

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 13 September 2016 08:54
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing CACA

Categories: Red Category

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your work on the Braughing CACA and for your explanations at the open evening last week. We spoke briefly after the meeting but I've summarised some of my concerns about the draft CACA below.

- Terms such as 'harmful', 'offensive' and 'absurd' are inappropriate given that you've said there's nothing worse than neutral in the village. It would be better to use a term like unsympathetic as Peter Boylan suggested
- Green End and Braughing are not separate villages and shouldn't be described as such
- You mention that Braughing has excellent transport links which is definitely not the case. There is no rail service and the bus service is very limited - so this needs to be changed. The road links to get to a station are OK (other than in bad weather) but public transport links are very poor
- Braughing should not be described as a dormitory village or in decline other than in relation to a rural economy (i.e. it is valid that we don't have many local people working in farming, local shops, blacksmiths etc. as was the case in the past). There is a very strong community spirit in the village and many social clubs and events. Yes, the village is often quiet during the day in the week when many people are working (some from home) but that's because we have a significant proportion of people of working age rather than retired, and children who are at school, and therefore shows that the village is not in decline. The term anywheresville is also totally inappropriate for Braughing.
- The outbuildings at the old butchers are not attractive and we think it will cause a problem if they are protected. This is an ideal site for a new business, e.g. a tea shop or B&B but a new owner would be less likely to take on a business here if they are constrained about what they can do with ugly run-down outbuildings. Please can you change the categorisation of these buildings as it would be counterproductive to classify them as category 1 unlisted.

Also, I'm not sure whether this is an issue specific to a particular operating system or whether the problem has been fixed but I've been told that, when the draft document was opened in a browser it had the name 'Waterside Conservation area'. I don't get that myself but thought I'd pass it on just in case it is still an issue, maybe with a Mac?

Kind regards,

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 30 September 2016 16:02
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing conservation area

Categories: Red Category

Dear Mike,

I attended your talk on the redesign of the boundaries of the Braughing conservation area and I must say I am against the new plan, the reduction in area will leave our beautiful village open to housing developers.

Braughing
Ware
Herts

Sent from my iPad2

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 05 October 2016 09:28
To: Brown Mike
Subject: CAA Feedback from NP team

Dear Mr. Brown

As the Conservation and Environment team working on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, we feel that we should highlight some areas of your recent Conservation Area Appraisal that might benefit from amendment.

Whilst we have no specific objection to the proposed boundary changes, we are mindful that some residents have expressed concern and trust that their comments will be taken into account. Perhaps further reassurance is required in this regard: we can see that the changes make sense, but some may misinterpret them as having a negative effect on the village.

We support much of the document you have produced, but there are certain descriptive passages that are either inaccurate or likely to cause offence.

The use of the following phraseology is, we feel, inappropriate:

- the use of the word ‘mansions’ in relation to larger homes
- the term ‘isolated communities’ referring to, for example, Pound Close – the residents here and in Pentlows are well-integrated into village life and there is a frequently used footpath running through the former on to Gravelly Lane; we do, however, support your assertion that gated communities are best avoided
- ‘absurd’ and ‘sunken’ of the houses at the top of Pound Close – these reflect the surrounding architecture and were set below the road in order to avoid their having too dominant an appearance
- ‘harmful’ ✓
- ‘anywheresville’ ✓
- ‘offensive’. ✓

We would like to see all of these terms removed. Further, we feel that there is little point in criticising existing buildings, especially those labelled ‘neutral’ (you seem to suggest that there is nothing worse): we (and EHDC) can only learn from what has been built in the past and ensure that any new buildings are designed so as to sit attractively in the landscape. We should also remember that the two most recent developments have provided much needed affordable housing for local people.

The concept of Green End and Braughing as two separate villages is an historic one: this is one community and the term ‘Green End’ is generally understood to mean the section of Braughing running along the B1368.

The protection of the outbuildings to the rear of the butchers’ shop would seem to us to be counterproductive: it may constitute a serious obstacle to future sympathetic redevelopment of the site.

We would like to see more detailed analysis of ways in which trees, verges, hedgerows and riverbanks might be protected: in our view, all mature native trees within the conservation area and adjacent to it are important and all make a ‘positive contribution’ in terms of their attractiveness as well as their usefulness as wildlife habitats.

We hope that you find our feedback useful, as that is the spirit in which it is intended: it is important that we work together to protect the heritage of our conservation area and of the village as a whole.

Yours sincerely,

Braughing Neighbourhood Plan Conservation and Environment Group.

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 10 October 2016 09:22
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area, Draft Character Appraisal
Attachments: To Mike Brown.docx
Categories: Red Category

Dear Mr. Brown,

Please find attached my comments on the above which I trust you will give careful consideration to before drawing up the final document.

Yours sincerely,

To: Mike Brown, Conservation Officer, East Herts District Council.

From: Braughing, Herts. SG11

Subject: Braughing Conservation Area, Draft Character Appraisal

Date: 10th October 2016

Dear Mr. Brown,

I attended your meeting in Braughing on 6th September and was impressed with the amount of work which had obviously gone into the preparation of the draft appraisal.

I noted your surprise at having to present to a large audience, rather than your expectation of just speaking on a one-to-one basis with villagers. This clearly shows the amount of interest this issue has raised in Braughing and the considerable feeling concerning some of your proposals to alter the conservation area boundaries.

I recognise your feelings that that certain small amendments need to be made to the conservation area in the interests of "tidying up" but to "dedesignate" two massive areas of land to the east and south of Braughing can in no way be in the interests of the Village and can only benefit greedy property developers in the long run.

The "dedesignation" of Stortford Lane and the area behind Ford Street Farm is a clear example of a total disregard for the beauty of the countryside and the people who live in the adjacent houses. It is an area of outstanding beauty – what the countryside is all about – and it would be a disaster if this land is sacrificed to urbanisation with the loss of unrivalled views across the valley.

The other large area of "dedesignation" is the Glebe Field, adjoining Pelham Road which, it has been strongly suggested, should be a protected Green Open Space in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan because it ticks all the boxes and fulfils all the necessary criteria. It is listed on the Historical Environmental Register and is a Site of Archaeological Significance and Historic Importance. I am surprised that this information was not conveyed to you by Braughing

Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group when you liaised with them during the preparation of the Draft Character Appraisal. The wonderful views enjoyed from this piece of land extend all the way to the Barkway Radio Tower, twelve miles away, and it would be a travesty if it was "dedesignated" and allowed to be built upon, simply to satisfy the vested interests of property speculators who have no affection for the countryside.

I trust you will give my comments serious consideration before arriving at the final plan.

Yours sincerely,

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 14 October 2016 09:31
To: Brown Mike
Cc: Peter Boylan - Braughing Parish Council
Subject: Fw: Conservation Area Character Appraisal - Draft Document for public consultation
Attachments: 2016 10 13 - Braughing PC response to CAA.pdf

Importance: High

Categories: Red Category

Dear Mr Brown
Please see attached from Braughing PC
Regards
Belinda Irons
Clerk

BRAUGHING PARISH COUNCIL

*Belinda Irons, Clerk, 14 Crawley End, Chrishall, Nr Royston, Herts, SG8 8QL
Tel: 01763 838732 email: chrishall@uwclub.net*

Mike Brown
Conservation Officer
East Herts District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

13th September 2016

Re: Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Public Consultation

Dear Mike

Following the launch of the Draft Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals on 6th September 2016, Braughing Parish Council welcome the opportunity to provide further comment on the proposed document. Councillors have reviewed the document and offer the following feedback, which we hope will influence the final version of the document.

Whilst councillors have no specific objection to the proposed boundary changes, we are very aware that some residents have expressed concern and trust that their individual feedback will be taken into account when producing the final version of the document. Perhaps further explanation and reassurance is required in this regard, as some may assume these boundary changes as having a negative effect on the village.

The parish council would like to offer the following comments on the document itself:

1.3 – Braughing cannot be described as having “excellent transport links especially with regards public transport”. The reality is that without a car it is tough to get to other main towns. The last bus during the week arrives in Braughing at 7pm. There is no public transport on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

2.17 – This paragraph doesn't make sense to most. How does the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require the new District Plan to be produced? It might be helpful to explain why this Act provides the legislative framework for the District Plan.

3.9 – at the bottom of page 14, the paragraph regarding Kelly's Trade Directory doesn't make sense to most readers. The entries have been taken directly regarding the licensee of each pub and other occupations they hold as well as running a pub. But this is about the individual and not the pub. May need rewording to explain that individuals had multiple occupations.

3.11 – refers to the 'mansions to the north of Gravelly Lane'. This is an inappropriate term to use and could be seen as a derogatory remark. Hamels and Upp Hall deserve the appropriate title of mansion, but these do not. They are large detached houses in a gated community, but they are not mansions. This paragraph is attempting to give examples of isolated communities. Pound Close has a footpath that runs right through it from Green End to Gravelly Lane. Pentlows, now that the remaining meadow has been passed to the ownership of the parish council, will have the benefit of a right of way from the main road, through the development and down into the meadow for all residents to enjoy the public open space.

5 – Character Analysis Map

It would be helpful to understand the category on this map relating to "Trees making a positive contribution". The tree highlighted in the rear garden of The Gables is a Eucalyptus tree. This would not normally be regarded as making a positive contribution as it is not indigenous to this part of the country or indeed this part of the world.

The map draws attention to the important open spaces, which form a ribbon through the village, which we welcome. However, we are surprised the field to the rear of Ivy Cottage to Fleece Lane is not included. This is the lower part of the field behind the Post Office and houses up to Fleece Lane. The parish council would welcome the inclusion of this as an important open space.

5.1 – First paragraph - At the end of the quote it refers to 'the villages of Braughing and Green End.' Green End is not a separate village, but a street within the village.

5.2 – The term used 'Gated developments such as Gravelly Dell are particularly offensive.' Will be seen as an offensive remark and is unnecessary.

5.5 – Church – middle of page 31. The word clerestorey is mis-spelled. There is no 'e' in the storey part and should read 'clerestory'.

5.5 – page 32 image description. What does 'Cf' mean? As this is a public document, it would be helpful if this was explained rather than using an acronym that is not widely known.

