



Old Town High Street Conservation Area Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document



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1 Introduction

“Our built heritage represents the very best of our past. It provides a huge resource that can play an important role in the future of our towns, cities and rural areas in giving the stimulus provided to regeneration and the promotion of sustainable development” - Heritage Works, English Heritage, 2005.

1.1 A conservation area is defined as being an “area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”⁽¹⁾.

1.2 The Old Town High Street Conservation Area was originally designated in March 1969. The boundary was extended in September 1979. Figure 1 illustrates its boundary.

1.3 This management plan will help guide any changes and secure the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area. The preparation of a management plan follows designation and / or review of an area and preparation of a character appraisal. These three steps should be carried out on a regular basis to ensure that designations and proposals are kept up-to date. This is in accordance with the requirements of legislation⁽²⁾.

1.4 The character appraisal provides a comprehensive assessment of the physical character and appearance of the conservation area and defines what elements are of merit, what the key issues are, what opportunities exist for preservation/enhancement and which elements detract from the conservation area.

1.5 Its purpose is to provide a benchmark for assessing the impact of development proposals on the character and/or appearance of the conservation area.

1.6 This management plan draws on the appraisal's⁽³⁾ findings along with advice from English Heritage⁽⁴⁾.

1 Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990 s.69

2 Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990 s.71 and 72; s.71 specifically requires the local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas and to submit these proposals for public consideration

3 Old Town High Street Conservation Area Appraisal, BEAMS, 2009.

4 Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, 2006 and Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, 2011



Figure 1 Old Town High Street Conservation Area map (Green line denotes boundary)

2 Conservation areas and planning procedures

2.1 The Council has a duty to only allow developments in a conservation area that preserve or enhance its character or appearance. Demolitions, alterations, extensions and other works affecting the character or appearance of properties in a conservation area will probably require planning permission and/or conservation area consent and/or listed building consent.

2.2 At the time of writing, there are almost 90 listed buildings within the Old Town High Street Conservation Area. You should confirm whether a property is listed prior to the consideration of any potential scheme as listed buildings are subject to more stringent controls. In addition to the works identified above, development that would not normally require planning permission or conservation area consent, such as internal alterations to a building, may also require listed building consent.

2.3 The Council generally requires more detail than usual with applications submitted for listed building consent or for planning permission and conservation area consent for buildings within a conservation area.

2.4 The following section provides a brief overview of applications in conservation areas but you should always contact the Council to clarify how your proposals might be affected by conservation area designations.

Building alterations

2.5 In a conservation area you sometimes need planning permission for changes to buildings which would normally be permitted elsewhere. This might include extensions, alterations, dormer windows, satellite dishes or altering the external appearance of a property. You should contact the Council to determine how your proposal might be affected.

Demolition

2.6 For any unlisted building within a conservation area, a planning application to demolish a building is not required, however conservation area consent will be necessary. Conservation area consent is required to totally or substantially demolish most buildings within a conservation area.

2.7 Conservation area consent is also required to totally or substantially demolish a gate, fence, wall or railing over 1m high where it is next to a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway) or public open space; or over 2m high elsewhere.

Works to trees

2.8 The Council requires six weeks notice in writing before felling or cutting back the majority of trees in conservation areas, even if they are not specifically protected by a tree preservation order (TPO). In giving notice it is necessary to specify precisely what works are to be carried out.

2.9 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are designed to protect important trees that make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the area. There are numerous trees within the Old Town High Street Conservation Area covered by TPOs. Any works to trees covered by a TPO must be approved by the Council.

Advertisements

2.10 Additional planning procedures apply to the display of advertisements within a conservation area. In particular prohibiting the use of advertising hoardings around building sites and the use of captive balloons for advertising.

Enforcement

2.11 The failure to comply with any of the special planning procedures listed above could lead to prosecution by the Council. It is therefore advisable to consult the Council before proceeding with any works, which might affect the character and appearance of a conservation area and/or a listed building.

It is always advisable to discuss any proposals with the Development Management team at Stevenage Borough Council at the earliest opportunity.

Please see our website for further information and direct contact details.

Alternatively you may telephone the Council on 01438 242159.

