	22,446

- 4.6 The future capital programme is detailed in the table below:

Table 6: Capital Programme 2016/17 to 2019/20

	2016/17 Original budget £'000	2015/16 Approved Slippage £'000	2015/16 Outturn Slippage £'000	2016/17 Revised budget £'000	2017/18 Budget £'000	2018/19 Budget £'000	2019/20 Budget £'000
Business & Technology Shared Service	675	151	251	1,077	310	555	467
Communications, Strategy & Policy	20	-	-	20	-	-	-
Housing & Health	2,028	105	1	2,134	908	908	908
Operations	1,029	275	49	1,353	718	189	284
Planning & Building Control	92	(23)	(1)	68	55	55	55
Strategic Finance & Property	764	171	(7)	928	436	286	286
Total:	4,608	679	292	5,578	2,427	1,993	2,000

5.0 2015/16 Annual Statement of Accounts

5.1 Regulations require the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts to be approved by Members after the annual audit has taken place. Approval and publication must take place by 30 September following the relevant accounting year. The Council's Constitution delegates the scrutiny and approval of the accounts to the Audit Committee. The Accounts are required however to be signed by the Council's Section 151 Officer by 30 June following the relevant accounting year.

5.2 In order to adopt best practice the Accounts will be submitted to the Audit Committee for consideration on 15 June 2016 in order to give the Committee an early opportunity of viewing the (unaudited) accounts. Members should also note that in the wider interest of transparency and public accountability the unaudited accounts will also be available on the Council's website.

5.3 The audited accounts will be submitted for approval at the meeting of the Audit Committee on 21 September 2016.

6.0 Implications/Conclusion

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

Background Papers

Budget Report to Executive; 2 February 2016.

Contact Member: Councillor Geoffrey Williamson – Executive Member for Finance and Support Services.

Geoffrey.Williamson@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Philip Gregory – Head of Strategic Finance and Property, Extn 2050.

Philip.Gregory@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Alison Street – Principal Accountant, Extn: 2056.

Alison.Street@eastherts.gov.uk

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS:

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives <i>(delete as appropriate):</i>	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities. Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives. Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy.
Consultation:	Financial and non-financial discussions have taken place with the Leadership Team and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Support Services.
Legal:	There are no legal implications.
Financial:	Financial implications are included in the body of the report.
Human Resource:	There are no Human Resources implications.
Risk Management:	By not having effective performance management and reporting the Council is at risk of not being clear whether its priorities and objectives are being met and service delivery issues being resolved efficiently and effectively. Effective performance management supports transparency and improves local accountability.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	There no Health and Wellbeing issues raised as part of this report.

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2015/16 Outturn position

	2015/16 Original budget	2015/16 Forecast Outturn	Contingency Funding	NHB Priority Spend Funding	Reserve Funding	2015/16 Outturn Position	Overall Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive and Director of Customer & Community	151	107	-	-	-	107	(44)
Environmental Services	5,609	5,634	(7)		(76)	5,551	(58)
Customer Services & Parking	(474)	(996)		(30)	367	(659)	(185)
Communications, Engagement & Cultural Services	928	843	-	-	-	843	(85)
Business Development	360	416		(20)	(96)	300	(60)
Customer and Community Services	6,574	6,004	(7)	(50)	196	6,143	- 431
Director of Neighbourhood	112	110	-	-	-	110	(2)
Corporate Support Team	108	105	-	-	-	105	(3)
Planning & Building Control	1,069	1,159	-	-	(111)	1,049	(21)
Community Safety & Health	1,197	1,221	(13)	(15)	(71)	1,122	(75)
Housing Services	567	558	-	(4)	(36)	519	(49)
Neighbourhood Services	3,053	3,153	(13)	(19)	(217)	2,904	(149)
Director of Finance & Support Services	118	129	-	-	-	129	11
Human Resources & OD	328	360	(10)		(13)	337	9
Business & Technology Shared Services	1,296	1,284	-	-	-	1,284	(12)
Strategic Finance	530	(38)	(16)	-	522	468	(62)
Governance & Risk Management	1,487	1,531	-	-	-	1,531	44
Democratic & Legal Services	1,131	1,096	-	-	(151)	944	(187)
Revenues & Housing Benefits Shared Service	319	404	-	-	-	404	85
Corporate Service Budgets	46	792	-	-	(486)	306	260
Finance and Support Services	5,255	5,557	(26)	-	(129)	5,402	147
Total:	14,882	14,714	(46)	(69)	(150)	14,449	(433)

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2015/16 Priority Spend Budget Commitments

	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Spend £'000	Comment
Priority Spend Budget	697		
Budget Commitments:			
Parking Services	340	30	One-off funding to support car park pay & display income
Public Health Promotions	100	100	Match funding to support health and wellbeing funds received from Hertfordshire County Council.
Economic Development	20	20	To support Wenta business advice services
Remaining Priority Spend Budget:	237	547	Transferred to NHB Priority Spend Reserve

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2015/16 Contingency Budget Commitments

	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Spend £'000	Comment
Contingency budget	370		
Budget Commitments:			
HR - Salaries	10	10	Approved by CMT in 2014/15
Strategic Finance - Salaries	16	15	Approved by CMT in 2014/15
Environmental Health - Salaries	26	6	Approved by CMT in 2014/15
Community Protection - Salaries	2	2	Approved by CMT in 2014/15
Environmental Services - Salaries	15	-	Approved by CMT in 2014/15
Housing Needs Survey	9	9	Approved by CMT in 2014/15
Remaining Contingency Budget:	292	329	

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK –
MARCH 2016 / QUARTER 4 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT
SERVICES

WARD (S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To provide a report on performance monitoring for East Herts Council for 2015/16 as at March 2016/Quarter 4.
- 11 out of the 12 performance indicators (that have a target) are either on target or exceeding their target as at March 2016 and one indicator was just below target (Amber).
- 8 indicators out of the 18 performance indicators are showing an improving short term trend when performance is compared to the previous period. One indicator has maintained the same level of performance and nine have declined.
- The performance system analyses where current performance is less than the average for the preceding 12 months or four quarters this is flagged as a potential long term trend. Eight of the 50 indicators have been flagged for this reporting period and further analysis can be found in table 3.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u>	
(A)	that the current explanation for long term trends in paragraph 2.3 and the impact it is estimated to have on the final outturn be noted, for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EHPI 153 – Number of applicants that presented to the council as homeless.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Normally this report analyses both financial and performance data, but as a separate report on the financial outturn for 2015/16 is being produced for this period. This report will solely focus on analysing performance data.
- 1.2 A new performance framework (that has been discussed during this meeting) will be introduced from 2016/17 superseding the old method of reporting performance and as a result this will be the last time the performance report will be presented to this committee in this format.
- 1.3 The 2015/16 end of year position will be reported for all performance indicators as part of the 2015/16 Annual Report. This will be presented to Corporate Business Scrutiny in August 2016 and then Executive in September 2016.

2 PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Performance against targets

- 2.1 Table one shows movement in performance when compared to the last reporting period for measures where there is a RAG status. Seven indicators are showing an improvement and five indicators show a decline in performance.

Table 1:

Performance Indicator Short Name	Performance Status (RAG)	Movement since last reported
EHPI 10.2 – Council tax collection, % of current year liability collected	Green	Improved
EHPI 10.4 – NNDR (Business rates) collection, % of current year liability collected	Green	Improved
EHPI 157b – Processing of planning applications: Minor applications	Green	Improved
EHPI 2.2 – Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household	Green	Improved

EHPI 8 – % of invoices paid on time	Green	Improved
EHPI 181 – Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events	Green	Improved
EHPI 7.3 – Percentage of appeals to the traffic penalty tribunal against the number of PCNs issued	Green	Improved
EHPI 157a – Processing of planning applications: Major applications	Green	Declined
EHPI 157c – Processing of planning applications: Other applications	Green	Declined
EHPI 2.4 – Fly tips: removal	Green	Declined
EHPI 7.2 – Turnaround of PCN Challenges and Representations	Green	Declined
EHPI 12c – Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in post	Amber	Declined

Trend only performance indicators

2.2 Table two shows movement in performance when compared to the last reporting period (short term trend) for the measures where no targets have been set, i.e. only trend data is analysed.

Table 2:

Indicator (Trend only)
The number of planning appeals in March was higher in volume compared to February but the number of appeals allowed was the same when compared to February for EHPI 204 (Planning appeals allowed)
There has been a slight decrease in EHPI 151 (Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter) since Quarter 3.
There has been a slight increase in the number of applicants for EHPI 152 (The number of applicants accepted as owed the main homelessness duty to secure accommodation) since Quarter 3.
There has been an increase in EHPI 153 (Number of applicants that

presented to the council as homeless) since Quarter 3.
There has been an increase in EHPI 191 (Residual household waste per household) compared to the previous month.
There has been an increase in EHPI 2.6 (Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal).

- 2.3 Table three shows the long term trend analysis (current value compared to the average performance for the last 12 months for monthly indicators or last four quarters for quarter indicators) for those indicators that are showing a significant decline.

Table 3:

Service & Indicator	Commentary
HR and Organisational Development	
EHPI 12c – Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in post	Long term trend for total number of sickness absence indicated a declining trend due to higher levels of seasonal short term sickness absences. Managers have been alerted to the trend. However it is estimated that the year-end outturn will be within its target threshold. Total absence for the year so far is 5.62 days (against an end of year target of 6.5 days).
Housing Services	
EHPI 153 – Number of applicants that presented to the council as homeless.	There has been an increase in households presenting themselves as homeless, primarily due to the end of an assured shorthold tenancy in the private sector where the landlord wants the property back to either sell or re-let at a higher rent. This in turn is reflected in the overall increase to the year-end outturn. This increase in presentations is reflective of the national trend.

- 2.4 Please refer to performance indicator summary analysis in **Essential Reference Paper B** for full performance indicator analysis.