5.7 – bottom of page 35. There is no benefit of describing the colour of the Category 1 buildings as cerise. When reading the character appraisal map, it is very difficult to distinguish between the two colours used for Category 1 and Category 2. Also the colours used to describe listed buildings and conversely those buildings or structures that have a negative impact are very similar and difficult to distinguish.

5.7 – page 36. Outbuildings to north and rear of 4 Green End are identified as Category 1 buildings, although they are within the curtilage of a listed building, 4 Green End. It would be helpful to readers to understand why these are being categorized as such, given the protection they have as being part of a listed building.

5.7 – page 37. You have also listed 'Outbuilding to north of 26 Green End.' Again, this lies within the curtilage of a listed building and the same comment applies as to the previous one.

5.7 – page 38. Identifies the outhouse opposite Gravelly Barn as a Category 1 building. This lies within the curtilage of Braughingbury, a listed building. Same comment applies.

5.13 – Elements harmful to the Conservation Area

The opening paragraph refers to neutral quality buildings as being post war and modern development and later describes them as 'being new'. On examination of the character analysis map, this is not the case. There are unlisted timber framed buildings that are known to have been present on the 1863 parish map. For instance, Fairview in Green End was a public house in the 19th Century.

5.13 – first paragraph on page 44. The term 'anywheresville' is used to describe some modern developments in the village. This is a derogatory term not required and clearly reflects on EHDC as the planning authority responsible for granting permission and monitoring progress. This paragraph again claims lack of connectivity with adjacent sites. Can this be re-worded?

5.13 – first paragraph on page 44. The term culs-de-sacs is misspelled.

5.13 – second image on page 44. Describes 'development in a sunken state'. Again, what is described is what EHDC planning authority granted in terms of permission. The intention was to prevent the development overpowering the street scene and a similar style to its immediate neighbours, 36 to 44 Green End, built in the 1820's and Grade II listed.

5.13 – page 45. The image description and text in paragraph below. Is this really "Harmful". It may be better described as unsympathetic to its heritage setting. The paragraph beneath the image contains the term "...if not protected by a vigilant and informed local population" This reads a little like vigilante policing. This could maybe better described as a 'community who feel passionate and proud of the strong sense of heritage they wish to retain.' We should be encouraging all residents to feel this way.

The section itself does make important points about new development and the need to make sure it's of high quality and in keeping with the rest of the environment.

5.14 – page 46, second paragraph. "These are often 'life style' driven in order to facilitate single function rooms and their various digital distractions and, following the hotel model, an en-suite bathroom for each bedroom, all reflective of the increasing fragmentation of family life."

This followed by the suggested actions feels somewhat patronising and unrealistic. We need to encourage people to live within historic buildings. Whilst we need to ensure they retain the historic value, we can't surely deny people the need for modern technology and a lifestyle that most of us would want.

The final paragraph in this section uses the term 'harmful' again relating to the boundary fence in Green End. Can you please consider an alternative term, even if 'unsympathetic'?

Finally, on this section the parish council are surprised to find that you have described 7a Green End to have a neutral impact, when there has been significant input from EHDC to control the development that has taken place over the last few

years. There is a view that this property has a significant negative impact on the conservation area.

6.5 – end of paragraph uses the term 'outlying villas'. Can you clarify the term, as not a description we would normally see in Braughing? ✓

7.2 – Use of the term 'harmful' again for the boundary fence in Green End. Please consider an alternative. ✓

8.4 – weblink – will this be permanent. Is it sensible to include such a protracted link into a document, which is likely to change. ✓

8.15 – overgrowth of vegetation. The proposed action appears to focus on the parish council persuading and enlightening residents. Where listed buildings are directly affected, surely there is a legal duty placed on property owners to maintain. Why cant something be included on this. Also, more could be done to enforce the legal duties on property and land owners in accordance with Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980. ✓

Cutting or felling etc. trees that overhang or are a danger to roads or footpaths

(1) Where a hedge, tree or shrub overhangs a highway or any other road or footpath to which the public has access so as to endanger or obstruct the passage of vehicles or pedestrians, or obstructs or interferes with the view of drivers of vehicles or the light from a public lamp, or overhangs a highway so as to endanger or obstruct the passage of horse-riders, a competent authority may, by notice either to the owner of the hedge, tree or shrub or to the occupier of the land on which it is growing, require him within 14 days from the date of service of the notice so to lop or cut it as to remove the cause of the danger, obstruction or interference. ✓

Summary

Braughing Parish Council looks forward to working with you on taking forward the management proposals. However, as explained above, the management proposals need some further work to develop them into a detailed set of actions. It may be prudent to mention that in the report in terms of next steps. ✓

Although overall we have an excellent draft document, the parish council remains concerned about the use of language to describe some of the less sympathetic development, which has taken place in the village in recent years. We have to be mindful of the residents who live in those parts of the village and also the responsibility East Herts District Council have in determining planning applications. ✓

Yours sincerely

Belinda Irons
Clerk to the Council

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 16 October 2016 11:38
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area, Draft Character Appraisal

To: Mike Brown, Conservation Officer, EHDC

From: Braughing, Herts, SG11

Dear Mr. Brown,

I attended the meeting last month regarding dedesignating some of Braughing's Conservation areas.

It was very apparent that the vast majority of the large audience were totally opposed to the suggestion which was put forward, of losing 30% of the existing Conservation Area.

Members of the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan were present, therefore I was very surprised that instead of backing the villagers' views which, as public servants, it is their duty to do, they have sent a letter agreeing with these proposals.

This does not appear democratic and I would urge you to listen to the feelings of people who love and care about this village.

Dedesignating this beautiful village would be a very retrograde step.

Yours sincerely,

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 16 October 2016 13:28
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area consultation

Dear Mr Brown

I attended the public meeting and have digested your comments and the contents of the appraisal and management proposals.

Whilst it is good to see that you have arrived in East Herts intent on making an impact; with real and proper diligence in the execution of your duties, it's a shame to see criticism of aspects of the village appearance to which blame can be attributed to the failings of your predecessor(s), and East Herts Development; as you were told by a number of residents.

Generally, I support your rationalisation of the boundary, though I do have concerns about several areas that are earmarked for proposed dedesignation if they are not protected in any other way (such as views or spaces). I'm afraid that newly designating 7 and 7a Green End (opposite the Post Office) is rather locking the stable door after the horse has bolted, and I would venture to suggest that in both cases any signs of historical features have very recently or recently disappeared, and neither site now has any merit.

I do not agree with newly classing dilapidated outbuildings behind the abandoned White's ex-butchers as Category 1 non-listed buildings; and wonder what grounds there are for doing so?

I also fully endorse the comments of the Braughing Parish Council.

I am inclined to support, in light of your comments during the public meeting, Article 4 Direction.

In respect of the consultation itself, you may recall my communication on receiving an invitation to attend and ask questions at the public meeting some 10 days in advance; that though this advised that the document was available in the Post Office and on the website, in fact it wasn't. When I complained that I couldn't find it on the website, your illogical excuse was that the consultation didn't start until the public meeting. Illogical, because the invitation said it was available, and because how can you ask questions about a document that hasn't yet been published? I do recommend that you have proper regard for ensuring the relevant documents are published at the same time as giving notice of consultations. I was not the only person who went searching for it; only to be disappointed. Some didn't bother trying again, which surely diminishes the proper purpose and value of a consultation.

Thanks

Address?

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 17 October 2016 08:36
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing conservation area

I wish to protest against the proposed deregistration of the hedgerow on the west side of Green Lane opposite pound close As new houses are to be built there I think it's important that this major entry through the village has the Hedgerow maintained otherwise the elevated view of the new construction will dominate the village appearance along that road (B1368) I believe the planning permission for the development did require at the hedgerows be maintained Please acknowledge your receipt of this email Thank you

Braughing
Sg11
Sent from my iPhone

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 17 October 2016 08:38
To: Brown Mike
Subject: BRAUGHING CONSERVATION AREA

Dear Mr. Brown,

I am a resident of Braughing and have been for [redacted] and I am aware that EHDC are currently reviewing the conservation area around Braughing. I have reviewed the documentation and can see no positives from such activities only risks that will expose key parts of the village to potential urbanisation and lose of key vistas, and therefore a total loss of character.

The conservation area boundaries have been in place for nearly 50 years and are the primary reason Braughing retains its character. Why after all these years is it felt it is justified to move the boundaries to make them more logical and defensible ? The parish and residents are currently developing a neighbourhood plan that will include potential future development sites that the parishioners support if development is necessary. To change the boundaries could result in development in areas unwanted by the villagers and make a total mockery of the effort and cost that has been invested in the neighbourhood plan.

I strongly object to the proposed changes.

Address

Braughing
Ware
Herts
SG11

17 October 2016

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

Attention of Mike Brown, Conservation Officer

Dear Sirs

Braughing Conservation Area

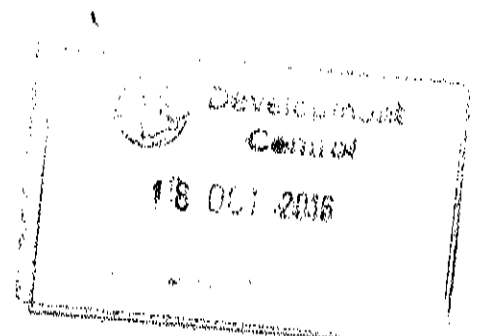
We were fortunate in attending the presentation that you gave to the village on 6th September when you explained the proposed changes to the Conservation Area. There were many questions and you had many answers but the answer to the question: *'Why is it necessary to make the changes?'* with: *'To rationalise the boundary'* is not acceptable.

The purpose of creating a conservation area is to protect the area that it encircles. In the case of Braughing, this was carefully set up in 1968 at a time that the village was considerably smaller and less developed as it is today. However, it has, over the years protected it from changing times and has largely meant that much of the character of the village has been retained. This is not just the buildings that form the village but, more importantly the landscape within which it sits. Views in and out of the village must be preserved and to lose the areas around Stortford and Gravelly Lanes, the Meads and the Glebe field and Vicarage Lane area will inevitably lead to a loss of these and to the important natural features and habitat that they contain.