3 The aims

3.1 The management plan has four objectives:

Objective 1

To establish and define the significance of the conservation area as a whole and of the individual elements which contribute to that significance, building on the character appraisal.

Objective 2

To assess and define the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the area and how these impact on the significance of the individual elements and of the conservation area as a whole.

Objective 3

To provide a benchmark for assessing and managing change.

Objective 4

To provide guidance to ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area will be maintained through the effective management of change and that opportunities to enhance the character and appearance are maximised.

4 In context

Planning policy context

4.1 The management plan will support existing planning policy as adopted by Stevenage Borough Council.

Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS] – The East of England Plan

4.2 The management plan complies with policies ENV6 and ENV7 of the RSS as adopted May 2008.

4.3 It should be noted that the regional level of plans (The East of England Plan) is proposed for revocation.

Stevenage District Plan 2nd Review 2004 [SDP]

4.4 The management plan supplements the following saved policies within the SDP:

Policy number	Policy title
Town-wide	
TW2	Structural open space
TW9	Quality in design
TW11	Planning requirements
Housing	
H3	New housing allocations (H3/1)
Transport	
T6	Design standards
T13	Cycleways
T14	Pedestrians
T15	Car parking strategy
T16	Loss of residential car parking
Environment	
EN9	Archaeology and development (EN9/2)
EN10	Green Links (EN10/2)

Policy number	Policy title
EN13	Trees in new developments
EN15	Ancient lanes and associated hedgerows (EN15/2)
EN21	Other sites of nature conservation importance
Leisure and recreation	
L10	Principal open spaces (L10/14)
Old Town	
OT5	Main shopping frontages
OT14	Public car parking

Table 1 - Policies of particular relevance in the Stevenage District Plan (2nd Review)

4.5 This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Emerging Planning Policy

4.6 The conservation area is located entirely within the emerging Old Town Area Action Plan. This document is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The following policies are of particular note:

OT01	Housing allocations (OT01/4, OT01/6 & OT01/8)
OT02	Education
OT03	District centre
OT04	District centre advertising
OT05	Principal open space (OT05/1)
OT06	Ancient lanes and hedgerows (OT06/1)
OT07	Green Lung (OT07/1)
OT08	Key Link
OT10	Areas of archaeological significance (OT10/1)
OT11	Character zones (OT11/5, OT11/6, OT11/7 & OT11/8)

Table 2 - Policies of particular relevance in emerging local planning policies (Old Town Area Action Plan)

Wider planning policy framework

4.7 The following is a list of existing policy and strategy documents which are supported by the management plan:

NPPF - The National Planning Policy Framework
A Better Life - The role of culture in the sustainable development of the East of England Plan, 2006
The Biodiversity Action Plan, 2010
The Stevenage Green Space Strategy 2010

Table 3 The wider planning policy framework

4.8 For up to date details of relevant planning policy please refer to our website www.stevenage.gov.uk.

5 A brief history

5.1 A detailed history and analysis of the area is included in the Conservation Area Appraisal, completed in 2009. The following sections provide a brief summary. The Appraisal should be referred to for additional information.

5.2 During the medieval period, the Great North Road ran through the Borough of Stevenage, and it is along this road that the settlement began to develop, what is now the Old Town High Street.

5.3 A market was granted by the Abbot of Westminster in 1281. The market place was wide to accommodate market stalls and a market cross formerly stood in Middle Row near what is now NatWest bank. The Stevenage Brook ran down the High Street with a large pond at the southern end.



Figure 2 Older buildings within the conservation area: 2 Letchmore Road (l) and 131 High Street (r)

5.4 Several 16th century (or earlier) buildings are known to survive including 2 Letchmore Road, 9a Middle Row and 84a and 131 High Street. Thomas Alleyne, Rector of Stevenage in the 16th century founded three grammar schools, one of which survives and bears his name.

5.5 The highway was an important factor in the development of Stevenage. A series of coaching inns and public houses were built. The Falcon at 84a High Street is thought to have been the oldest licensed building in the town. A brewery was established to the rear of 115-117 High Street.