3 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

Contact Member: Councillor Geoff Williamson – Executive Member
for Finance and Support Services
geoffrey.williamson@eastherts.gov.uk

Report author: Karl Chui – Performance Monitoring Officer
Ext: 2243
karl.chui@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Ben Wood, Head of Communications, Strategy and
Policy, Ext: 1699
benjamin.wood@eastherts.gov.uk

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IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

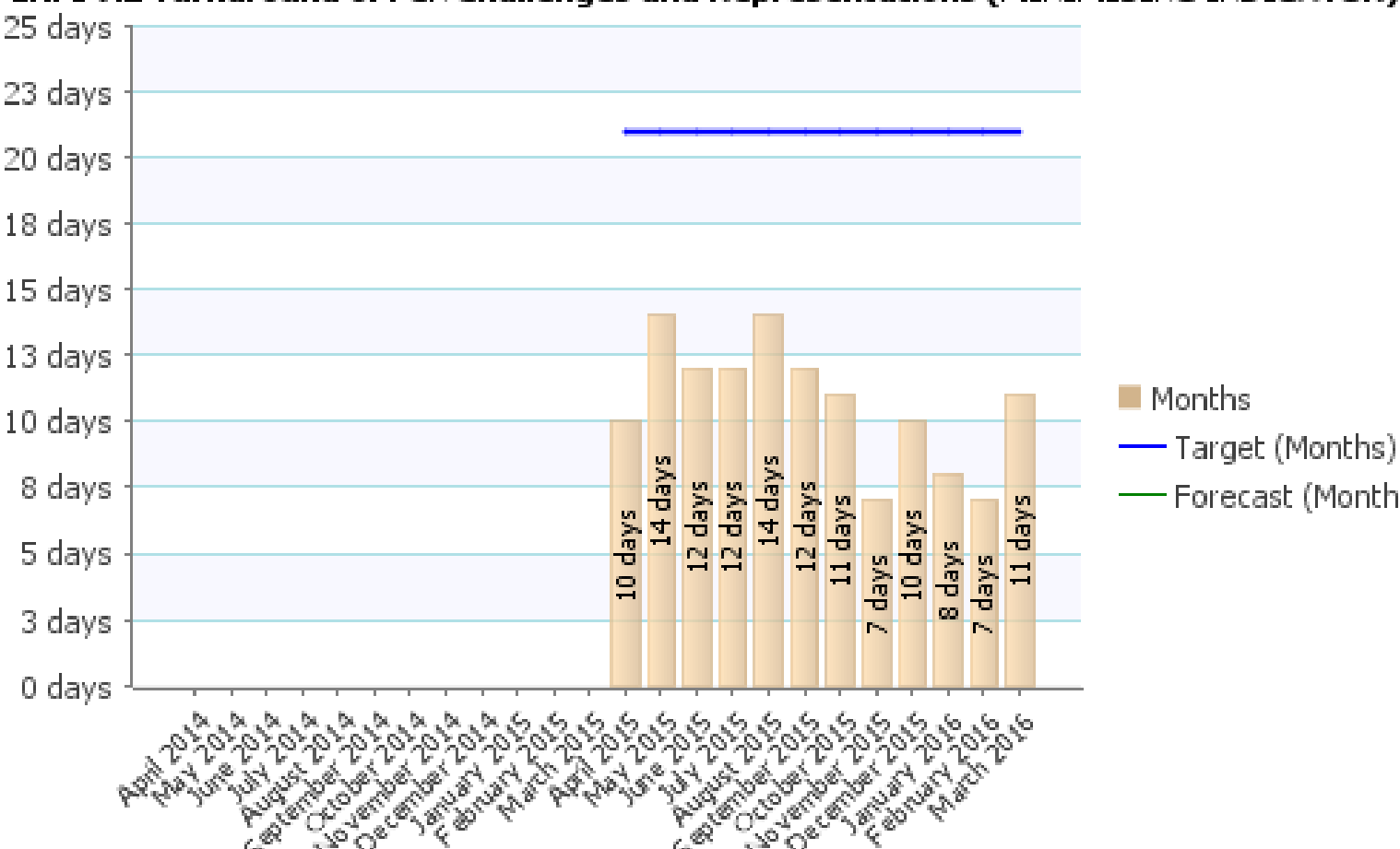
Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	<p><i>People – Fair and accessible services for those that use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute</i></p> <p>This priority focuses on delivering strong services and seeking to enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable.</p> <p><i>Place – Safe and Clean</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 – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities</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:	Discussions have taken place with Directors, Heads of Service to construct an accurate performance report.
Legal:	There are no legal implications.
Financial:	There are no financial implications.
Human Resource:	There are no human resource implications.
Risk Management:	The Healthcheck report considers emerging risks to the in-year delivery of the council's performance.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	There no direct Health and Wellbeing issues arising as a result of the recommendations in this report.

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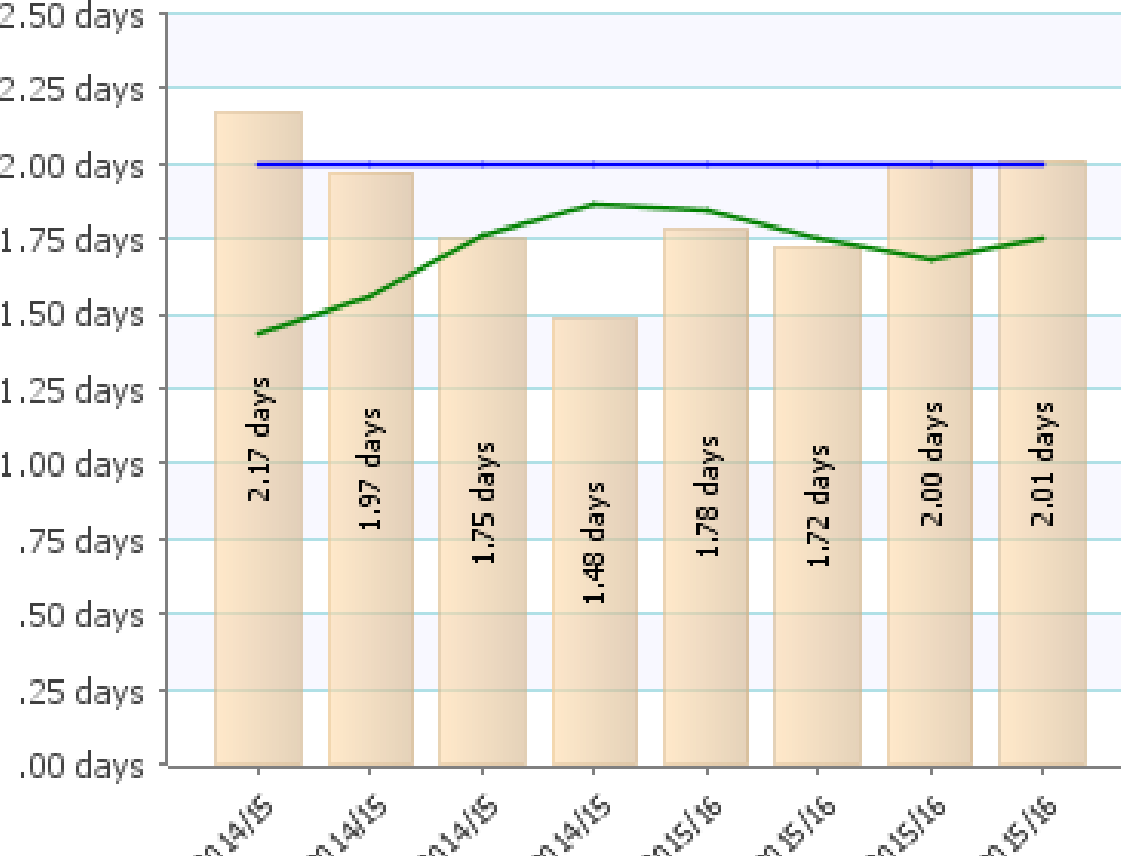



March 2016/Quarter 4 Executive Corporate Healthcheck 2015/16

Service Area Information, Parking and Customer Services

PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 7.2 Turnaround of PCN Challenges and Representations (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		Managed By	Andrew Pulham; Neil Sloper																																																		
EHPI 7.2 Turnaround of PCN Challenges and Representations (MINIMISING INDICATOR)				Short Term Trend Arrow	↓																																																		
 <table><tr><th>Month</th><th>Turnaround (days)</th></tr><tr><td>April 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>May 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>June 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>July 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>August 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>September 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>October 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>November 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>December 2014</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>January 2015</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>February 2015</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>March 2015</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>April 2015</td><td>10 days</td></tr><tr><td>May 2015</td><td>14 days</td></tr><tr><td>June 2015</td><td>12 days</td></tr><tr><td>July 2015</td><td>12 days</td></tr><tr><td>August 2015</td><td>14 days</td></tr><tr><td>September 2015</td><td>12 days</td></tr><tr><td>October 2015</td><td>11 days</td></tr><tr><td>November 2015</td><td>7 days</td></tr><tr><td>December 2015</td><td>10 days</td></tr><tr><td>January 2016</td><td>8 days</td></tr><tr><td>February 2016</td><td>7 days</td></tr><tr><td>March 2016</td><td>11 days</td></tr></table>				Month	Turnaround (days)	April 2014		May 2014		June 2014		July 2014		August 2014		September 2014		October 2014		November 2014		December 2014		January 2015		February 2015		March 2015		April 2015	10 days	May 2015	14 days	June 2015	12 days	July 2015	12 days	August 2015	14 days	September 2015	12 days	October 2015	11 days	November 2015	7 days	December 2015	10 days	January 2016	8 days	February 2016	7 days	March 2016	11 days	Long Term Trend Arrow	N/A – New indicator for 2015/16 therefore no Long term trend to analyse.
Month	Turnaround (days)																																																						
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March 2016	11 days																																																						
				Traffic Light Icon	🟢																																																		
				Current Value	11 days																																																		
				Current Target	21 days																																																		
				Notes & History Latest Note	This performance indicator remains within target.																																																		
				Management Response / Action	No further management response required at this stage.																																																		

PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 7.3 Percentage of appeals to the traffic penalty tribunal against the number of PCNs issued (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		Managed By		Andrew Pulham; Neil Sloper																			
EHPI 7.3 Percentage of appeals to the traffic penalty tribunal against the number of PCNs issued (MINIMISING INDICATOR)				Short Term Trend Arrow		↑																			
<table><caption>EHPI 7.3 Percentage of appeals to the traffic penalty tribunal against the number of PCNs issued (MINIMISING INDICATOR)</caption><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Percentage</th></tr><tr><td>Q1 2014/15</td><td>0.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2014/15</td><td>0.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2014/15</td><td>0.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2014/15</td><td>0.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2015/16</td><td>0.07%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2015/16</td><td>0.07%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2015/16</td><td>0.20%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2015/16</td><td>0.17%</td></tr></table>				Quarter	Percentage	Q1 2014/15	0.00%	Q2 2014/15	0.00%	Q3 2014/15	0.00%	Q4 2014/15	0.00%	Q1 2015/16	0.07%	Q2 2015/16	0.07%	Q3 2015/16	0.20%	Q4 2015/16	0.17%	Long Term Trend Arrow		N/A – New indicator for 2015/16 therefore no long term trend to analyse.	
				Quarter	Percentage																				
				Q1 2014/15	0.00%																				
				Q2 2014/15	0.00%																				
Q3 2014/15	0.00%																								
Q4 2014/15	0.00%																								
Q1 2015/16	0.07%																								
Q2 2015/16	0.07%																								
Q3 2015/16	0.20%																								
Q4 2015/16	0.17%																								
Traffic Light Icon		✔																							
Current Value		.17%																							
Current Target		.35%																							
<div>■ Quarters</div> <div>— Target (Quarters)</div> <div>— Forecast (Quarters)</div>				Notes & History Latest Note		12 appeals received against a total of 6,919 PCNs issued in the last quarter.																			
				Management Response / Action		No further management response required at this stage.																			