Whilst we welcome the effort that you have given to study our village we urge you to consider ways to further protect it rather than considering a course of action that will lead to detrimental changes to it.

Yours faithfully,

Cc Braughing Parish Council
Braughing Society
Oliver Heald
Ben Harris-Quinney



Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 18 October 2016 19:03
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Feedback Comments - Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal

Dear Mike,

I write regarding the consultation of the draft Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals 2016.

Having read the document and attended the launch meeting at Braughing Church Hall, it is evident that considerable work has gone into producing a detailed and thoughtful appraisal and set of management proposals. It is also clear why the boundaries of the actual Conservation Area have been reviewed in order to make it both cohesive and defensible. The EHDC Conservation team are certainly to be congratulated by the residents of Braughing on a great piece of work.

My only concern is the classification of the hedgerow on the south side Hull Lane as "making a positive contribution".

The criteria set out in the report for important trees and hedgerows are:

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

With regard to the hedgerow on the south side of Hull Lane, the hedgerow does not meet ANY of these three criteria and therefore should not be designated as "important" or "making a positive contribution". The hedge is not in good condition, in fact parts of it have only been planted in the last couple of years. The hedgerow is not visible from public view points and it does not make a significant contribution to the street scene. Indeed, local residents in Hull Lane have complained about the hedge and requested that it be removed altogether.

Furthermore, how can EHDC suggest that the hedgerow on the south side of Hull Lane is "important" or "making a positive contribution" without also including the hedgerow on the north side of Hull Lane (opposite Grove Barn) and the hedgerow which is along the frontage of 7 Green End, both of which are included within the Conservation Area. This appears to be unjustifiable.

Accordingly, I would ask for the classification of the hedgerow along the south side of Hull Lane to be removed.

Best regards,

Address?

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 19 October 2016 08:14
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area - Draft Character Appraisal and Management Proposals - Objection

Mike

I have also reviewed your document, and I share many of the concerns that have already been raised by other residents.

I believe that many of the areas you have removed from the conservation area have been earmarked for inclusion in the neighbourhood plan as prospective building plots.

If they are removed from the conservation area surely this will reduce the need to build the new houses in the same style as neighbouring properties. And as some of the fields are on the approach to the village, then this will destroy the look and feel of the village immediately.

I believe you need to increase the conservation area rather than reduce it, or leave it as it was.

To properly protect the village the surrounding fields must also be protected, and I appreciate that they are green belt, but it won't be long before the rules are relaxed.

As the chairman of the Parish Council is now a district councillor there must also be a conflict of interest if he has provided you with any recommendations, or suggestions.

Regards

Braughing

**BRAUGHING,
WARE, HERTS, SG11**

Phone

email'

18 October 2016

Mike Brown, East Herts Council,
Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford,
SG 13, 8BQ

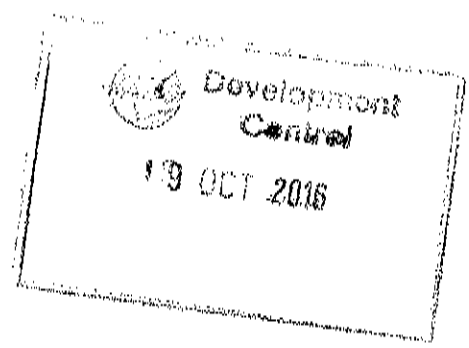
Dear Mr Brown,

Braughing Conservation Area: Draft Appraisal

I have read the draft with pleasure and appreciate the care and sympathy that has gone into it. But, in the centre of the Conservation Area, I do have serious concerns. I do not find that the draft makes any convincing case for the dedesignations that it proposes. I cannot see what in any concrete sense would be gained by them, while they seem to me to run unnecessary risks. My special concern, is the fields behind Ford Street Farm. Development on them would be a disastrous change for the worse in the outlook not only from my house but from the B1368, the main artery of Braughing. May I venture to suggest that if there is any doubt about moving the boundaries of the conservation area, they should be left alone. I also have an urgent concern about the land, which is at present grazing, to the north of Malting Lane and to the south of Fleece Lane. This is puzzlingly not included in the category of open spaces to be protected. The draft, correctly, in my view, makes the point that a much valued feature of Braughing is the survival of fields separating Green End from the rest of the village. Unless that field is also protected, the chain is potentially broken. Malting Lane, although it sustains an excessive volume of traffic at certain times of the day, has kept its character as a sunken land with steep banks and over-arching trees. Further development in the fields on either side of it would be disastrous for it.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 19 October 2016 13:19
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Conservation Proposals Braughing
Attachments: Mike Brown response.pdf; ATT00001.txt

Categories: Red Category

Dear Mr Brown

I enclose further copy of my husbands paper the contents of which I totally support, and I would wish to be counted in objection to the proposals as recently presented to the village

Yours sincerely

Braughing

Braughing Conservation Area

Draft Character Appraisal and Management Proposals

A Response :

21 October 2016



Braughing Conservation Area - Management Proposals

This Proposal is prompted by new Government legislation to address the current housing crisis. It would seem appropriate before looking at how this translates into changes for Braughing, if an examination of the wider picture is considered by the District Council in terms of demanding from the centre a more comprehensive policy which is broader, more profound and tackles the deeper contributory causes for this need.

A Perfect Storm

My thoughts are sadly we are now caught in the perfect storm as new homes are not being built fast enough to impact on the housing crisis and pressure is steadily building.

Many foreign investors, particularly with the current low valuation of the pound, are buying property in London and adding around 7% to the residential demand. Low bank rates are encouraging many to diversify investment into property to stay ahead of inflation. The Cameron Govt failed to deliver its promises on immigration control which recently emerged as the central issue within the EU referendum.

Many in London are being priced out of remaining in the capital and are moving out into the Home Counties.

In 2015 the Government introduced a narrow policy of throwing its weight behind the removal of red tape, and supporting Developers, in tackling the crisis, and took 2 major decisions : -

1. that all Development applications would be deemed to be in 'favour' of the applicant.
2. that it was time to build into the green belt around London.

The huge difference in property prices between London and the Home Counties suggests this part of Hertfordshire will be in the front line delivering into this demand. The growth of the science parks to the south of Cambridge (also with very high property prices) will add further into the need to build within this very desirable corridor between London and Cambridge.

Despite the high number of brownfield sites Developers prefer the easy option of greenfield conversion, and, frequently on acquiring land prefer to land bank. No legislation is being introduced to incentivise a urgent change in this area.

East Herts

Regionally the East Herts District Council has missed every date when forecasting the publication of the District plan and are now within months of having it taken away and done for them by Central Government. Whilst all have waited through this delay for some firm protective planning policy, this part of Hertfordshire has been vulnerable to a number of ill conceived predatory building applications, with Buntingford being particularly oversubscribed.

Locally we are experiencing unplanned growth where Developers have challenged the inability of the EHDC to demonstrate sufficient Housing Stock resulting often with the construction of bland housing of variable quality? We have seen on the southeastern side of Buntingford, within 4 miles of our village, new housing built to create new settlements greater than the population of Braughing. This has added further pressure into over crowded schools, roads and oversubscribed surgeries !

With the explosive housing growth has come mediocre quality, and it has become common and accepted practice for development applications to be sugared with all kinds of sweeteners to

seduce approval, but in reality, once consents have been obtained, specifications are diluted and the EHDC admits it has insufficient staff to enforce standards.

Next year our District council receipt from Central Govt will be 75% less than this year, and to meet growing budgets, the District Council must quickly increase the regional Housing stock. This isn't going to come from garden infills, or brownfield conversions, but from building more and more large scale developments financed through the big players like Wimpey and Redrow etc. who are already here ! The larger the development the greater the investment and opportunity for the District Council to tackle infrastructure.

THEREFORE IT IS LIKELY TO ASSUME THAT LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENTS WILL MAKE THE MOST IMPACT INTO THIS DEMAND, WILL TACKLE INFRASTRUCTURE, OPTIMISE LIMITED COUNCIL STAFF AND QUICKLY PROVIDE MEASURABLE BUDGET BENEFIT BY INCREASING RATEABLE INCOME

The proposed " dedesignated "changes to the protective conservation boundaries around Braughing cannot be seen, as suggested, as tidying up but are part of this new Planning policy fudge to redefine green belt simply to introduce rapid housing growth, and this will put, in my view, Braughing at enormous risk.

In the past 12 months we have seen the EHDC Village hierarchy study move from a policy of categorising villages, (intended to limit development to scaled proportions) to now opening the doors to consider all applications on their own merits. Adjacent to Braughing, Puckeridge, also classified as Category 1 village, with a population of 3560, will be in line for a minimum growth of 350 dwellings. (Recently the District Council Executive Meeting has endorsed an uplift in housing quota from 16,500 to now 19,500 new houses for this region)

This enormous concentration of housing is already, and will continue to have, an incredible impact on the quality of life for those who live in Braughing.

Boundary Changes

I believe it is very important to oppose the boundary changes as they are out of scale and inappropriate when compared with the size of Braughing and threaten the very unique identity of our village. It is important to be clear that though the Character Appraisal of Braughing represents qualitative historic record the Management proposals are intended as ' enablers ' to ease the Planning process. These recommendations can only be viewed as threatening as they present no enhancements but only a reduction in the status quo through a perceived need to " rationalise boundaries " which have now resulted in some very odd shaping.

The cohesion and presentation of the village in total is important to be considered at this time. Braughing is a jewel within the 42 Hertfordshire villages hence why it won both the CPRE award for best East Herts village and best County Village in the last year of this CPRE awards.



The re classification of the fields around the perimeter of Braughing suggest hairline judgements splitting dedesignated areas from those continuing to be conserved. As Braughing lies within the Quinn Valley it can be seen by the "admitted " planning flawed Pentlow development, sighted overlooking the village that any development, on the slopes of the valley can have a very negative impact to aspect?