5.6 By the 18th century, Stevenage had become a well established town. In 1756, a long-established footpath leading from Bury Mead to the parish church of St Nicholas was partly planted with lime and horse chestnut trees. Further trees were planted in 1857 and The Avenue was completed in 1935 for the Silver Jubilee of King George V. The Avenue was almost completely replaced in 1989 following the 1987 storms.



Figure 3 The Avenue in the 19th century (l) and today (r)

5.7 Further development occurred along Back Lane, Church Lane and Letchmore Road.

5.8 The prosperity of the 17th and 18th centuries was affected by the arrival of the railway in 1850. This led to the closure of some inns and public houses. However the population increased and shops and offices thrived. The Church of the Holy Trinity was built in 1861 at the south end of the High Street. The ESA factory, to the west of the railway line, opened in 1883 bringing new employment and prosperity.



Figure 4 James Way (l) connects the High Street with Lytton Way (r)

5.9 Expansion slowed down in the first half of the 20th century until the advent of the New Town in 1946. Some properties, especially to the west of the High Street, were demolished. This was to make way for the buildings and infrastructure of the expanding town, notably the Lytton Way dual carriageway.

5.10 Some recent development has occurred within the conservation area. This includes several office blocks located to the rear of High Street properties and fronting on to Primett Road.

5.11 Modern housing has been provided at Olde Swann Court, Warren Court and Ireton Court. The development of Vincent Place on the corner of Trinity Road and High Street has recently been completed.



Figure 5 Modern housing and office development in the conservation area

6 An analysis

"The character appraisal should provide the basis for developing management proposals for the conservation area." - Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, English Heritage, 2006.