Service Area Environmental Services and Leisure

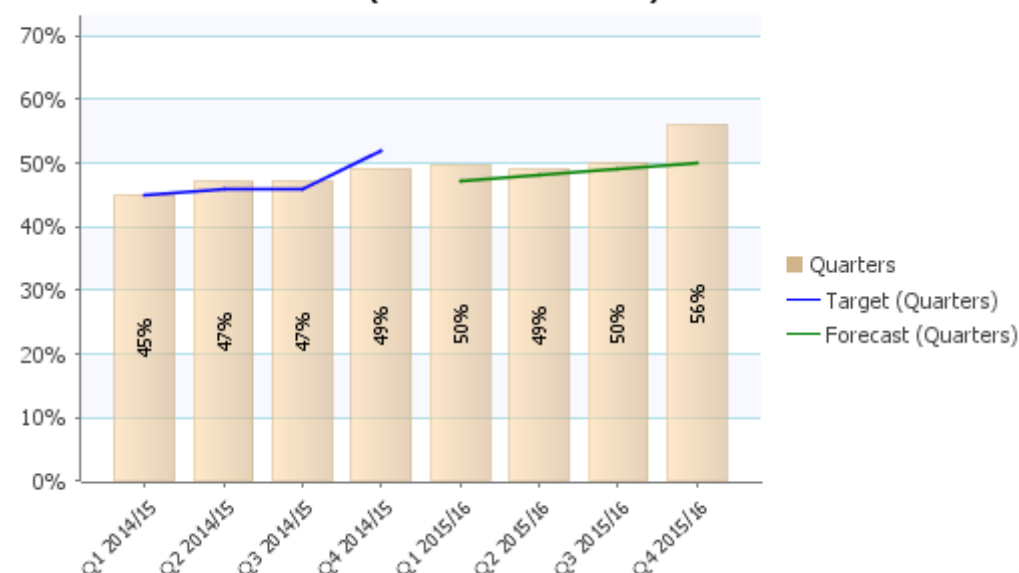
PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 2.4 (47) Fly-tips: removal. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)	
EHPI 2.4 (47) Fly-tips: removal. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		 <div><div>Quarters</div><div>Target (Quarters)</div><div>Forecast (Quarters)</div></div>	
Managed By		Cliff Cardoza; Karl Chui	
Short Term Trend Arrow			
Long Term Trend Arrow			
Traffic Light Icon			
Current Value		2.01 days	
Current Target		2.00 days	
Notes & History Latest Note		Quarter four performance is just within the target threshold of 2 days. There were delays in clearance due to an increase in larger fly tips which take longer to clear. However the end of year annual target has been achieved.	
Management Response / Action		No further management response required at this stage.	

<div><div>PI Code & Short Name</div><div>EHPI 2.2 Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)</div></div>		<div><div>Managed By</div><div>Cliff Cardoza;</div></div>	
<div><div>EHPI 2.2 Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)</div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div>Months</div></div><div><div></div><div>Target (Months)</div></div><div><div></div><div>Forecast (Months)</div></div></div><div><div><div>April 2014</div><div>35.43</div></div><div><div>May 2014</div><div>27.04</div></div><div><div>June 2014</div><div>32.29</div></div><div><div>July 2014</div><div>39.15</div></div><div><div>August 2014</div><div>29.63</div></div><div><div>September 2014</div><div>31.15</div></div><div><div>October 2014</div><div>23.04</div></div><div><div>November 2014</div><div>27.32</div></div><div><div>December 2014</div><div>25.85</div></div><div><div>January 2015</div><div>24.71</div></div><div><div>February 2015</div><div>24.19</div></div><div><div>March 2015</div><div>22.97</div></div><div><div>April 2015</div><div>29.37</div></div><div><div>May 2015</div><div>25.42</div></div><div><div>June 2015</div><div>22.04</div></div><div><div>July 2015</div><div>23.62</div></div><div><div>August 2015</div><div>16.23</div></div><div><div>September 2015</div><div>22.64</div></div><div><div>October 2015</div><div>22.89</div></div><div><div>November 2015</div><div>18.65</div></div><div><div>December 2015</div><div>17.56</div></div><div><div>January 2016</div><div>29.61</div></div><div><div>February 2016</div><div>20.75</div></div><div><div>March 2016</div><div>19.75</div></div></div></div></div></div>		<div><div>Short Term Trend Arrow</div><div>↑</div></div> <div><div>Long Term Trend Arrow</div><div>↑</div></div> <div><div>Traffic Light Icon</div><div>✔</div></div> <div><div>Current Value</div><div>19.75</div></div> <div><div>Current Target</div><div>45.00</div></div>	
<div><div>Notes & History Latest Note</div><div>A slightly better performance for March which is very good considering Easter fell at the end of this month and revised collections can often cause missed collections to increase. Annual figure for missed collections is 22.4.</div></div>		<div><div>Management Response / Action</div><div>No further management response required at this stage.</div></div>	

PI Code & Short Name

EHPI 2.6 Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal out of the total collected. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)

EHPI 2.6 Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal out of the total collected. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)

**Managed By**

Cliff Cardoza;

Short Term Trend Arrow**Long Term Trend Arrow****Traffic Light Icon**

Trend only indicator

Current Value

56%

Current Target

Trend only indicator

Notes & History Latest Note

The higher percentage for quarter 4 is expected as a result of the lower composting tonnages. Annual figure comes out at 51%

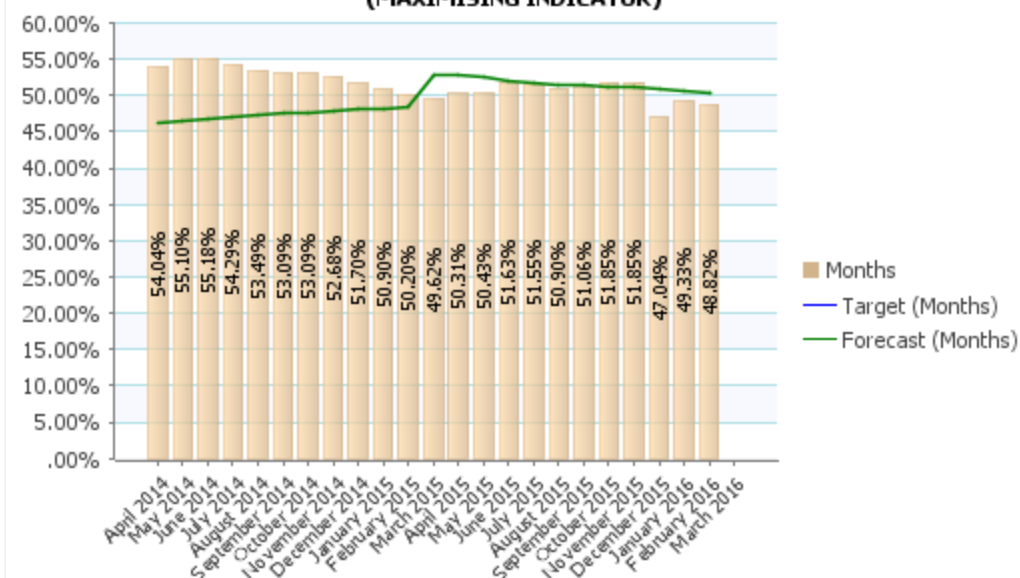
Management Response / Action

No further management response required at this stage.

PI Code & Short Name

EHPI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)

EHPI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)

**Managed By**

Cliff Cardoza;

Short Term Trend Arrow**Long Term Trend Arrow****Traffic Light Icon**

Trend only indicator

Current Value

48.82%

Current Target

Trend only indicator

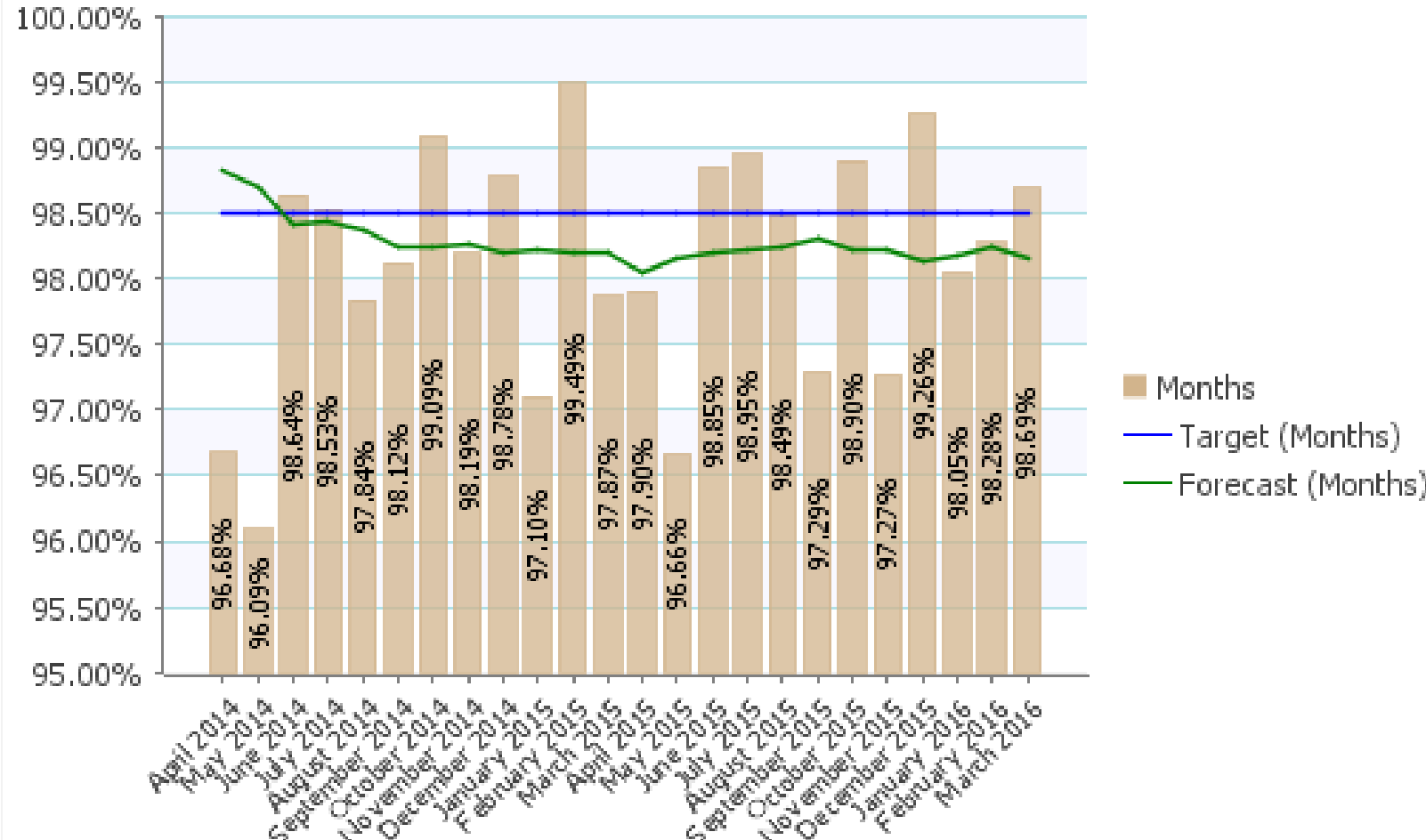
Notes & History Latest Note

Recycling and composting percentage is less than the same period last year despite the total amount of recycling being greater than in 2014/15.