Ford street Farm : The Proposal recommends the removal of fields to the east of the farmyard. These fields form part of one Braughing's most beautiful vistas, viewed from across the Quin Valley from the B 1368. With the steep elevation of these fields any buildings here, as with Pentlows, would have a very negative aspect to the vista. (note ploughed fields adjacent to horizon in the picture below subject to de designation)



Stortford Lane : This beautiful lane is one of the finest examples of a medieval holloway and is believed locally to have changed little in 800 years. It is also flanked by many ancient trees and native woodland including some beautiful bluebell woods. Why would this be removed from Conservation protection ? (fields to the rear subject to dedesignation)



Gravelly Lane : The strip of land north of Gravelly Lane seems at odds for reclassification adjacent to the very pretty ford and running through the side of the River Quin where trees have been planted etc to conserve and enhance this area ? Also Gravelly Lane is a very pretty and highly prized local lane providing pedestrian and bridle access to the Bone and beyond. This is very characterful as lined with mature hazel hedging which supports the local wildlife habitat including kingfishers.

Any potential changes to the profile of this lane would encourage more traffic, speed and threat to how its currently used.

Glebe Field : this field has been subject to recent strong local support to be protected as a pasture. What is the difference between this paddock and those elsewhere in the village conservation area? This field is visible from Barkway and contains significant visible archaeology Why dedesignation ?



I would urge you to review the comments contained within the Category Challenge Paper which highlights key differentials with regard to Braughing and why it was made a CPRE Village of the Year. I believe a full appraisal of conservation should include due consideration to our history, land, wild life,

identity and provide a social legacy as more people work from home and live in villages. The "asset" management of components of the countryside as recommended in this report I would suggest fragments elements from the panorama and potentially starts edging out something which is priceless and irreplaceable.

View from west of village : The ploughed foreground in the photograph below is proposed to be dedesignated.



The proposed tidying up of local fields with fractional alterations in some boundaries and broad sweeps to others is not clear and there is a danger that the direction of creating an inside and outside to conservation as a potential Disney land approach to the country side and inconsistency ?

Villages such as Braughing have grown organically in the past, we cannot separate Conservation and Planning policy, the re designation of such large portions of land would suggest opportunity for massive bolt on housing estates which are out of character within a rural environment but are now being "deemed in favour of the applicant" and

approved - this draft proposal must bring this threat closer ! The opening up of large tranches of dedesignated land around our village offers potential for it to grow by over 60% and must immediately attract more Development interest. After the costly and protracted Gladman battles why present more opportunity for this to be repeated?

Regional expansion

The explosive expansion of Buntingford has been nationally recognised as disproportionate with applications reviewed by the Secretary of State, it is likely therefore, in the future, these will be more controlled. Where do the Planners and Developers look next - perhaps Category 1 villages?

Post Brexit

It can be assumed post Brexit farming will be pursuing new broader policies independent of the EU and the loss of valuable farm land at this time should not be easily forfeited.

Communications are we being listened to ??

The interpretation of what remains in conservation and what has been removed suggests inter reaction with the Braughing Neighbourhood Planning Committee who, despite a clear mandate and preference from the majority of the village to provide proposals for new housing through infill and brownfield conversion, are in support of relaxing the village boundaries. This is believed to be generally unpopular, as is the Parish Council Committee's view of also supporting these Management Proposals. Opinions of those who attended your conservation presentation and later PC meetings, together with those have written to the Council, (including the undersigned), have been ignored in their response to you.

District Councillor B Harris Quinney has been unavailable to provide adequate representation on behalf of the village and not been reachable for comment throughout this year, any leverage through a District Councillor acting on behalf of the village in key debates has therefore been absent and has disadvantaged the village.

It is very disturbing as major changes such as this are being progressed that comments to you should include the simple question are we being listened to ?

Braughing

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 19 October 2016 12:31
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area . Draft Character Appraisal .

Dear Mr Brown

I attended the meeting on September 6th when EHDC Draft Character Appraisal for Braughing Conservation Area was presented to the audience . The document is impressive and detailed . However , although the audience were told it is " a tidying up of the boundaries " It is apparent that the proposal would result in a lose of 30% of the Conservation Area . A lose of some of the most beautiful views , vistas and ancient hedgerows including wildlife in the village . The majority of the large audience were totally opposed to this suggestion and made their views vehemently clear .

It must be remembered that Braughing was the CPRE Herts County Village of the Year in 2012 . Rationalisation of these boundaries , which have been in place for nearly 50 years , would result in the urbanisation of a beautiful village and in the future open the flood gates to predatory developers . All the sites marked for removal from the Conservation Area are essential to Braughing ' s unique charm and heritage .

The Parish Council have sent a letter agreeing with the proposals but this is certainly not the views of a large majority of the people they represent . Please consider ,sympathetically , the views and feelings of the people who enjoy everything this beautiful , tranquil village has to offer .

Yours Sincerely

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 19 October 2016 14:33
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing conservation area

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Orange Category, Red Category

I do not agree with the sites, which are being proposed to be removed, from the conservation area in Braughing , round the river Quin valley .
Yours

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 19 October 2016 14:56
To: Brown Mike
Cc: oliver.heald.mp@parliament.uk; Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben)
Subject: Proposed changes to Braughing conservation area boundary

Categories: Red Category

Dear Mr Brown

I write in response to proposed alterations to the Conservation Area in Braughing. The current boundaries are a very logical way to protect the character of the village as a whole, including, as they do, field margins and hedgerows bordering the ancient lanes both in and around the village (which are both very important visual features of the rural settlement and provide valuable ecological habitats and wildlife corridors). It appears that these alterations will make it much more difficult to protect the rural character of the village for future generations to enjoy. Views across the valley to surrounding farmland are essential to the landscape setting of the village and the mosaic of fields and meadows at the heart of this ancient settlement are vital environmental resources for both wildlife and local residents and should be accorded the highest conservation value.

It was clearly the view of those who drew up the boundary of the present Conservation Area that all the landscape elements of the rural settlement were vital to the character of the village and there seems to be no good reason for a different view to be taken now. In particular, the proposed exclusion from the Conservation Area of the strips of land bordering the village lanes will make them very vulnerable to future development proposals. Indeed, a cynical view might be that, far from making the conservation area more rational, these proposals would have the effect of emasculating the controls that are so essential to maintaining the rural nature of the village, purely in order to cram far more totally unsuitable housing developments into it, thus changing forever the character of the village and its surrounding area.

It is the visible reminders of its ancient past – the narrow, winding lanes bordered by hedgerows and fields – the old buildings – the meadows and fords – and, not least, the enveloping farmland which provides the essential character of the village of Braughing and should be given every statutory protection available.

Please reconsider these proposals in the light of the points above and return to an holistic vision of the conservation area, with proper protection for all those elements that make up the essential character of this beautiful village.

Yours sincerely

Hamels Park

Buntingford

Herts

SG9

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 10:21
To: Brown Mike; Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben)
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area

We are residents to Braughing Village and we read the draught character map plan with some trepidation. After looking at some of the development that has taken place in the very recent past it seems that scant concern has been given to Braughing and the fact that it is mostly a conservation area. The tone of the report however seemed to be at odds as to what has gone before and I was pleased at the general ethos that was being conveyed.

We were then totally shocked to read the recommendations in terms of the de-designation of a huge swathe of conservation areas, and a reason of "rationalisation" given! I am sorry but it looks more like a future plan for development plots being assigned! The inclusion of more areas is always welcome if there is a logical rationale and solid reason for it. I fail to see how designating a property that is under close scrutiny by the council for not complying to the planning rules can now be deemed to be of value!

To say that the new estate builds are of neutral impact is nonsense. They negatively impact the surrounding area. How did these get planning permission in the first place? The field is as central as you can get in Braughing and has outstanding views marked all around it but is not to be included as protected! It has protected hedgerows around it and is as close to the iconic ford as possible (and even features in one of your images in the report!). I know that this is potentially earmarked for development. Is this why it has not been deemed important enough to be protected? How can one field, one that is central to the village be omitted from this protection?? It has the same heritage considerations to adhere to and the same importance to the character of the village. Are the views that these new houses would be blocking not considered?? Is the fact that it would change the outlook for so many residents and visitors to the village not of significance?? These are the same outlooks that have been protected for more than 40 years for a very good reason.

I know that there is much to consider when doing these reports but do feel that the report becomes nonsensical when it makes recommendations at odds with its initial observations!

We really feel that a move to decrease a conservation area that has been in place since 1968 is an example of short-sightedness and a lack of appreciation when it comes to the historic influence of these areas. Why indeed have a conservation area if the council intends to reduce and restrict it every time it suits their needs or the needs of another developer who moves into a peaceful and respected conservation area and then sets out to change its whole being? We assume that the reasons for Braughing's conservation area being listed as so back in 1968 have not changed in the last 40+ years what with its numerous listed buildings and desirable character which has won it County Village of Year in the past.

Braughing deserves its conservation status and as such should be protected and not made vulnerable to those who wish to change its very being.

I am sure, as Conservation Officer for the Council you would consider it your duty to uphold these long-standing virtues and protect these vital areas that reflect our heritage so well.

I would appreciate your acknowledgment at receiving this email, a copy of which I have also posted out to you.

Many thanks

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 19 October 2016 17:16
To: Brown Mike
Cc: Oliver Heald (MP); Oliver Heald (MP); Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben)
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Proposal 2016
Attachments: Mike Brown response.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Orange Category, Red Category

Dear Mr BROWN,

I attended the 'public consultation' in Braughing on the 6th September & I would like to record my disappointment with the way the meeting proceeded. There was considerable & justified concern expressed by the majority of those villagers who attended, but little or no willingness on your part to accept any of the valuable points made. Sadly there was also no tangible support of their community from the token Parish councillors who were present. Subsequent correspondence received supports the view that none of the concerns expressed so forcibly by the villagers have been addressed, or are likely to, either by the District, or Parish councils. It leads me to wonder if the whole public consultation process was just 'shop-dressing' & the EHDC had already planned to proceed with the Conservation Area boundary reductions regardless. If so that would be a very poor day for local democracy.

If, as you said, the de-designation of the conservation area land proposed would " be of no detriment to the Braughing village community or benefit to the District Council, it was merely administrative rationalisation", why then spend the community charge payers money to carry out this unnecessary exercise in the first place. I would hate to think that the EHDC's main driver in this exercise was to release attractive sites within the conservation area for future speculative development, to satisfy the Districts need to fulfil it's recently increased quota of new house starts to satisfy Central Governments latest initiatives, singling out the London/Cambridge corridor for particular attention. Because of it's proximity to London & Cambridge Braughing becomes very vulnerable to any such unwanted large scale development, which can only destroy the existing secluded character.