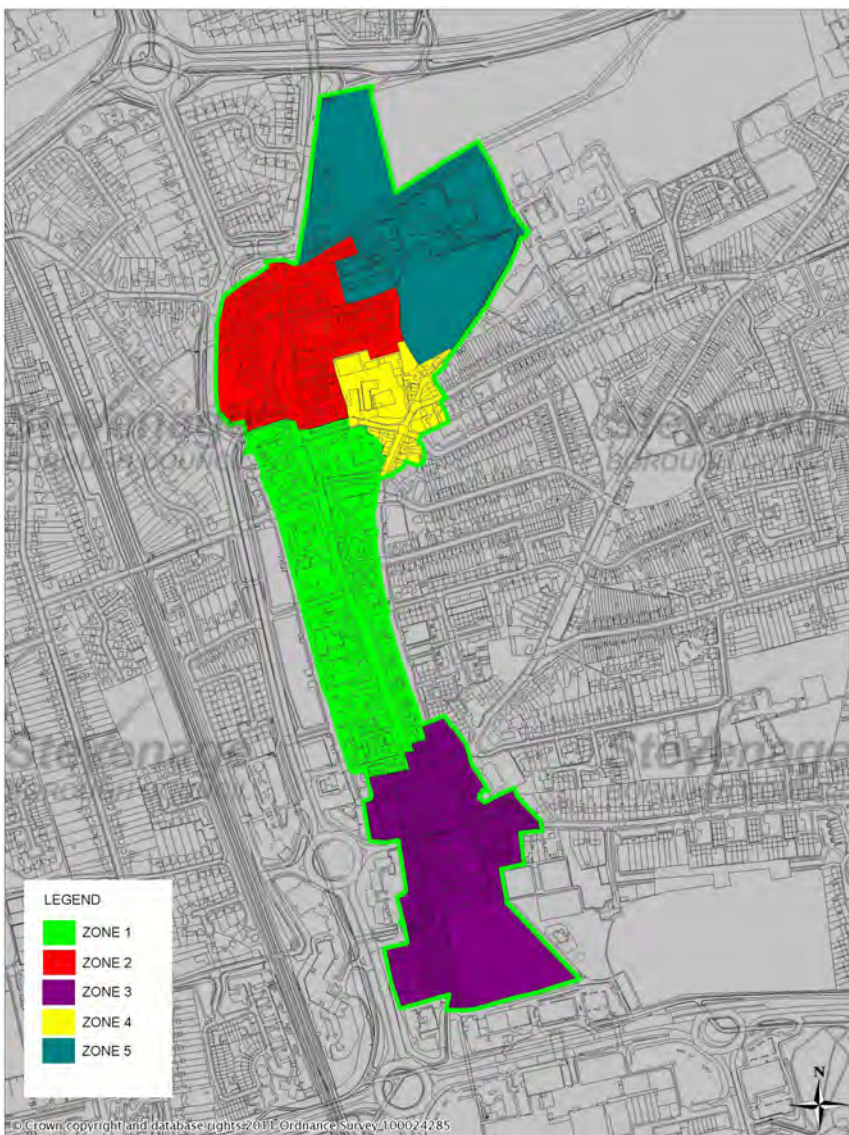


Figure 6 Conservation Area Zones

6.1 This section considers the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with the conversation area. This information has been compiled from a number of sources including the conservation area appraisal, site surveys and previous consultation comments.

6.2 The appraisal of the Old Town High Street conservation area considered five distinct character zones (shown in Figure 6).

6.3 Each zone has a different character and appearance that relates to its past and present functions, the design of the street layout and / or its buildings.

6.4 Due to the size of the area and the variety of characteristics, each zone is now discussed in turn.

Character Zone 1: High Street (Central)

6.5 The central zone of the conservation area forms the core of the original 1969 designation. It has a predominantly commercial use. There is some residential use of flats above shops.

6.6 Figure 7 illustrates some of the key features.

Strengths

6.7 There are a number of significant strengths which warrant the continued protection of the zone:

- Retention of medieval burgage plot layout including a number of carriage entrances and rear outbuildings;
- Large number of historically and architecturally important buildings:
 - 48 listed buildings (of a total 87 in the conservation area); and
 - Approximately 40 further unlisted buildings of importance to the area;
- Important buildings, or clusters of buildings, including:
 - 16th century hall house at 94-98 High Street (Grade II* listed);
 - Late 17th / early 18th century red brick building at 68 High Street;
 - Inns and public houses included The Red Lion Inn, The White Lion Inn and The Marquis of Lorne;
 - The group of buildings associated with Middle Row / Baker Street ~ the old market area~ particularly 63 High Street on the south-western corner;
 - The row of predominantly 19th century buildings at 79 - 117 High Street;
 - The Cromwell Hotel due to its size and architectural detail; and
 - The 1930s Elmes Arcade as an example of early 20th century infill development;
- Variety of building materials, the most common of which include:
 - Timber frame and timber weatherboard to some rear outbuildings;
 - Red and yellow brick (including re-fronting of timber frame buildings);
 - Old red clay tile or slate roofs with small gabled attic dormers;
 - Recessed timber sash windows of Georgian / Victorian style;
 - Timber doors with full or part glass panels;
 - Brick chimney stacks projecting above the roofline with chimney pots; and
 - Timber shop fronts spanning the width of the property with stall riser and a fascia board above; and
- Attractive and well maintained public realm including traditional street furniture in the form of black painted lampposts, black and gold bollards and planters.

