

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.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:</b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>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>
<b>(B)</b>	<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</b>
<b>(C)</b>	<b>the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be adopted.</b>

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.

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