Nestling, as it does, among the rolling hills of the Quin valley, a major part of the village's charm & uniqueness are the mysterious & beautiful green corridors that form the entrances to the village all round, on Ford Street, Green End (B1368) both ways, Stortford Lane, the Pelham road & Gravelly Lane full length. It is therefore essential to retain these for posterity. Any major development in these areas would destroy the very quiet charm & beauty that attracts the developers in the first place. Is this something that the EHDC are happy to be responsible for, or is this of no concern to the council? The de-designation of land at these important green entrances only makes their final destruction all the more likely.

There are many other concerned villagers who will have provided more detailed responses to the 'Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Proposals' than I have here, but I have attached s response dated 21st October 2016 which fully endorse. Please take time to assimilate all the issues raised & the great measure of opposition in the village to your proposals as they currently stand. To reconsider your proposals, even at this late hour, is a sign of moral strength & integrity, not of weakness, & will be welcomed by our village community for many years to come.

Brown Mike

20

From:
Sent: 19 October 2016 17:24
To: Brown Mike
Cc: oliver.heald.mp@parliament.uk; Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben);

Subject: Braughing Conservation Area
Attachments: Pentlows.JPG

Categories: Red Category

Dear Mr Brown

I have read very carefully the Braughing Conservation Area Character Appraisal and have the following observations.

First, and most important, I object most strongly to the suggestion of any de-designation of any part of the existing conservation area. I agree with the minor additions but would want to ensure that further estate building cannot take place anywhere around the village. Put differently, I cannot see the case for de-designation unless it is to enable development.

You have correctly pointed out the inappropriateness of the two ghettos we already have - Pound Close and Pentlows - and it is your Authority that enabled such poor development. The density and nature of the housing provided is out of keeping and has resulted in loss of greenery from scrubland to meadow. To give you some idea of just how horrible these properties are I attach a photograph taken of the Pentlows development which has more in common with New Orleans than East Hertfordshire (or when it is so tastelessly illuminated for the months before Christmas, akin to the ultimate vulgarity that is Las Vegas). I do appreciate that once developers get planning permission your Authority just does not have the capacity in manpower or finance to ensure compliance. The solution is to require very large refundable deposits up front as a guarantee of compliance or better still don't give planning approval in the first place to developers with a track record of non-compliance.

If you go ahead with contraction of the conservation area the risk for the future then is simple. More closed Toytown estates on the periphery to house people with no appreciation of rural living or values and who contribute very little to village affairs. (Out of the 45 or so new residences I can think of three exceptions.) East Herts has demonstrated that it is not able to manage sympathetic development: for example it would cost a little to incorporate pargetting and flint infill brick walls, and also to have some space between houses, but planners don't seem to have much idea of integration.

So in summary, a sensible description of our village, warts and all; a lack of appreciation that your Authority is accountable for some of the horrors; and a totally unsound recommendation as to conservation area boundary changes.

Our Parish Council has responded with sensitivity not wishing to offend any parishioners. However, its views are solely those of the Council, and from anecdotal evidence do not represent the strength of feeling of many people living in the village.

Gravelly Lane
Braughing

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 19 October 2016 20:50
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Draft for consultation 2016
Attachments: Letter.doc

Dear Mike

Please find attached my letter regarding the Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Draft for consultation 2016.

Regards

Braughing
Herts
SG11

19 October 2016

Mike Brown
East Herts Council Wallfields
Pegs Lane Hertford
SG13 8EQ

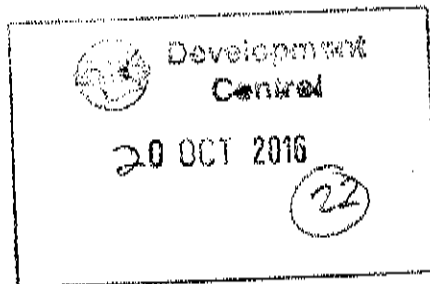
Dear Mr Brown,

I have read the Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Draft for consultation 2016 with interest. Much of the paper is reassuring, going into considerable detail, with clear objectives to protect and enhance Braughing's unique heritage and character. I fully support these objectives.

However, I do not agree that the proposal to remove designated areas from the conservation area fulfils these objectives. To the contrary, once areas are removed from conservation scrutiny they become significantly less protected and open to inappropriate change, thus making Braughing's unique character vulnerable. It is the conservation area boundary designation of 1968 which has contributed to Braughing's current uniqueness. A reduction in this conservation area would only be harmful to Braughing's heritage assets.

I therefore do not support the proposed dedesignation of areas within the existing conservation boundaries, but support the proposed inclusion of additional designated areas to rationalise the boundary.

Yours sincerely



Dear Sir

I am writing to say
I am extremely worried about
the designated of Braughing
conservation areas.

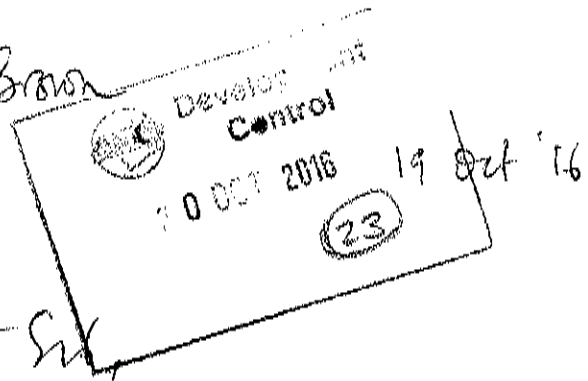
These areas include some
of Braughing's beautiful vistas
ie hedgerow etc.

I cannot understand
why these should be changed.

Braughing has always been
known for outstanding beauty
and historical interest so
therefore this is very
worrying for residents of
Braughing.

Yours Sincerely

To: Mike Brown



Dear Sir,

As a Braughling resident for more than
I am alarmed to find that
the Management Proposals contained in
EHDC's Draft Character Appraisal propose to
de-designate sections of the Conservation
Area.

Surely this would leave Braughling open
to a fresh onslaught by developers after
we have already had 50 or more new
houses built and others (Alderman & Co)
rejected

2.

The conservation area should be protected and left to do its job of preserving the character and beauty of the village.

Yours sincerely,

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 15:34
To: Brown Mike
Cc: oliver.heald.mp@parliament.uk; Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben)
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area : draft character appraisal & management proposals

Categories: Red Category

Dear Mike

I have read the above referred to document and have several comments/concerns which I feel are relevant in preparation for finalising the proposal; please see below :

Areas for dedesignation

The rationale for dedesignating several tracts of land is weakly formulated and not convincing; even upon re-reading several times, I cannot see a clear, compelling reason to do so. The section copied below is even contradictory across both bullet points – the core threat to the conservation area is speculative/inappropriate building ... and dedesignating tracts of land opens Braughing's conservation area to these exact threats. If anything, the conservation area should be extended if motives to protect it are sincere. Dedesignation does not enhance in this example.

1.9. The Management Proposals section:

Puts forward any required boundary changes to omit or add areas to the Conservation Area that would make it both cohesive and defensible;

Proposes measures and initiatives that address the threats to the Conservation Area's special interest, character and appearance identified in the Character Appraisal;

The proposal 5.2 General overview "*The topography of the area makes for some beautiful views each way across the verdant valley, peppered with historic houses and the church. ... Views from the surrounding fields to the north and east down into the village can be very picturesque.*" So much of this proposal is contradictory – whilst praising the beauty of the landscape, the dedesignation of tracts of land is exactly what will threaten this beauty.

Current Braughing Demographic / Community

The proposal makes quite a negative/sweeping assumption on the demographic of Braughing with several inaccurate statements, ie assumes a population of either affluent retirees or suburbanite commuters who "tend to shop at the supermarkets in the towns where the work (and/or go there recreationally at weekends)." For anyone who knows Braughing, this is inaccurate and misrepresentative. Some residents of Braughing have lived there their whole lives; many (like me) have moved there because of its rural appeal – I am from a farming background and work in the City of London, and would definitely NOT categorise myself as one of these 'modern commuting suburbanites' you presume make up the population of Braughing. The population supports 3 pubs (plus shop/post office and Pearce's Farm Shop), and you only have to look at the Braughing Community Website to see the number of local clubs & societies, and the vast range of community-driven and supported events which take place throughout the year. Please do not write Braughing off as on the road to becoming "a hollowed-out commuter suburb" – if you visit the village and talk to the people, this is not the true reflection! I think credit should be given to the people of Braughing for the efforts they are taking to pull everyone together into a cohesive and socially buoyant community.

Recent Residential Development (Pound Close, Pentlows) & Lessons for Future

The proposal is quite critical as to how these 2 developments sit very uncomfortably within the village of Braughing. "*anywhere land suburban quality at odds with the rural character of the village*"; "*urban design layouts ... are particularly offensive*"; "*large, looming and over-articulated*"; "*overly-complex high density faux-detached dwellings*"; the bitter irony of all this is that Braughing residents fought for years to prevent

these developments, because local people feared exactly what has turned out to be reality – inappropriate development, which the village is now stuck with. EHDC approved these applications against the will of local people; EHDC planners should ask themselves how this all ended up so badly, and look at how developers seem to be able to amend their plans so easily once planning permission is obtained, to the detriment of the environment in which they are located.

Listed Buildings

Is the process of listing buildings progressive? On a national level, it would be interesting to learn if there is a view as to whether listing criteria will be pushed beyond the current date of pre-1948. Efforts suggested in the proposal to protect historic buildings, retain historic originals and improve quality (future planning applications) are welcome.

In Conclusion

One of the opening comments in the proposal is that "*The historic environment cannot be replaced and is a resource that is both fragile and finite.*" This really encapsulates everything and I agree wholeheartedly with this – and this is why dedesignation in particular is so worrying, as it opens up potential damage (via opportunistic building) to absolutely ruin and destroy the beautiful historic area of Braughing; recent examples of Pentlows and Pound Close are here with us to stay – we can't turn back the clock, and must learn from these experiences. My main concern with the proposal is this exact contradiction – trying to protect Braughing from similar repeated planning mistakes cannot be achieved by dedesignation.

