



PUCKERIDGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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

1. Introduction.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.8. This Conservation Appraisal will:

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

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

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

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

PART A - LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

2. Legal and Policy framework.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Part B - APPRAISAL

3. Origins and historic development.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

4.3. Listed buildings. Individually listed buildings have been identified, plotted and some very briefly described. Full descriptions can be obtained on line at English Heritage's web site or Heritage Gateway. Such listed buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilages of listed buildings, if they pre- date1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings. There are a small number of such walls that are important to Puckeridge's visual, architectural and historic heritage.

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

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

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

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

- (a) They are in good condition;**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.12. Important views are identified.

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

5. General character and setting of Puckeridge.

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

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

Conservation Area is clearly defined and visually separate and distinctive.

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

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

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

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

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

6. Detailed Character Analysis.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Picture 4 – Milestone near no. 16 High Street.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

PART C – MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

7. Management Proposals.

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

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

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

Telephone no. 01279 655261

E-mail planning@eastherts.gov.uk

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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