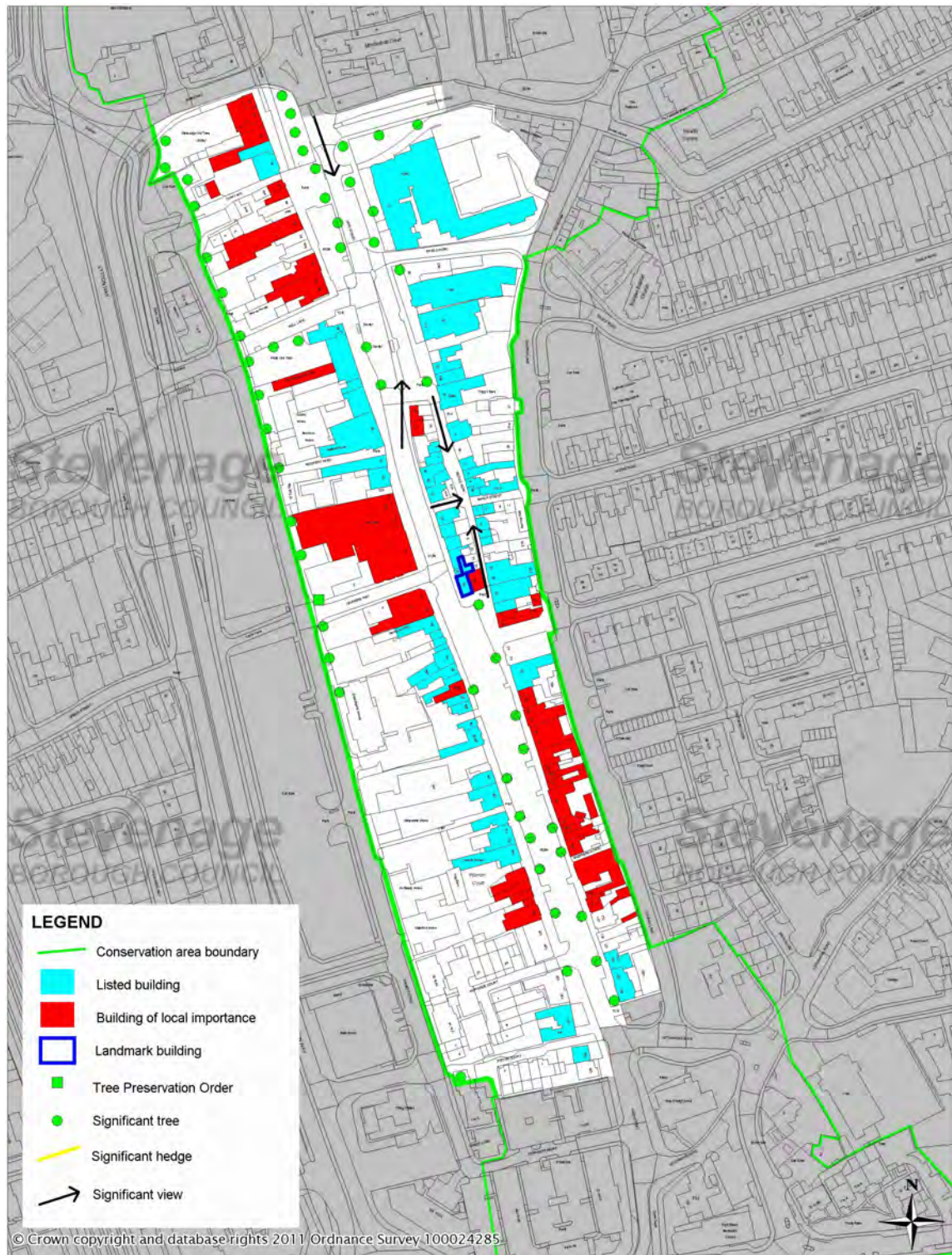


Figure 7 Character Zone 1: High Street (central)

Weaknesses

6.8 The conservation area appraisal highlighted the following weaknesses in this zone:

- Loss of traditional architectural features including:
 - Replacement of original timber sash and casement windows with plastic uPVC or aluminium framed equivalents;
 - Insertion of modern shop fronts into older properties;
 - Rotting timber windows at first floor and attic / dormer level due to lack of maintenance; and
 - Some instances of inappropriate shutters and grilles;
- Boarded-up building at 12 Middle Row;
- Cluttered and / or inappropriate shop signage and lighting on some buildings.

Opportunities

6.9 The following have been identified as potential measures to address some of these issues:

- Promoting the historical importance of Old Town core;
- Potential development at Elmes Arcade provides the opportunity to preserve or enhance the character of the area; and
- Encouraging the use of traditional materials.

Threats

- The cumulative negative impact of the continued loss of architectural features;
- Further disruption of the burgrave plot patterns, particularly to the rear of the western side of the High Street facing Primett Road;
- Loss of traditional shop fronts;
- Economic decline of local businesses; and
- Parking demand leads to breaches of restrictions and regulations

6.10 This character zone is the core of the conservation area. A significant proportion of listed buildings ensure that the overall medieval character of the zone is maintained. The additional stringent management of listed buildings is a positive control to the ongoing development within conservation area.

6.11 Without management, over time, the strengths of the area will become weakened by the cumulative effect of the loss of traditional materials. There is a need to ensure that the quality of this zone is not permitted to weaken further. This can be addressed through the opportunities, as highlighted above, which could promote the profile of the area and encourage sympathetic repairs.