I hope this is constructive input.

Kind regards

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 16:04
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal - Feedback
Attachments: ConservationArea.docx

Dear Mike

Please find attached my letter regarding feedback about the Braughing Conservation Area.

Best regards

19th October 2016

Mike Brown CBS MRICS Dip Bldg Cons IHBC
Conservation & Urban Design Officer
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

Dear Mike,

I write regarding the consultation of the draft Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals 2016.

Having read the document and attended the launch meeting at Braughing Church Hall, it is evident that considerable work has gone into producing a detailed and thoughtful appraisal and set of management proposals. It is also clear why the boundaries of the actual Conservation Area have been reviewed in order to make it both cohesive and defensible. The EHDC Conservation team are certainly to be congratulated by the residents of Braughing on a great piece of work.

My only concern is the classification of the hedgerow on the south side Hull Lane as "making a positive contribution".

The criteria set out in the report for important trees and hedgerows are:

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

With regard to the hedgerow on the south side of Hull Lane

the hedgerow does not meet ANY of these three criteria and therefore should not be designated as "important" or "making a positive contribution". The hedge is not in good condition, in fact parts of it have only been planted in the last couple of years. The hedgerow is not visible from public view points and it does not make a significant contribution to the street scene. Indeed, local residents in Hull Lane have complained about the hedge and requested that it be removed altogether.

Furthermore, how can EHDC suggest that the hedgerow on the south side of Hull Lane is "important" or "making a positive contribution" without also including the hedgerow on the north side of Hull Lane (opposite Grove Barn) and the hedgerow which is along the frontage of 7 Green End, both of which are included within the Conservation Area. This appears to be unjustifiable.

Accordingly, I would ask for the classification of the hedgerow along the south side of Hull Lane to be removed.

Yours sincerely

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 17:24
To: Brown Mike
Cc: oliver.heald.mp@parliament.uk; Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben)
Subject: BRAUGHING CONSERVATION AREA DRAFT CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND
MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Orange Category, Red Category

Dear Mr Brown

We wish to record our agreement and full support to the letter written to you by Braughing Parish Council on 13 September 2016 regarding the Braughing Conservation Area Draft.

In addition, we do not understand why St Mary's Churchyard is designated an important space to be protected this is not accorded to the Fleece Lane Evangelical Congregational Chapel's burial ground. This area is just as important to the relatives of those buried there.

We trust you will take our comments into account when firming up the above proposal.

Yours sincerely

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 20:31
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Proposed Conservation Area boundary changes in Braughing
Attachments:

Dear Mike Brown,

Please find attached a letter with regard to the proposed Conservation Area boundary changes in Braughing.

I consider that the proposal by EHC to considerably reduce the boundary of Braughing conservation area will be to the detriment of this lovely village.

Could you please help the village to maintain its picturesque and unique character.

Yours Sincerely

20 October 2016

*Mike Brown
East Herts Council Wallfields
Pegs Lane Hertford
SG13 8EQ*

Dear Mr Brown,

I am writing to express my views regarding the draft proposal for Braughing Conservation Area change in boundary.

I agree that the existing boundary should be rationalise, but to remove designated areas from the conservation area will mean that overall the village character will be less protected. In my view it makes more sense to rationalise the boundary by the inclusion of additional designated areas and not by the dedesignation of areas as proposed. Inclusion of additional areas would go a long way to ensuring that future development within the whole area is of a scale, density and in materials and craftsmanship that reflect the local vernacular tradition. Dedesignation of areas would have the opposite effect, with the potential of spoiling picturesque views around the village.

Please reconsider the proposal to dedesignate areas within the conservation area.

Yours sincerely

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 21:16
To: Brown Mike
Cc:
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area Draft Character Appraisal and Management Proposals
Attachments: Mr Brown16 Green End.docx

Please reply to

Mr Brown Conservation Officer
Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford SG13 8DQ

Braughing
Ware
Herts SG11

20th October 2016

Dear Mr Brown

Re: Braughing Conservation Area

It was with great sadness and dismay that I read your report. Rather than making the area more defensible, I can see the changes you are recommending (to the Conservation area) only serve to open up the village to considerable development, and leave the historic and beautiful rural areas of Braughing unprotected. The beautiful lanes which so many enjoy walking, currently enjoying healthy tranquillity and in touch with nature. Stortford Lane is so pretty and such a joy to drive and walk up besides the deep banks, full of wildlife.

I was also horrified to see that the agricultural field between Fleece Lane and Malting Lane has been left **completely unprotected**, opening up the top half of this field to unwanted development, changing the entire character of the centre of the village. It is noticeable that it has been omitted from the green strip that runs through the centre of the village.

Public opinion has been ignored to retain and protect this field and development of this field will destroy the central character of the village, the historic and rural setting of Fleece Lane, and the views across the village. I have noted how The Pentlows development has sadly altered the character of Gravelly Lane.

This decision has been made for financial consideration only and not for the best interest of the village. I believe adequate financial gain could be made by infilling with development along Maltings Lane, in the area behind the Post Office. Thereby preserving the rural character of Fleece lane and the views across the valley, it would be a compromise that will benefit everyone.

I was also shocked to see that 7A Green End is to be included in the Conservation area. I am amazed that the owner was permitted to block pave the whole area in front of the house. This is a blot on the landscape and is NOT in keeping with the village environment. How was this allowed? Will The Conservation Team have more power to address and reverse this paved area, if this house is included in the Conservation Area? Or will this eyesore pave the way for more developments such as this one?

There are many other ways to add more buildings/homes to this village without destroying the character of this beautiful village. The village fought to stop The Gladman development, but these proposals would permit a much worse destruction of the village character.

I hope these proposals will be reconsidered and public opinion be further sought.

Kind regards

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 22:42
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Orange Category, Red Category

Dear Mike,

In relation to the map that has been published with the proposal for Braughing Conservation Area, for your information a continuous hedgerow is shown from the Braughing ford on the west bank of the river running north. In fact the hedgerow is not continuous, it starts halfway further up the river.

There is also a building shown on the west bank of the river just north of Braughing Ford, the map shows it as red, indicating it is a Cat 1 Non Listed Building. In fact it is an asbestos building which at some point change its construction material and appearance to make it more appealing. Not sure it is worthy of a Cat1.

Kind regards

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 22:44
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals'

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Orange Category, Red Category

Dear Mr Mike Brown

I am a Braughing resident of 40 years and have seen many changes to my beloved village over the years, I have had the pleasure of growing up in a fantastic community. The changes/developments have all been for the good and enhanced our village, bringing new families and friends to our wonderful village.

I have read through the 'Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' and understand you require feedback.

I would firstly like to say that we have a first class Parish Council who work so hard and certainly deliver when needed, also I am proud to live in East Herts and be looked after by a caring and helpful East Herts Council team. I feel this is all confirmed yet again by the documentation I have read through. Very professional and informative.

I think the 'Management Proposals' are fair and just about right, allowing needed development but still keeping many views and enhancing our village.

I live in Braughing and see 'The Village Of The Year 2012' award daily on the green , I look forward to the next one that our village wins with the exciting plans ahead, EHDC doing a grand job, Braughing Parish Council continuing to work hard and our community working together.

I can say for myself, my family and many friends in the village I have spoken to, we trust you guys and this document proves you have the villages best interest at heart, great work guys.

Kind Regards

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 20 October 2016 23:04
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Orange Category, Red Category

Dear Mr Brown,

I live in Braughing and have read the proposals for the change of the Braughing Conservation Area. I just want to state that I fully support the change and it makes sense to draw up the boundary in this way.

I also think the balance of protection is just right without being draconian. I am sure there are those who would want to paint every field in the light blue as protected land and try to make a rationale for this. For me and the people I know the balance is just right with the changes proposed.

Regards

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 21 October 2016 00:07
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals
Categories: Red Category

Dear Mr Brown

We are writing to you regarding your request for feedback about the published documentation 'Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals'.

Braughing for [redacted] in Braughing, and we have lived in the village for over [redacted] years, of which we are very proud.

We feel that at this time a small amount of development which has been proposed and the new conservation areas would be very positive

so the EHDC and Braughing Parish Councils new plans have given us hope and excitement everyone in the village will benefit!

We think the Braughing Conservation document is excellent and is just perfect for the needs of Braughing. It keeps some lovely view and hedge rows etc but we and many others feel we need to continue to build our community, new blood, affordable properties to help build our community and help Braughing thrive. We think it is well thought out and very fair to all.

A big thank you and pat on the back for the hard work of the EHDC and the Braughing Parish Council and all involved

23

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 21 October 2016 07:57
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation area

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Orange Category, Red Category

Dear Mr. Brown,

I send you this message as a very resent resident in Braughing, the conservation of this area is of the utmost importance to myself and my family.

This history, the beautiful vistas and the wonderful environment are some of the reasons that we chose to move here and raise our

I am not sure what I can do to protest the development in this area but I full oppose it and will whole heartedly support any demonstration to prevent this happening.

Please do inform me of anything that I may do to support the prevention of any development in Braughing that may have a detrimental impact on my family's future in the villiage.

Kind regards,

Sent from my iPhone

34

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 21 October 2016 08:49
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area

Braughing,
Hertfordshire SG11

Mike Brown,
Conservation Officer, East Herts Council,
Wallfields,
Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ.

21st November 2016

Dear Mike Brown,

Adjustments to the Braughing Conservation Area.

I am a professional archaeologist, working in developer-led archaeology.

I am writing to express my concern that two areas of high archaeological potential have been removed from the protection of the Conservation Area, to wit the Glebe Field on the north-east corner of the village and the field abutting the north side of the western end of Stortford Lane/Warren Lane. I am further surprised that the field behind the Post Office has not been given Protected Green Space status, given that it was assessed recently by [redacted] of the HCC HEU as having potential for archaeology of national significance.

I would humbly suggest that you consult closely with [redacted] before putting any changes into effect.

Yours sincerely,

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 21 October 2016 09:38
To: Brown Mike
Cc: Oliver HEALD; Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben); Belinda Irons
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area - Consultation.

**Braughing,
Hertfordshire SG11**

Mike Brown,
Conservation Officer, East Herts Council,
Wallfields,
Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ.