Management Response / Action

No further management response required at this stage.

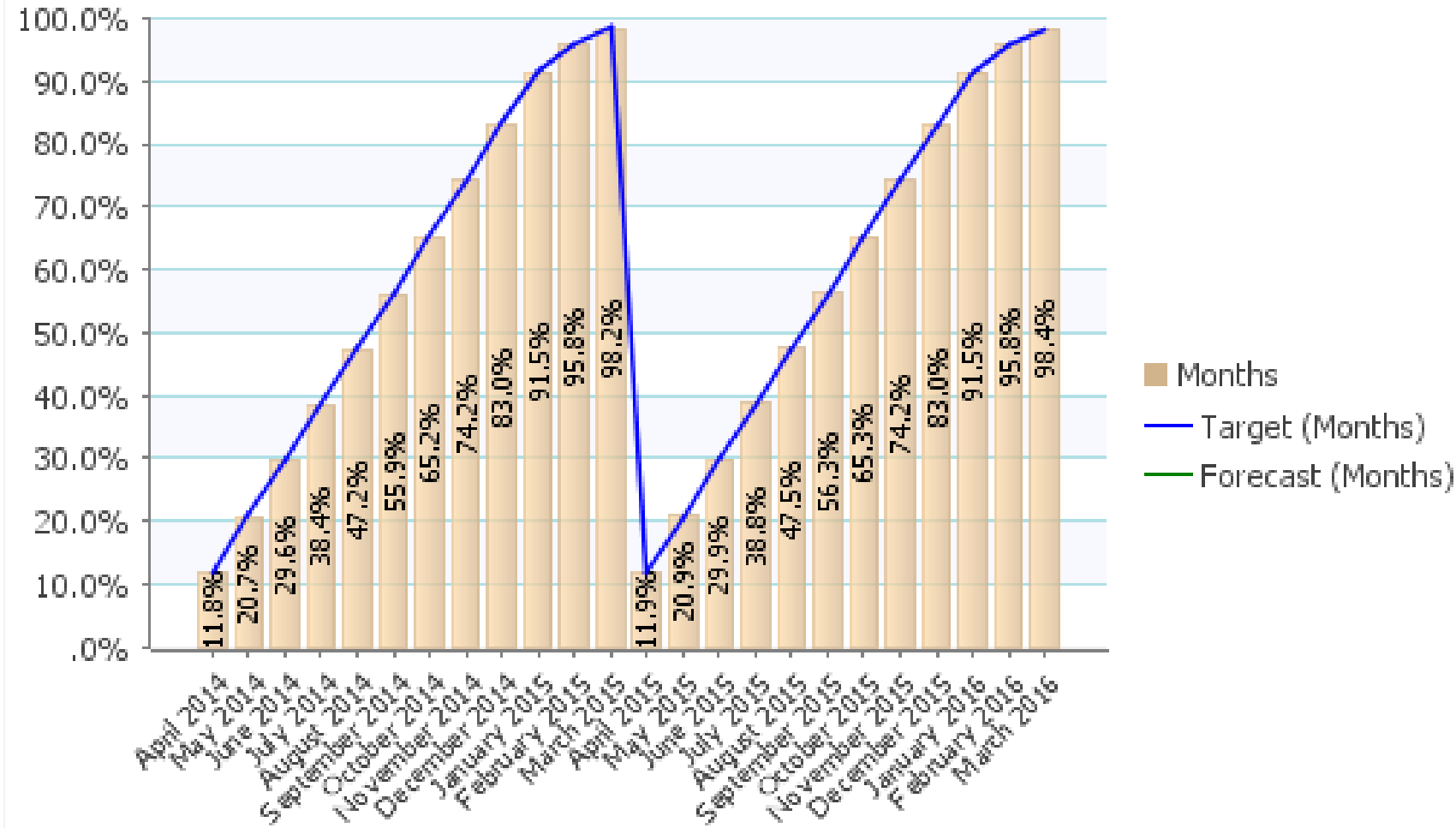
Service Area Governance and Risk Management

PI Code & Short Name EHPI 8 % of invoices paid on time. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)		Managed By	Chris Gibson																																																		
EHPI 8 % of invoices paid on time. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)  <table><tr><th>Month</th><th>Value</th></tr><tr><td>April 2014</td><td>96.68%</td></tr><tr><td>May 2014</td><td>96.09%</td></tr><tr><td>June 2014</td><td>98.64%</td></tr><tr><td>July 2014</td><td>98.53%</td></tr><tr><td>August 2014</td><td>97.84%</td></tr><tr><td>September 2014</td><td>98.12%</td></tr><tr><td>October 2014</td><td>99.09%</td></tr><tr><td>November 2014</td><td>98.19%</td></tr><tr><td>December 2014</td><td>98.78%</td></tr><tr><td>January 2015</td><td>97.10%</td></tr><tr><td>February 2015</td><td>99.49%</td></tr><tr><td>March 2015</td><td>97.87%</td></tr><tr><td>April 2015</td><td>97.90%</td></tr><tr><td>May 2015</td><td>96.66%</td></tr><tr><td>June 2015</td><td>98.85%</td></tr><tr><td>July 2015</td><td>98.95%</td></tr><tr><td>August 2015</td><td>98.49%</td></tr><tr><td>September 2015</td><td>97.29%</td></tr><tr><td>October 2015</td><td>98.90%</td></tr><tr><td>November 2015</td><td>97.27%</td></tr><tr><td>December 2015</td><td>99.26%</td></tr><tr><td>January 2016</td><td>98.05%</td></tr><tr><td>February 2016</td><td>98.28%</td></tr><tr><td>March 2016</td><td>98.69%</td></tr></table>		Month	Value	April 2014	96.68%	May 2014	96.09%	June 2014	98.64%	July 2014	98.53%	August 2014	97.84%	September 2014	98.12%	October 2014	99.09%	November 2014	98.19%	December 2014	98.78%	January 2015	97.10%	February 2015	99.49%	March 2015	97.87%	April 2015	97.90%	May 2015	96.66%	June 2015	98.85%	July 2015	98.95%	August 2015	98.49%	September 2015	97.29%	October 2015	98.90%	November 2015	97.27%	December 2015	99.26%	January 2016	98.05%	February 2016	98.28%	March 2016	98.69%	Short Term Trend Arrow	↑
Month	Value																																																				
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		Long Term Trend Arrow	↑																																																		
		Traffic Light Icon	🟢																																																		
		Current Value	98.69%																																																		
		Current Target	98.50%																																																		
		Notes & History Latest Note	March performance has exceeded target of 98.50%.																																																		
		Management Response / Action	No further management response required at this stage.																																																		

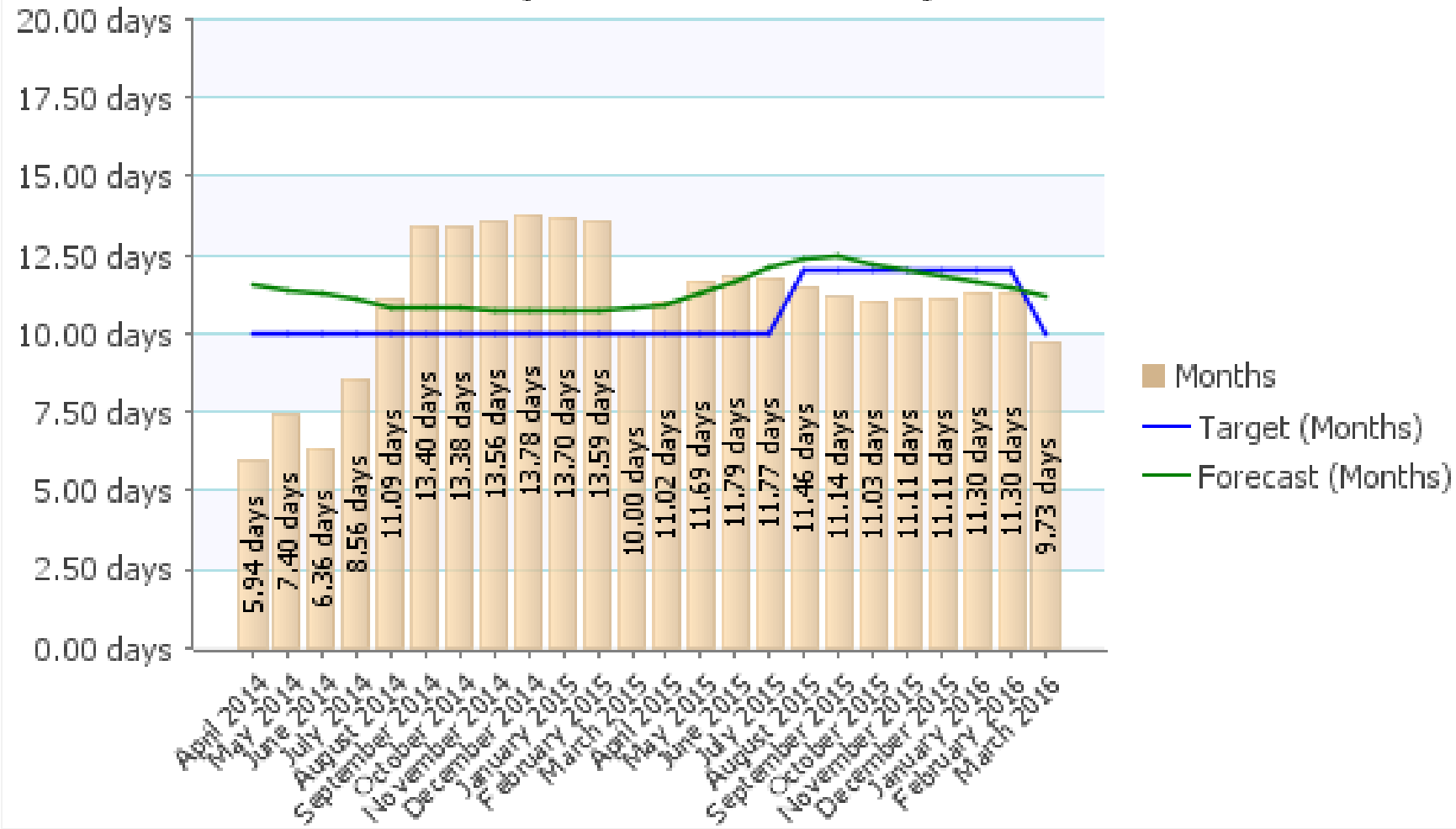
Service Area HR and Organisational Development