6.12 There is a need to ensure that the perceived threats are not permitted to have long term negative effects on the conservation area. The potential for economic decline of the High Street is a significant issue. The change of use from an economic core threatens the historic character and use of the area as a whole.

Character Zone 2: Bowling Green

6.13 This zone comprises the Bowling Green at the north end of the High Street along with the properties that front onto it. The Bowling Green is a focal point and key space within the conservation area. Figure 8 illustrates some of the key features.

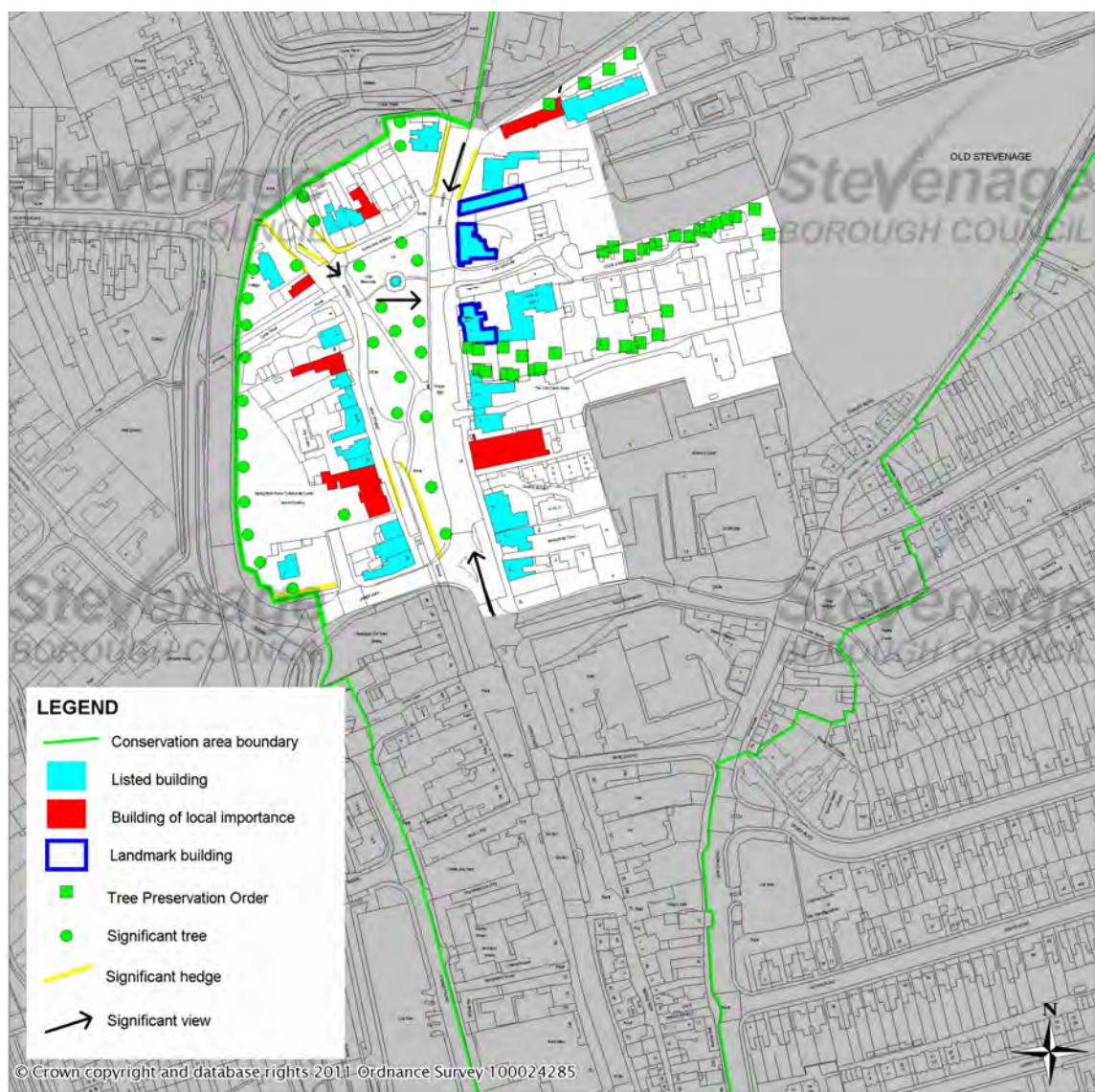


Figure 8 Character Zone 2: Bowling Green

Strengths

6.14 The strengths of this zone include:

- The main area of open space within the High Street where the road to Hitchin historically divided off from the Great North Road including the war memorial (listed), water trough and drinking fountain;
- 26 listed buildings and a further 9 unlisted buildings or structures of importance to the area;
- Important buildings, or clusters of buildings, including:
 - The Grange ~ formerly The Swann Inn (Grade II* listed) including its courtyard garden; and
 - The smaller properties along the north and west sides of the Bowling Green
- Variety of building materials, the most common of which include:
 - Red brick and timber frame (some encased);
 - Old red clay tile or slate roofs with small gabled attic dormers;
 - Timber sash windows of Georgian / Victorian style;
 - Timber doors with full or part glass panels;
 - Brick chimney stacks projecting above the roofline with chimney pots; and
 - Timber shop fronts spanning the width of the property with stall riser and a fascia board above.

Weaknesses

6.15 The following weaknesses have been identified in this zone:

- Loss of some timber sash and casement windows with plastic uPVC;
- The Old Malthouse and Kiln at Alleyne's School remains on the Heritage at Risk Register 2010;
- Inconsistency of street furniture in comparison to zone 1, especially street lighting;
- Traffic and noise impact of the gyratory system around the Bowling Green; and
- Limited use of the Bowling Green by pedestrians as a consequence.

Opportunities

6.16 The following measures have been identified:

- Encourage owners of The Old Malthouse to complete repairs to bring this important building back into use;
- Use of a similar pallet of street furniture to that seen in zone 1 for any future replacements or repairs;

- Consider the future of the gyratory system in the long-term; and