21st. October 2016

**Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal And Management Proposals
Response to the Consultation**

Dear Mr Brown,

I attended the meeting hosted by you on September 6th concerning the Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal, and Management Proposals and I have since read through the documentation in detail.

I have been generally very impressed and reassured by the appraisal which appears to recognise Braughing's very special beauty, heritage, and charm, with an apparent strong objective to protect and enhance this.

However I am appalled by the 'Management Proposals', which propose a 30% loss in Braughing's conservation area. Braughing was one of the first villages to have a designated conservation area in 1968; it has been in place, and protected the village well, for nearly fifty years. Without exception all the areas cited for removal, the 'dedesignated sites', are essential for maintaining Braughing's unique heritage and character. What has changed to justify this loss and how can such a significant loss actually provide greater protection?

The 'Management Proposals' seem to be totally at odds with the given objectives and character assessment.

It is proposed to remove fields and boundaries from some of Braughing's most beautiful spaces, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation.

The 'important open spaces to be protected' that run along the river corridor are to be welcomed but why the blank field (unprotected?) between Fleece Lane and Malting Lane? Doesn't this vitiate the purpose of the corridor? This is not logical. This open space lies in the centre of the conservation area and is very important in the form and setting of the village and the vistas around.

Any development that took place here would be an eyesore and damage the rural ambience of this very popular and special area of the village.

I ask you please to reconsider the implications of these proposals and consult further with local parishioners who are baffled by the reasoning given. There is a strong feeling by many in the village that huge decisions are being made without their consent and that recent Government policy, to relax planning 'constraint' may be being used.

Yours sincerely

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 21 October 2016 13:47
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing conservation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Red Category

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the vast changes proposed to the conservation area.

Braughing is such a pretty and historic village that it needs to be protected from developers ruining

its character. Twice this morning i have spoken to people visiting the village who have come a considerable distance to enjoy the timeless beauty of the village and its surroundings. Please reconsider your proposals

Regards

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 23 October 2016 12:07
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing conservation

Categories: Red Category

Sorry mike . My address is

Although i am not a resident of braughing

I would hate to see it become like

my village where so many of the green fields of my childhood have been replaced with housing.

Braughing is a village to be proud of and i hope it will remain so.

Regards

Sent from Samsung tablet

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 21 October 2016 16:50
To: Brown Mike
Cc: oliver.heald.mp@parliament.uk; Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben)
Subject: EHDC's Draft character appraisal for Braughing's Conservation Area

Categories: Red Category

Dear Mike,

We have been informed of the recent EHDC's Draft character appraisal for Braughing's Conservation Area have very serious concerns regarding the 'Management Proposals', in particular, the 'dedesignated sites'.

There would seem to be a huge contradiction between the character assessment with objectives, and the Management Proposals given to address these. Without exception, all the areas cited for removal from the conservation area are essential for maintaining Braughing's unique character and heritage.

Some of Braughing's ugliest building, much that has been, and still is, the subject of enforcement orders, is now to be included in the conservation area!

The 'Management Proposals' seem to be totally at odds with the given objectives and character assessment.

We understand the Planners have decided that it is necessary to have a clear distinction between inside and outside the conservation area. A conservation area cannot be viewed like a stage set. Views and vistas in and out of its boundaries must be included, so too pathways, natural features such as woods, meadows and hedgerow which contribute to the setting and ambience.

In 2012 Braughing won the CPRE Hertfordshire County Village of the Year award, the last year that such an award was made. Why only four years later is it felt necessary to reduce Braughing's conservation area so radically and leave it open to attack and ruin?

Please can you investigate this on behalf of the Braughing residents and ensure that these proposals are not given the go ahead.

Kind regards

38

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 21 October 2016 17:07
To: Brown Mike
Cc: Sir Oliver Heald MP; Councillor Harris-Quinney (Ben);
Subject: EHDC's draft Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals
Attachments: Conservation area Cobbler's Cottage.docx

Dear all,
Please see attached letter outlining our serious concerns regarding these proposals.
We urge you not to give the go-ahead to these outrageous and unnecessary changes to our conservation area.

Thank you,

Braughing,
Herts
SG11
20 October 2016

Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposal 2016

Dear Mr Brown,

We attended the public meeting in Braughing on 6th September and have read the above documentation.

It is pleasing to see that the document appears to have a strong objective to protect Braughing's heritage and character. However, we are concerned about the "Management Proposals", specifically the 'dedesignated sites' which seems to be a contradiction of the character assessment with objectives and the ways to address them. All the areas cited for removal from the conservation area are essential for maintaining Braughing's unique character and heritage. It is unacceptable to remove 30% of Braughing's conservation area, which has protected our village for nearly 50 years with the sole justification given to us '*to rationalise the boundary*'.

The purpose of creating a conservation area is to protect the area it encircles. A conservation area is intended to identify valuable, visual or historic characteristics in a locality which may warrant special measures to protect and preserve them. The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act recognises that there are particular areas of 'architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' and charges planning authorities with a duty to designate any such locations within their jurisdiction as conservation areas. Braughing's designated conservation area was set up in 1968 at a time when the village was a lot smaller and less developed than today. Being designated so early after the process was introduced has protected Braughing during changing times and as a result there are many listed buildings and the character and charm of the village has been retained. It is not only the buildings which form our village, but the landscape in which it sits and this must be protected at all costs.

Without exception, all the areas cited for removal from the conservation area are essential for maintaining Braughing's unique character and heritage.

Stortford Lane- this beautiful lane is a fine example of a medieval Holloway which has probably changed little in over 800 years. It is flanked by many ancient trees and native woodland including beautiful bluebell woods. Why is this to be removed from the conservation area?

Ford Street Farm- The proposal recommends removal of fields to the east of the farmyard. These fields form part of one of Braughing's most beautiful vistas, viewed from across the Quinn valley from the B1368. Because of the steep elevation of these fields, any building here as with Pentlows would create an eyesore that would totally destroy this vista. This whole large vista is crucial to the form and setting of the village with St Mary's church to the northeast, the Maltings, views across the valley and south towards Green End House.

Gravelly Lane- this beautiful lane including the idyllic back ford is an essential part of the parish paths network providing access to the Bourne and beyond. Unbelievably the north end of this pretty lane including the ford is to be removed from the conservation area. The lane is lined with mature hazel hedging which is a crucial part in the making of this beautiful setting. The area is rich in wildlife including kingfishers. It would be totally unacceptable to remove the preservation of this beautiful area of Braughing to allow road widening and urbanisation.

The Meads- the proposed de-designation of the conservation area removes the Braughing Meads which are water meadows forming an important wildlife habitat and popular with walkers.

The proposed de-designation goes further and includes the removal of the **Glebe field** and **Vicarage Lane**. This area maintains the rural ambience and tranquility of The Street and Gravelly Lane used by many walkers and horse-riders. The north and west boundaries of the Glebe field are ancient hedgerows and the field is an ancient pasture containing significant archeology. This field and the adjacent Old Vicarage form part of a Saxon minister. The Street towards Pentlows Hill represents a roman road. Removal of any of this from the protection of the conservation area will permit road widening, inappropriate building and street furnishing and the loss forever of this field and ancient east end of the village. Also included are some areas along **Green End** which would clearly make way for building along these narrow strips of land.

Conservation areas are intended to protect local landscape, character and distinctiveness, giving an umbrella protection to all the features which combined together give a locality it's special characteristics and heritage assets. This includes the historic buildings and local architecture as well as natural features such as trees, hedgerows, meadows, waterways and spaces in between.

We do not understand why boundaries which have protected Braughing so well for nearly 50 years need to be changed. Losing 30% of Braughing's conservation area will make us vulnerable to unwanted and inappropriate development. We have not been given a plausible explanation for these proposed changes, so we must conclude that they are part of recent government policy to remove protective legislation because of its constraint on development.

We urge you to consider further ways to protect our beautiful village rather than considering a course of action such as this proposal which will lead to detrimental changes to it.

Yours faithfully,

39

Brown Mike

From:
Sent: 21 October 2016 17:12
To: Brown Mike
Subject: Braughing Conservation Area
Attachments: Conservation area- letter.docx

Dear Mr Brown

Please see attached a letter which I am whole heartedly in support of. I hope you will consider all the points raised in considering any changes to the Braughing Conservation Area.

Yours sincerely

I attended the meeting on September 6th concerning EHDC's Draft character appraisal for Braughing's Conservation Area but unfortunately was away on holiday for the last PC meeting when the subject was on the agenda.

I have now had time to read through the documentation and generally very impressed and reassured by its findings. The document goes into considerable detail with an apparent strong objective to protect and enhance Braughing's unique heritage and character.

I know a team set up by the History Society played a significant role in its scoping, and this is clearly evident.

However I have very serious concerns regarding the 'Management Proposals', in particular, the 'dedesignated sites'. There would seem to be a huge contradiction between the character assessment with objectives, and the Management Proposals given to address these. Without exception, all the areas cited for removal from the conservation area are essential for maintaining Braughing's unique character and heritage.

The 'Management Proposals' seem to be totally at odds with the given objectives and character assessment.

To be removed from the conservation area -

Ford Street Farm - Fields removed to the east of the farmyard. These fields form part of one of Braughing's most beautiful vistas, viewed across the Quin valley from the B1368. Because of the steep elevation of these fields, any building that took place here would create an eyesore that would totally destroy this vista. This whole, large vista is crucial to the form and setting of the village, with St Mary's church to the north east, The Maltings, views across the valley and south towards Green End House.

Stortford Lane - This beautiful lane is one of the finest examples in the district of a medieval hollow way and has probably changed little in over 800 years. It represents human influence on the shaping of the landscape over many centuries.

It is also flanked by many ancient native trees and woodland, including some beautiful bluebell woods. So why is this beautiful lane to be removed from the protection of the conservation area?

Gravelly Lane

It is not clear from the given plan but it appears that much of the north end of Gravelly Lane, including the idyllic back ford, is to be removed from the conservation area.

This is quite unacceptable. This beautiful lane is an essential part of the Parish paths network, and plays a vital role in Braughing's recreational charm.