<div>PI Code & Short Name</div> <div>EHPI 12c Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in post (MINIMISING INDICATOR)</div>		<div>Managed By</div> <div>Vicki David; Emma Freeman;</div>																																																			
<div>EHPI 12c Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in post (MINIMISING INDICATOR)</div> <div><table><tr><th>Month</th><th>Sickness Absence Days</th></tr><tr><td>April 2014</td><td>0.31 days</td></tr><tr><td>May 2014</td><td>0.32 days</td></tr><tr><td>June 2014</td><td>0.24 days</td></tr><tr><td>July 2014</td><td>0.20 days</td></tr><tr><td>August 2014</td><td>0.24 days</td></tr><tr><td>September 2014</td><td>0.41 days</td></tr><tr><td>October 2014</td><td>0.49 days</td></tr><tr><td>November 2014</td><td>0.40 days</td></tr><tr><td>December 2014</td><td>0.42 days</td></tr><tr><td>January 2015</td><td>0.57 days</td></tr><tr><td>February 2015</td><td>0.39 days</td></tr><tr><td>March 2015</td><td>0.52 days</td></tr><tr><td>April 2015</td><td>0.52 days</td></tr><tr><td>May 2015</td><td>0.33 days</td></tr><tr><td>June 2015</td><td>0.27 days</td></tr><tr><td>July 2015</td><td>0.34 days</td></tr><tr><td>August 2015</td><td>0.31 days</td></tr><tr><td>September 2015</td><td>0.44 days</td></tr><tr><td>October 2015</td><td>0.53 days</td></tr><tr><td>November 2015</td><td>0.66 days</td></tr><tr><td>December 2015</td><td>0.49 days</td></tr><tr><td>January 2016</td><td>0.63 days</td></tr><tr><td>February 2016</td><td>0.56 days</td></tr><tr><td>March 2016</td><td>0.57 days</td></tr></table></div>		Month	Sickness Absence Days	April 2014	0.31 days	May 2014	0.32 days	June 2014	0.24 days	July 2014	0.20 days	August 2014	0.24 days	September 2014	0.41 days	October 2014	0.49 days	November 2014	0.40 days	December 2014	0.42 days	January 2015	0.57 days	February 2015	0.39 days	March 2015	0.52 days	April 2015	0.52 days	May 2015	0.33 days	June 2015	0.27 days	July 2015	0.34 days	August 2015	0.31 days	September 2015	0.44 days	October 2015	0.53 days	November 2015	0.66 days	December 2015	0.49 days	January 2016	0.63 days	February 2016	0.56 days	March 2016	0.57 days	<div>Short Term Trend Arrow</div> <div>↓</div>	
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		<div>Long Term Trend Arrow</div> <div>↓</div>																																																			
		<div>Traffic Light Icon</div> <div>🟡</div>																																																			
		<div>Current Value</div> <div>0.57 days</div>																																																			
		<div>Current Target</div> <div>0.54 days</div>																																																			
		<div>Notes & History Latest Note</div> <div>Total absence for the year so far is 5.62 days (end of year target is 6.5 days) Over target this month due to higher levels of seasonal short term sickness.</div>																																																			
		<div>Management Response / Action</div> <div>Managers are continuing to keep track of sickness absence cases.</div>																																																			

Service Area Revenues and Benefits

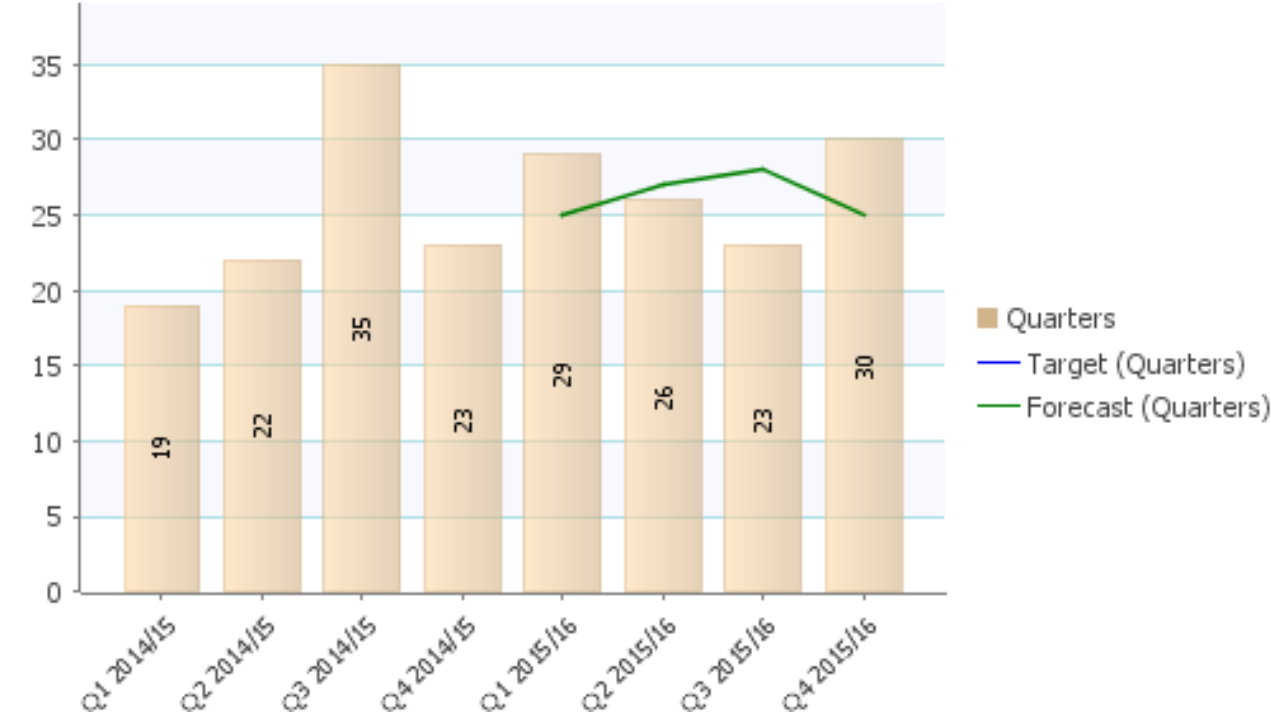
<div>PI Code & Short Name</div> <div>EHPI 10.2 Council tax collection, % of current year liability collected. (MAXIMISING CUMULATIVE INDICATOR)</div>		<div>Managed By</div> <div>Su Tarran</div>	
<div>EHPI 10.2 Council tax collection, % of current year liability collected. (MAXIMISING CUMULATIVE INDICATOR)</div> <div><div><div>Months</div><div>Target (Months)</div><div>Forecast (Months)</div></div></div>		<div>Short Term Trend Arrow</div> <div>↑</div>	
		<div>Long Term Trend Arrow</div> <div>↑</div>	
		<div>Traffic Light Icon</div> <div>✔</div>	
		<div>Current Value</div> <div>98.4%</div>	
		<div>Current Target</div> <div>98.3%</div>	
		<div>Notes & History Latest Note</div> <div>Performance on target.</div>	
		<div>Management Response / Action</div> <div>No further management response required at this stage.</div>	

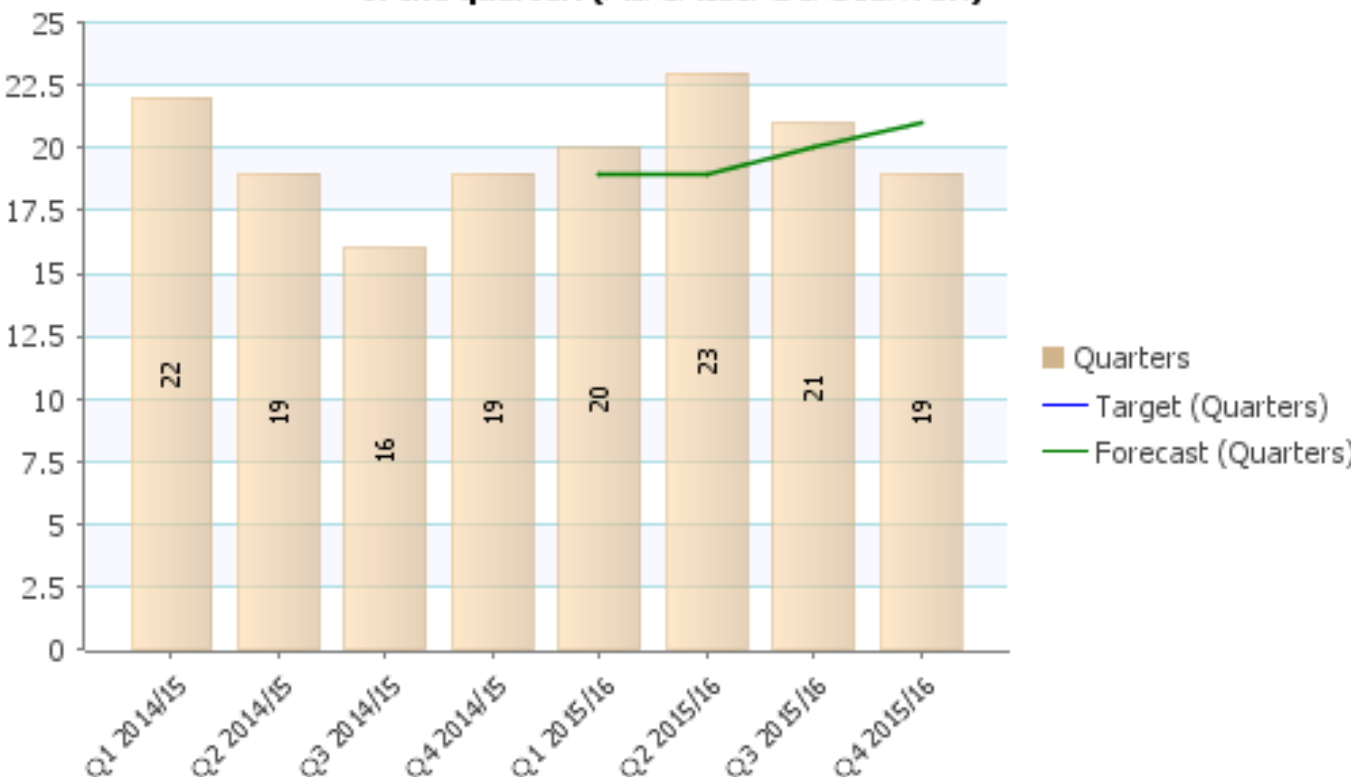
PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 10.4 NNDR (Business rates) collection, % of current year liability collected. (MAXIMISING CUMULATIVE INDICATOR)		Managed By		Su Tarran;																																																																																																									
EHPI 10.4 NNDR (Business rates) collection, % of current year liability collected. (MAXIMISING CUMULATIVE INDICATOR)				Short Term Trend Arrow																																																																																																											
<table><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>Months (%)</th><th>Target (Months) (%)</th><th>Forecast (Months) (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>April 2014</td><td>1.3%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>May 2014</td><td>21.1%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>June 2014</td><td>29.9%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>July 2014</td><td>38.5%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>August 2014</td><td>52.3%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>September 2014</td><td>55.4%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>October 2014</td><td>63.6%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>November 2014</td><td>74.3%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>December 2014</td><td>83.5%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>January 2015</td><td>91.4%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>February 2015</td><td>94.4%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>March 2015</td><td>97.0%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>April 2015</td><td>97.0%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>May 2015</td><td>3.7%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>June 2015</td><td>21.9%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>July 2015</td><td>30.8%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>August 2015</td><td>39.2%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>September 2015</td><td>47.1%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>October 2015</td><td>55.5%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>November 2015</td><td>63.5%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>December 2015</td><td>74.8%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>January 2016</td><td>83.4%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>February 2016</td><td>91.2%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>March 2016</td><td>95.0%</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>April 2016</td><td>97.8%</td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>				Month	Months (%)	Target (Months) (%)	Forecast (Months) (%)	April 2014	1.3%			May 2014	21.1%			June 2014	29.9%			July 2014	38.5%			August 2014	52.3%			September 2014	55.4%			October 2014	63.6%			November 2014	74.3%			December 2014	83.5%			January 2015	91.4%			February 2015	94.4%			March 2015	97.0%			April 2015	97.0%			May 2015	3.7%			June 2015	21.9%			July 2015	30.8%			August 2015	39.2%			September 2015	47.1%			October 2015	55.5%			November 2015	63.5%			December 2015	74.8%			January 2016	83.4%			February 2016	91.2%			March 2016	95.0%			April 2016	97.8%			Long Term Trend Arrow			
				Month	Months (%)	Target (Months) (%)	Forecast (Months) (%)																																																																																																								
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Current Target		97.0%																																																																																																													
Notes & History Latest Note				Performance on target.																																																																																																											
Management Response / Action				No further management response required at this stage.																																																																																																											

PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 181 Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		Managed By	Su Tarran;
EHPI 181 Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)				Short Term Trend Arrow	⬆️
				Long Term Trend Arrow	⬆️
				Traffic Light Icon	🟢
				Current Value	9.73 days
				Current Target	10.00 days
				Notes & History Latest Note	Performance on target. Period from 9 February 2016 to 8 March 2016 is 3.39 days making cumulative 9.73 days
				Management Response / Action	No further management response required at this stage.

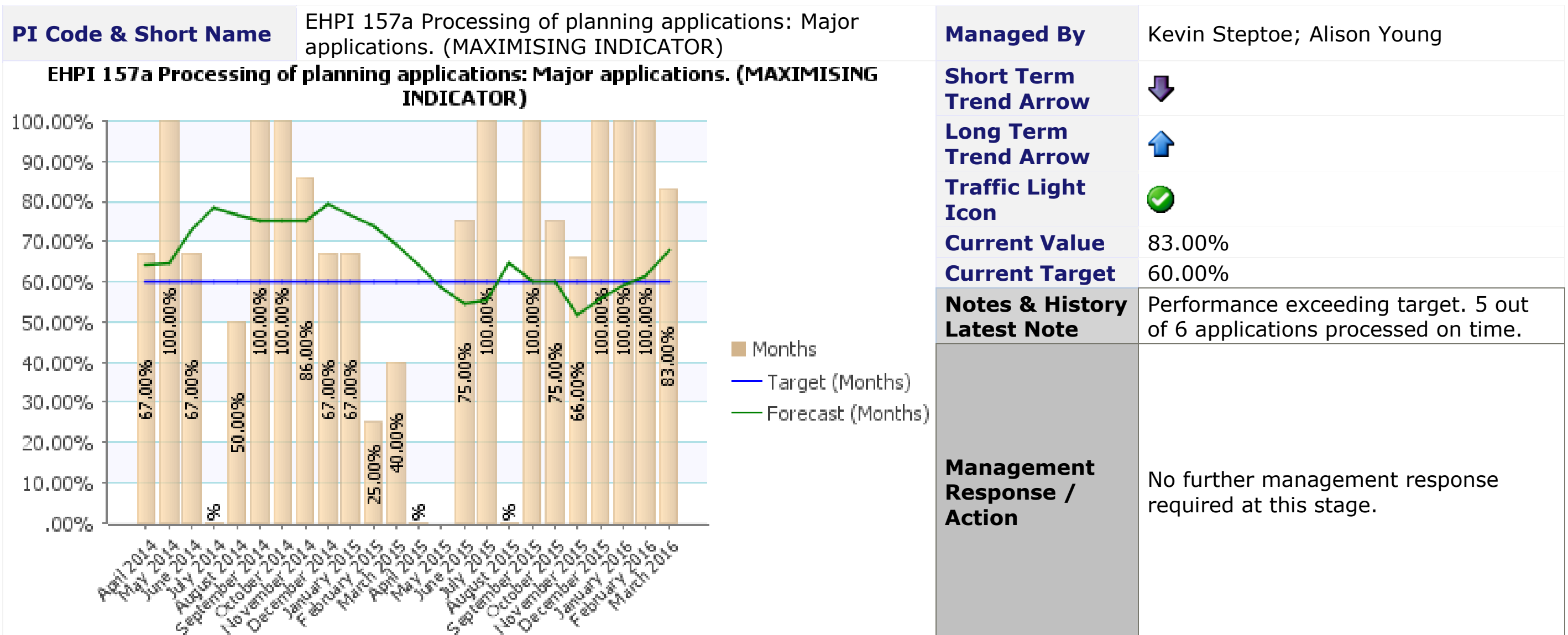
Service Area Housing

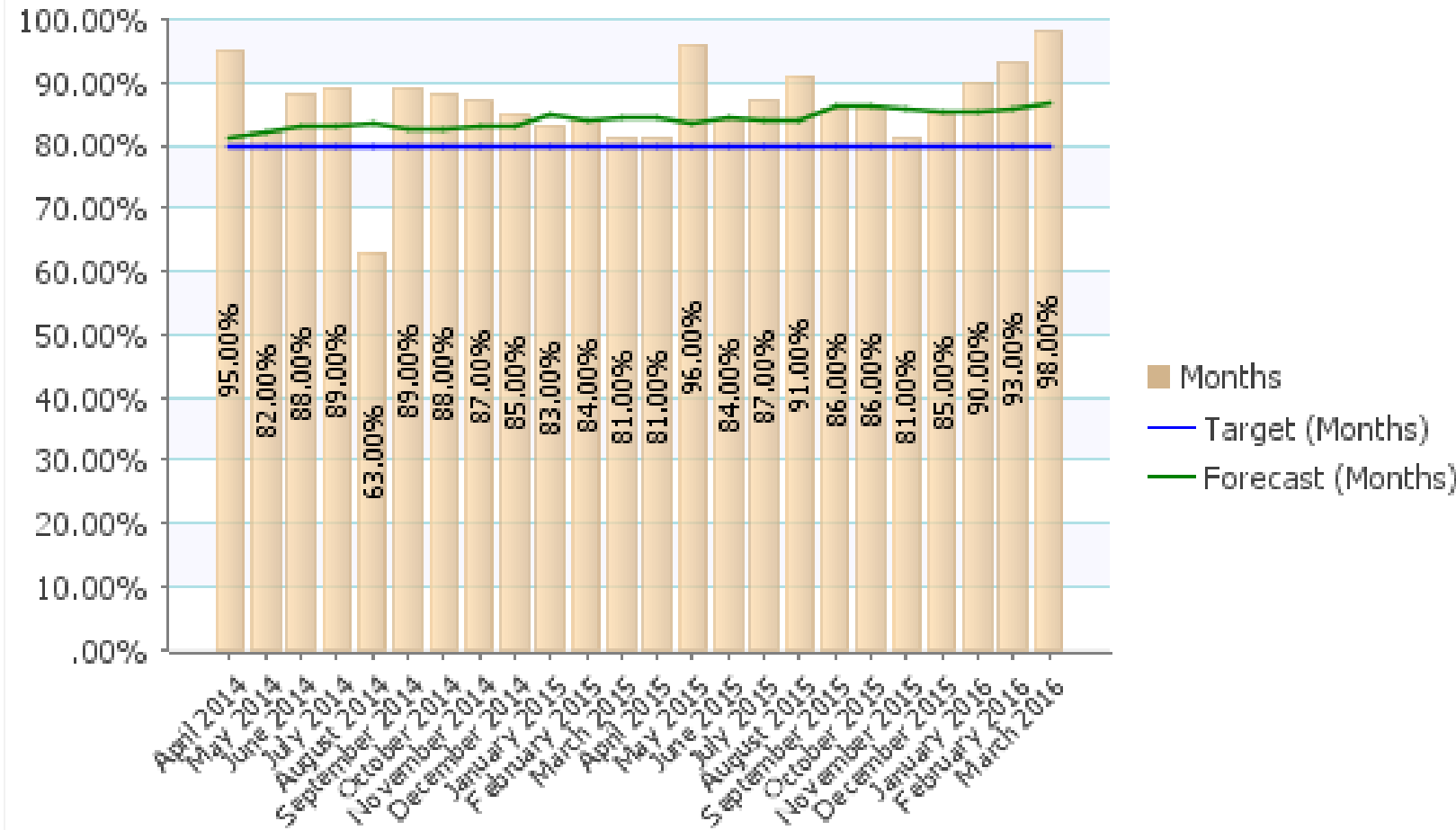
PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 152 The number of applicants accepted as owed the main homelessness duty to secure accommodation. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		Managed By	Claire Bennett																		
EHPI 152 The number of applicants accepted as owed the main homelessness duty to secure accommodation. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)				Short Term Trend Arrow	↓																		
<table><tr><th>Quarters</th><th>Value</th></tr><tr><td>Q1 2014/15</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2014/15</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2014/15</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2014/15</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2015/16</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2015/16</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2015/16</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2015/16</td><td>18</td></tr></table>				Quarters	Value	Q1 2014/15	7	Q2 2014/15	16	Q3 2014/15	13	Q4 2014/15	13	Q1 2015/16	19	Q2 2015/16	17	Q3 2015/16	17	Q4 2015/16	18	Long Term Trend Arrow	↓
Quarters	Value																						
Q1 2014/15	7																						
Q2 2014/15	16																						
Q3 2014/15	13																						
Q4 2014/15	13																						
Q1 2015/16	19																						
Q2 2015/16	17																						
Q3 2015/16	17																						
Q4 2015/16	18																						
				Traffic Light Icon	N/A – Trend only indicator																		
				Current Value	18																		
				Current Target	N/A – Trend only indicator																		
				Notes & History Latest Note	The number of households accepted as being owed a rehousing duty has remained very similar for each of the 4 quarters. However the total annual figure is 45% higher than the annual figure for 2014/15.																		
				Management Response / Action	No further management response required at this stage.																		

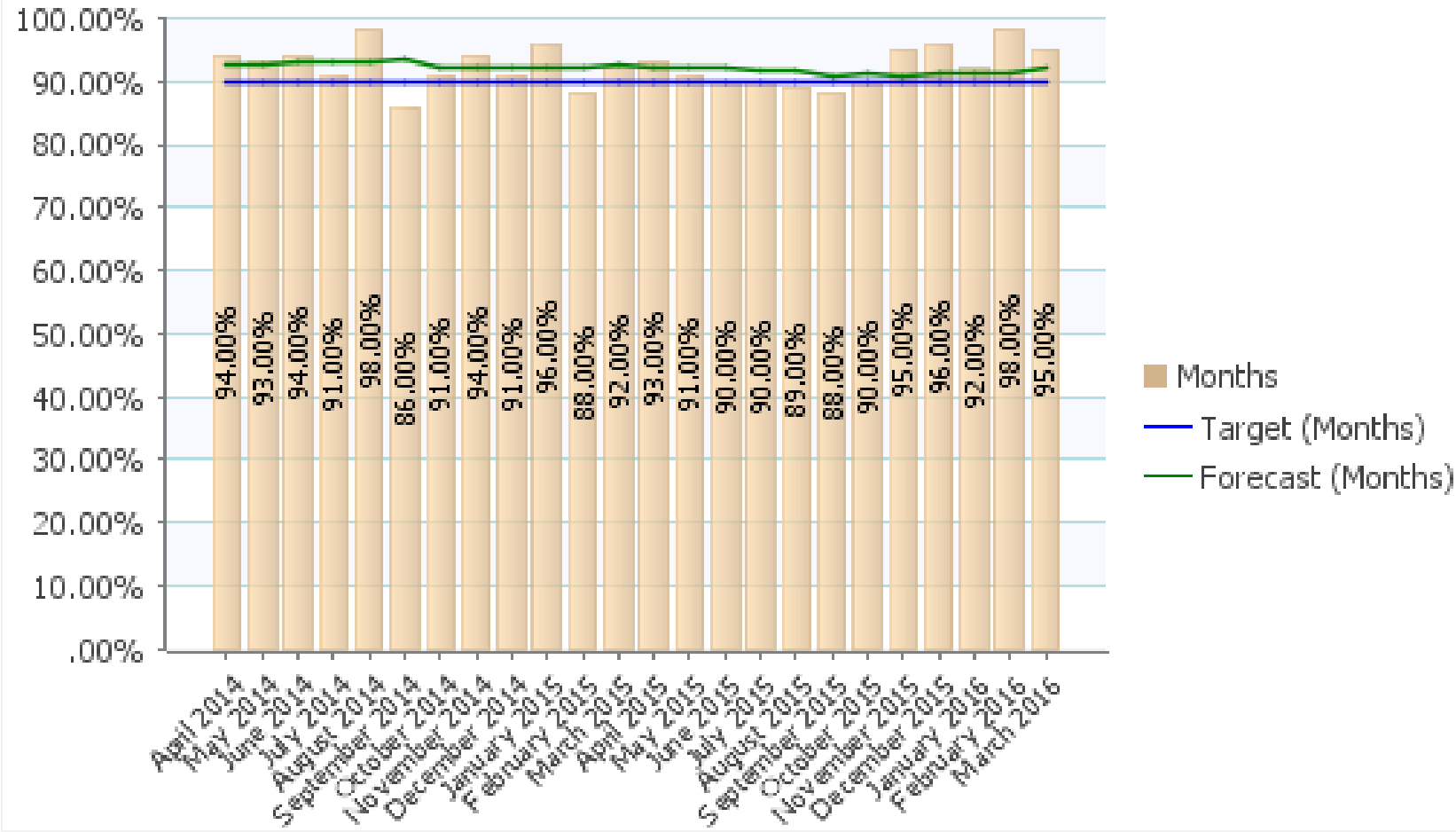
PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 153 Number of applicants that presented to the council as homeless. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)	
<div>EHPI 153 Number of applicants that presented to the council as homeless. (MINIMISING INDICATOR) </div>		Managed By	Claire Bennett
		Short Term Trend Arrow	↓
		Long Term Trend Arrow	↓
		Traffic Light Icon	N/A – Trend only indicator
		Current Value	30
		Current Target	N/A – Trend only indicator
Notes & History Latest Note		The fourth quarter recorded 30 households as presenting as homeless compared to 23 for the same quarter 2014/15. The cumulative total for 2015/16 is 113 compared to 99 for the same four quarters in 2014/15. The primary reasons remains the end of an assured short-hold tenancy in the private sector where the landlord wants the property back to either sell or re-let at a higher rent.	
Management Response / Action		No further management response required at this stage.	

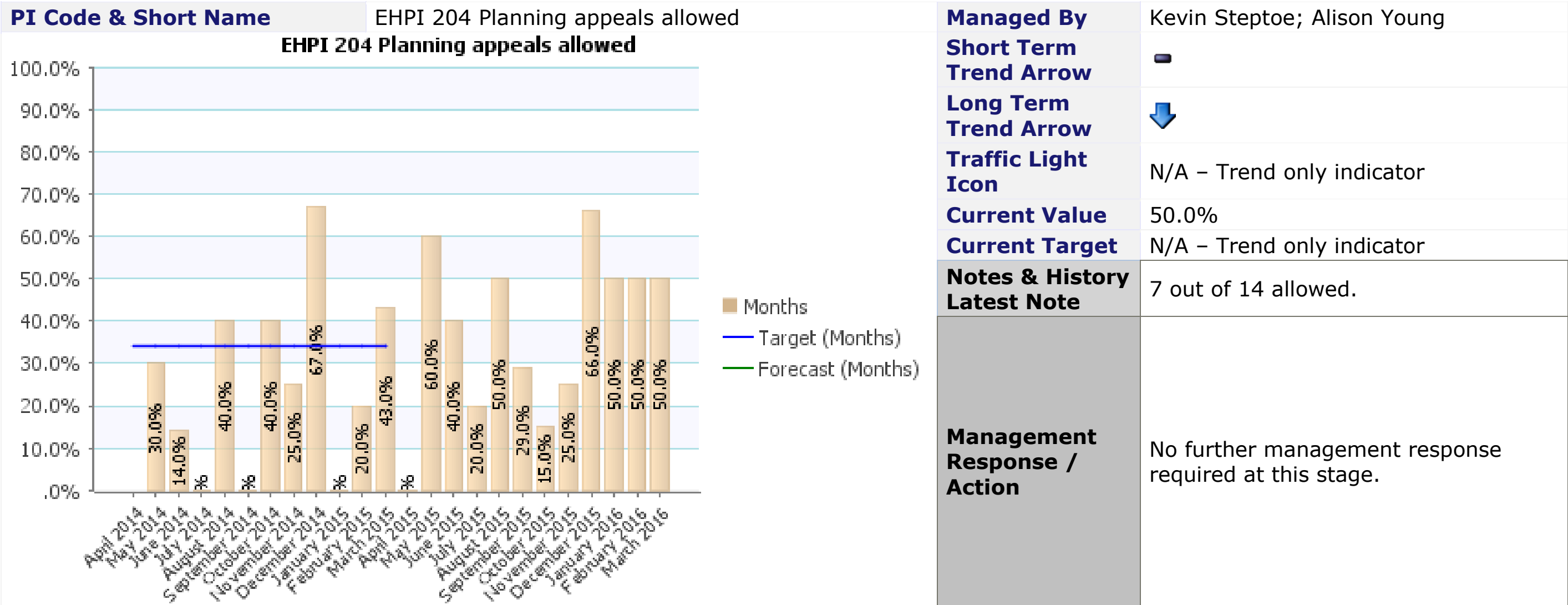
PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 151 Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)																			
EHPI 151 Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Value</th></tr><tr><td>Q1 2014/15</td><td>22</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2014/15</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2014/15</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2014/15</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2015/16</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2015/16</td><td>23</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2015/16</td><td>21</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2015/16</td><td>19</td></tr></table>		Quarter	Value	Q1 2014/15	22	Q2 2014/15	19	Q3 2014/15	16	Q4 2014/15	19	Q1 2015/16	20	Q2 2015/16	23	Q3 2015/16	21	Q4 2015/16	19
Quarter	Value																				
Q1 2014/15	22																				
Q2 2014/15	19																				
Q3 2014/15	16																				
Q4 2014/15	19																				
Q1 2015/16	20																				
Q2 2015/16	23																				
Q3 2015/16	21																				
Q4 2015/16	19																				
Managed By	Claire Bennett																				
Short Term Trend Arrow	↑																				
Long Term Trend Arrow	↑																				
Traffic Light Icon	N/A – Trend only indicator																				
Current Value	19																				
Current Target	N/A – Trend only indicator																				
Notes & History Latest Note	There were 11 households in the council's hostel accommodation (maximum household occupancy is 12) and no households in Bed and Breakfast. Of the remaining 8 households all had a homeless duty: 6 were in temporary supported accommodation and 2 were in self contained temporary accommodation.																				
Management Response / Action	No further management response required at this stage.																				

Service Area Planning and Building Control



PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 157b Processing of planning applications: Minor applications. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)		Managed By	Kevin Steptoe; Alison Young						
EHPI 157b Processing of planning applications: Minor applications. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)				Short Term Trend Arrow	⬆️						
 <table><tr><td>■</td><td>Months</td></tr><tr><td>—</td><td>Target (Months)</td></tr><tr><td>—</td><td>Forecast (Months)</td></tr></table>				■	Months	—	Target (Months)	—	Forecast (Months)	Long Term Trend Arrow	⬆️
■	Months										
—	Target (Months)										
—	Forecast (Months)										
				Traffic Light Icon	🟢						
				Current Value	98.00%						
				Current Target	80.00%						
				Notes & History Latest Note	Performance exceeding target. 46 out of 47 applications processed on time.						
				Management Response / Action	No further management response required at this stage.						