It would seem also from the plan that much of the native hedgerow on the north side of the lane has now been removed from the conservation area. Also the largely hazel hedgerow to be excluded from the east side of Gravelly Dell. Before Gravelly Dell was built this lane was a tunnel of hazel trees, and this hedge planted as reinstatement when the controversial development was approved.

All the hedgerow in Gravelly Lane forms a crucial part in the making of this rural, tranquil, very beautiful setting. The area is rich in wildlife with rare kingfishers regularly seen darting across

the river.

Removing this area from the conservation area would allow for road widening, ugly and inappropriate street furniture to be installed, roadside curbing and footpaths to be introduced, together with unwanted street lighting. This would give the green light to urbanisation. So why has this area been selected for removal?

The dedesignation goes further and includes the complete removal of the Glebe field and Vicarage Lane. This area acts as a vital buffer zone that maintains the rural ambience and tranquility of The Street and Gravelly Lane. The west and north boundaries of the Glebe field are ancient hedgerow, and the field itself is old pasture, and contains significant visible archaeology. The Glebe field and the adjacent areas including the Old Vicarage form part of a Saxon Minster. The Street northwards to Pentlows Hill represents the Roman road. To remove any of this from the protection of the conservation area will permit road widening, building, inappropriate street furnishing and urbanisation, possibly the loss forever of this meadow and east end of the village.

Extraordinarily the dedesignation has included the removal of Braughing's beautiful Meads. These water meadows are a popular place for locals and visitors to walk or picnic and form a vital part of the setting of this end of the village. They are also an important wildlife habitat.

Some very strange alterations to the conservation area have been proposed for Green End. The hedgerow (boundary) to the east of the new development site, opposite Pound Close, is to be removed. This will allow the new development to be clearly visible right across the valley.

However some of Braughing's ugliest building, much that has been, and still is, the subject of enforcement orders, is now to be included in the conservation area!

Definition and Purpose of Conservation Areas.

Conservation Areas first came into being as a result of the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are intended to identify any **valuable, visual, or historic characteristics** in a locality that may warrant special measures in order to protect or preserve them.

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 recognises that there are particular areas of 'architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' and charges planning authorities with a duty to designate any such locations within their jurisdiction as conservation areas.

Braughing was fortunate to have a designated conservation area only a year after the Civic Amenities Act was introduced. Being designated so early on may explain why Braughing has so many listed buildings and has maintained its heritage and charm.

The dedesignation of the proposed sites from Braughing's conservation area is inexplicable. These boundaries have been in place, as far as I understand, since the conservation area was first designated in 1968 and protected the village well; so **why** does EHDC wish to remove them?

The sole reason put forward for the 'dedesignation' of all the areas is to 'rationalise the boundary'. Perhaps someone could explain what is meant by this? Why after nearly 50 years of doing its job is it felt necessary to change Braughing's conservation area boundary so radically?

I understand the Planners have decided that it is necessary to have a clear distinction between inside and outside the conservation area. This is nonsense. A conservation area cannot be viewed like a stage set. Views and vistas in and out of its boundaries must be included, so too pathways, natural features such as woods, meadows and hedgerow which contribute to the setting and ambience.

In 2012 Braughing won the CPRE Hertfordshire County Village of the Year award, the last year that such an award was made. Why only four years later is it felt necessary to reduce Braughing's conservation area so radically and leave it open to attack and ruin?

Could the Parish Council please make this an item for discussion on its agenda for the next meeting? Perhaps it could be explained how these proposals are really expected to protect our village and fulfill the objectives given in the Appraisal?

Kind regards

I understand the Planners have decided that it is necessary to have a clear distinction between inside and outside the conservation area. This is nonsense. A conservation area cannot be viewed like a stage set. Views and vistas in and out of its boundaries must be included, so too pathways, natural features such as woods, meadows and hedgerow which contribute to the setting and ambience.

In 2012 Braughing won the CPRE Hertfordshire County Village of the Year award, the last year that such an award was made. Why only four years later is it felt necessary to reduce Braughing's conservation area so radically and leave it open to attack and ruin?

Could the Parish Council please make this an item for discussion on its agenda for the next meeting? Perhaps it could be explained how these proposals are really expected to protect our village and fulfill the objectives given in the Appraisal?

Kind regards

The Braughing Society

Affiliated to the Council for the Protection of Rural England



FOR THE ATTENTION OF MIKE BROWN, CONSERVATION OFFICER
EAST HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL

BRAUGHING CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

20TH OCTOBER 2016

Dear Mr Brown,

The Braughing Society Committee would like to comment on the above Draft Proposals out for Consultation.

We have read through the documentation in detail and are generally impressed and reassured by its findings. The document goes into considerable detail with an apparent strong objective to protect and enhance Braughing's unique heritage and character.

However we have very grave concerns regarding the 'Management Proposals', in particular, the 'dedesignated sites'. There would seem to be a huge contradiction between the character assessment with objectives, and the 'Management Proposals', given to address these. Without exception, all the areas cited for removal from the conservation area are essential for maintaining Braughing's unique character and heritage.

The 'Management Proposals' seem to be totally at odds with the given objectives and character assessment.

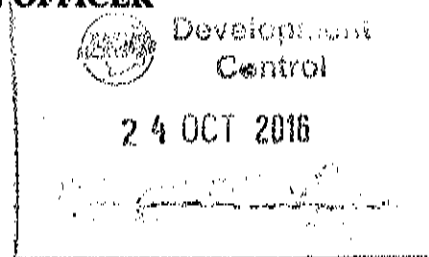
We are outraged to discover that it is proposed to remove 30% of Braughing's conservation area, which has protected well for almost fifty years. The sole reason given is to 'rationalise the boundary'.

We would like to remind the Council of the -

Definition and Purpose of Conservation Areas.

Conservation Areas first came into being as a result of the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are intended to identify any **valuable, visual, or historic characteristics** in a locality that may warrant special measures in order to protect or preserve them.

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 recognises that there are particular areas of 'architectural or historic interest, the character of which it



is desirable to preserve or enhance' and charges planning authorities with a duty to designate any such locations within their jurisdiction as conservation areas.

Braughing was fortunate to have a designated conservation area only a year after the Civic Amenities Act was introduced. Being designated so early on may explain why Braughing has so many listed buildings and has maintained its heritage and charm.

To be removed from the conservation area –

Ford Street Farm – Fields removed to the east of the farmyard. These fields form part of one of Braughing's most beautiful vistas, viewed across the Quin valley from the B1368. Because of the steep elevation of these fields, any building that took place here would create an eyesore that would totally destroy this vista. This whole, large vista is crucial to the form and setting of the village, with St Mary's church to the north east, The Maltings, views across the valley and south towards Green End House.

Stortford Lane – This beautiful lane is one of the finest examples in the district of a medieval hollow way and has probably changed little in over 800 years. It represents human influence on the shaping of the landscape over many centuries. It is also flanked by many ancient native trees and woodland, including some beautiful bluebell woods. So why is this beautiful lane to be removed from the protection of the conservation area?

Gravelly Lane –

It is not clear from the plan but it appears that much of the north end of Gravelly lane, including the idyllic back ford, is to be removed from the conservation area. This is quite unacceptable. This beautiful lane is an essential part of the parish paths network, and plays a vital role in Braughing's recreational charm. It would seem also from the plan that much of the native hedgerow on the north side of the lane has now been removed from the conservation area. Also the largely hazel hedgerow to be excluded from the east side of Gravelly Dell. Before Gravelly Dell was built this lane was a tunnel of hazel trees, and this hedge planted as reinstatement when the controversial development was approved.

All the hedgerow in Gravelly Lane forms a crucial part in the making of this rural, tranquil, very beautiful setting. The area is rich in wildlife with rare kingfishers regularly seen darting across the river.

Removing this area from the conservation area would allow for road widening, ugly street furniture to be installed, roadside curbing and footpaths to be introduced, together with unwanted street lighting. This would give the green light to urbanisation. So why has this area been selected for removal?

The dedesignation goes further and includes the complete removal of the Glebe field and Vicarage Lane. This area acts as a buffer zone that maintains the rural ambience and tranquillity of The Street and Gravelly Lane, used by so many walkers and horse riders. The west and north boundaries of the Glebe field are ancient hedgerow, and the

field itself old pasture, and contains significant and visible archaeology. The Glebe field and the adjacent areas including the Old Vicarage form part of a Saxon Minster. The Street northwards to Pentlows Hill represents the Roman road. To remove any of this from the protection of the conservation area will permit road widening, building, inappropriate street furnishing and urbanisation, possibly the loss forever of this meadow and east end of the village.

Extraordinarily the dedesignation has included the removal of Braughing's beautiful Meads. These water meadows are a popular place for locals and visitors to walk or relax and form a vital part of the setting of this end of the village. They are also an important wildlife habitat with some rare fauna and flora.

Some very strange alterations to the conservation area have been proposed for Green End. The hedgerow (boundary) to the east of the new development site, opposite Pound Close, is to be removed. This will allow the new development to be clearly visible right across the valley.

However some of Braughing's ugliest building, much that has been and still is the subject of enforcement orders, is now to be included in the conservation area!

We understand the Planners have decided that it is necessary to have a clear distinction between inside and outside the conservation area. This is nonsense!. A conservation area cannot be viewed like a stage set. Views in and out of its boundaries must be included, so too should pathways, natural features such as woods, meadows, and hedgerow which contribute to the setting and ambience.

Conservation areas are intended to protect local landscape character and distinctiveness. They provide for an overall umbrella protection to all the features that combine to give a space its feel and ambience and this includes its heritage assets, historic buildings and local architecture, natural features such as trees, hedgerow, meadows, waterways and the spaces in between.

The 'Management Proposals' seem only concerned with buildings.

So far no one has been able to provide a credible explanation as to why removing 30% of Braughing's conservation area will give our village greater protection. The 'dedesignation' of the proposed sites from Braughing's conservation area is inexplicable. These boundaries have been in place since the conservation area was first designated in 1968 and protected the village well; so why does EHDC wish to remove them?

We believe these 'Management Proposals' are part of recent Government policy to remove protective legislation because of its constraint on development, and would like to voice our strongest objections!

THE BRAUGHING SOCIETY COMMITTEE
The Elms, Pelham Road, Braughing, Herts, SG11 2QU