PI Code & Short Name		EHPI 157c Processing of planning applications: Other applications. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)		Managed By	Kevin Steptoe; Alison Young
EHPI 157c Processing of planning applications: Other applications. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)				Short Term Trend Arrow	↓
				Long Term Trend Arrow	↑
				Traffic Light Icon	🟢
				Current Value	95.00%
				Current Target	90.00%
				Notes & History Latest Note	Performance exceeding target. 133 out of 140 applications processed on time.
				Management Response / Action	No further management response required at this stage.



PI Status

6% off target

1% – 5% off target

OK

Long Term Trends

Improving

No Change

Getting Worse

Short Term Trends

Improving

No Change

Getting Worse

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

RISK MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT (JANUARY TO MARCH 2016)

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report relates to action taken to mitigate and control strategic risks in the period January to March 2016.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE:</u> That:	
(A)	the risk management controls implemented be approved.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Strategic Risk Register was last considered by The Executive on 5 April 2016. (Period October to December 2015). The register has been updated to reflect controls implemented between January and March 2016 and is attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Risk management monitoring usually forms part of the Healthcheck, however an outturn report is presented to the Executive for quarter four so a separate risk report is required.
- 2.2 Controls implemented in the period January to March 2016 have been recorded. Please refer to Essential Reference Paper B for more information.
- 2.3 All scores remain unchanged from the previous quarter.

- 2.4 The Strategic Risk Register for 2016/17 has been drafted. The first report featuring this register is due to be presented at the meeting on 6 September 2016, so changes are summarised below.
- 2.5 In 2016/17 two new risks will be added concerning devolution and extreme weather.
- 2.6 Three risks will drop down to the Operational Risk Management Group due to the controls implemented; 15-SR6 - 'Availability and performance of IT systems', 15-SR11 – 'Health and Safety', and 15-SR12 – 'Business Continuity Planning'.
- 2.7 15-SR1 – 'Significant funding reduction' will be split in to two sections, separating business rate income.
- 2.8 15-SR4 – 'Shared services' will be expanded to cover alternate service delivery models generally.
- 2.9 15-SR10 – 'Bishop's Stortford development' will be expanded to include any large / strategic developments.
- 2.10 15-SR16 – 'Old River Lane, Bishop's Stortford' will be expanded to the vitality of town centres.
- 2.11 Generally there has been a significant shift of scoring towards the 'critical' segment of the matrix, reflecting the financial and legislative challenges that the Council faces.
- 2.12 All strategic and operational risks can be viewed on the Council's performance management system, Covalent (www.covalentcpm.com/eastherts).
- 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

Quarter 3 Healthcheck report to Executive 5 April 2016

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=119&MId=2635>

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

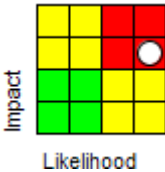
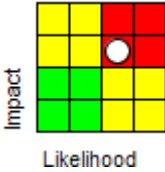
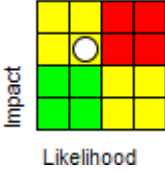
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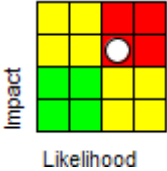
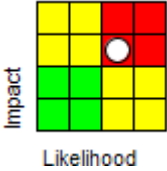
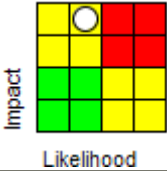
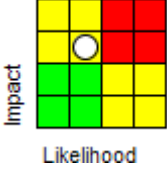
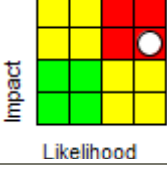
Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy
Consultation:	There are no specific consultation implications arising directly from this report.
Legal:	There are no specific legal implications arising directly from this report.
Financial:	There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.
Human Resource:	There are no specific human resource implications arising directly from this report.
Risk Management:	There are no additional risk management implications to those already contained in this report. However, it should be noted that if East Herts did not have a risk management monitoring process, the Authority would be seen to be not managing risks appropriately, which would have a significant negative impact on recommendations made by the External Auditors through the Annual Audit Letter.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising directly from this report.

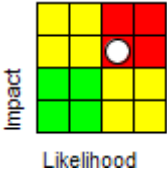
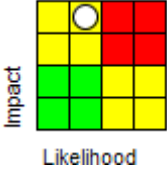
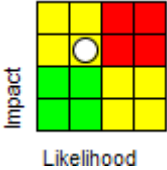
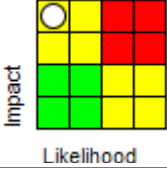
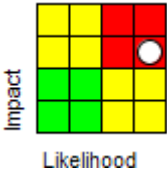
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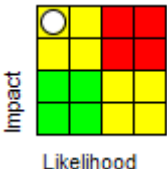
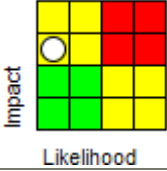
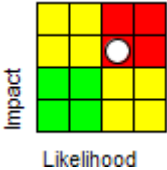
Essential Reference Paper B

Strategic Risk Register: January to March 2016

Code	Title	Description	Current Risk Matrix	Impact	Likelihood	Managed By	Latest Note
15-SR1	Risk of significant reduction in funding above that planned for, in particular localisation of Council Tax Support, localisation of business rates and New Homes Bonus.	There is uncertainty around future funding, both from Government and other areas such as income from commodities markets for recycled materials. There are cost pressures combined with an increased awareness and scrutiny of financial position.		3	4	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: Finance settlement for local Government announced at end of December 2015. Medium Term Financial Plan refreshed to take in to account changes. 2016/17 budget should be balanced, but future years significant gaps have been identified.
15-SR2	Risk of not having capacity / capability and flexibility to continue to deliver service levels over time.	There are challenges around workforce planning to ensure the Council is fit for the future, in terms of workforce skills, capacity and flexibility. Also about being fleet of foot and responsiveness		3	3	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: Senior management restructure has been undertaken and new Leadership Team arrangements being put in place. New Heads of Service will consider resourcing within their own teams to ensure that they are fit for purpose.
15-SR3	Risk that supplier / contractor or key third sector partner fails or fails to deliver.	A number of key services are delivered through major contracts, both directly and in consortia. This is both through private sector supply chains and in conjunction with the voluntary and third sector.		3	2	Liz Watts	January to March 2016: The level of risk remains unchanged. Key services continue to be delivered by contractors and partners. Effective monitoring and contract management is in place. These mechanisms are essential to mitigate the risks combined with effective procurement and a clear understanding of the relevant market place.

15-SR4	Risk that investment and effort does not deliver benefits and returns in Shared Services.	Moving more towards shared services with other public sector partners. Potential for lack of consistent political buy-in by all partners resulting in considerable effort without benefit. There is also a challenging skill set for managers due to the complexity.		3	3	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: The current shared services are performing well and delivering expected benefits. A number of new shared arrangements are being considered currently including Building Control and Waste Management.
15-SR5	There is uncertainty around government policy and a number of changes required without accompanying resource.	Risk of policy changes by decree which we do not comply with or implement		3	3	Liz Watts	January to March 2016: Pressures continue relating particularly to the budget in the form of the financial settlement from the government and the impact of the next round of welfare reform. Housing Benefits and Housing Options are likely to be most affected, but there will also be issues for Members and other services. Affordability for tenants will be a significant challenge. The Planning and Housing Bill will affect the provision of affordable housing. The reduction in government grants will affect the Council's budget in future years.
15-SR6	Availability and performance of IT systems and resources impacting on service delivery.	Reduced levels of service across the Authority. Targets may not be achieved. Staff morale and reputation of Council may suffer. Influence of ITSG should reduce risks		4	2	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: Networks are now fully resilient and load balanced. Robust Business Continuity arrangements in place for systems deployed from datacentres.
15-SR7	Data Protection: Failure to comply with the data protection principles. The potential disclosure of personal data inappropriately.	Action may be taken by the ICO. Individuals may suffer if their personal data, particularly sensitive personal data is disclosed.		3	2	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: 'Substantial' audit opinion received with no recommendations arising.
15-SR8	Impact of welfare reform changes.	New legislation will have an adverse financial impact on a significant number of residents. Residents will require more support from services across the Council affecting staffing levels, finances,		3	4	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: Implementation of welfare changes will happen as per timetable released by central Government.

		and a risk of increased aggression. There may also be difficulties in implementing Government policy, with uncertainty on timetable.					
15-SR9	Development of a District Plan that is acceptable to the community and the planning inspectorate.	Risk of not being able to agree plan in timeframe meaning: Increased costs, Lack of effective development control, Cannot bid for funding for infrastructure, lost opportunity, open to challenge in meantime, legal / reputational / political issues		3	3	Liz Watts	January to March 2016: Working with Partners and advisors as appropriate including Government through the Planning Inspectorate to ensure risks are minimised and to continue regular Portfolioholder updates.
15-SR10	Bishop's Stortford - significant development proposals - ensure good quality development securing all necessary infrastructure	Poor environment, loss of development opportunity, reputational risk		4	2	Liz Watts	January to March 2016: Member Steering Group in place to ensure all actions in relation to significant development sites are achieved.
15-SR11	Health and safety compliance across the Authority.	Non-compliance with statutory responsibilities may lead to accidents, more staff absence and potentially insurance claims.		3	2	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: Safety Committee meets regularly to consider compliance issues as well as any incidents to ensure any necessary improvements are identified. Audit programme continues. Planned mitigating actions: Land management training scheduled for 7th April 2016.
15-SR12	Business Continuity Planning	Failure to update the Business Continuity Plan may prevent the Council from providing critical services in the event of an incident.		4	1	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: Plan developed further and meeting scheduled with Hertfordshire County Council in April to review and plan a test. (Desktop exercise).
15-SR13	Failure of services to develop digital service offer and channel shift targets in line with Customer Service Strategy	Step change to digital basis for service delivery will not be made within the window of invest opportunity in the next 2-3 years		3	4	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: Plans being put together to develop the Council's road map to implementation.

15-SR14	Compliance with the Childrens Act 2004.	Whilst the Council's self-assessment obtained ratings of at least 'adequate' there is a commitment to improve and thereby ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults.		4	1	Liz Watts	January to March 2016: The action plan continues to be implemented. Further training for staff is being provided.
15-SR15	Safeguarding adults	Maintain and develop interagency relationships, Council policy and training.		3	1	Liz Watts	January to March 2016: Training provided, and attended by a significant number of employees. Safeguarding responsibilities identified in the new management structure.
15-SR16	Old River Lane, Bishop's Stortford	Risk that the Council does not exploit the opportunity to shape the site. Investment levels must be maintained to ensure that the property remains let and that tenants are supported.		3	3	Adele Taylor	January to March 2016: Consultants engaged to undertake master planning work leading to identification of options. Steering group is meeting on a regular basis to consider the longer term future of Old River Lane and other key sites within Bishop's Stortford. (An operational risk register is considered at the meeting). Day to day management of the site is contracted to Lambert Smith Hampton for the first year, and officers are regularly in consultation with them in regards to ensuring best value on the site.