- Discrete signage and / or interpretation boards to encourage pedestrian access to The Avenue via the west side of the High Street and the Bowling Green.

Threats

6.17 The following threats have been identified:

- The cumulative negative impact of the continued loss of architectural features;
- No viable solution to the gyratory system and / or increases in traffic and congestion.

6.18 The main strength of this zone is the Bowling Green and this has a significant impact on the conservation area as a whole. Although split from the southern end of the High Street by the gyratory system, the historical importance of the area and the limited amount of open space elsewhere in the conservation area as a whole increases the importance of the space.

6.19 Unsympathetic repairs or developments detract from the special qualities of the area and the gradual removal of original features will diminish the quality of the zone, and area as a whole. If these special features are lost forever, future reviews of the area would determine that there are no points of special architectural or historic interest which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. This could result in a reduction in the size of the conservation area.

6.20 Opportunities to improve weaknesses or to strengthen the quality of existing development will ensure the continued attractiveness of the Old Town to residents, workers and visitors alike.

Character Zone 3: High Street (south)

6.21 This zone comprises the southern end of the High Street, Ditchmore Lane, the cricket ground, memorial garden and the western ends of Sish Lane and Letchmore Road.

6.22 Figure 9 illustrates some of the key features.

Strengths

6.23 The strengths of this zone include:

- 8 listed buildings and a further 9 unlisted (groups of) buildings or structures of importance to the area;
- The three Grade II* 15th and 16th century buildings at 131 High Street, 2 Letchmore Road and 154 High Street;
- The large Victorian villas on Ditchmore Lane which have retained a number of original features;
- The contribution made by the open spaces as well as the trees bordering the cricket ground and Ditchmore Lane.

Weaknesses

6.24 The following weaknesses have been identified in this zone:

- Inconsistency of street furniture in comparison to zone 1, especially street lighting;
- Boarded-up property at 6 Ditchmore Lane has negative impact on appearance of area;
- Traffic and noise impact of the Trinity Road / Sish Lane overpass; and
- The negative impact of the pedestrian route into the town under this road. The poor quality of the public realm detracts from Holy Trinity Church and the Coach and Horses Inn.

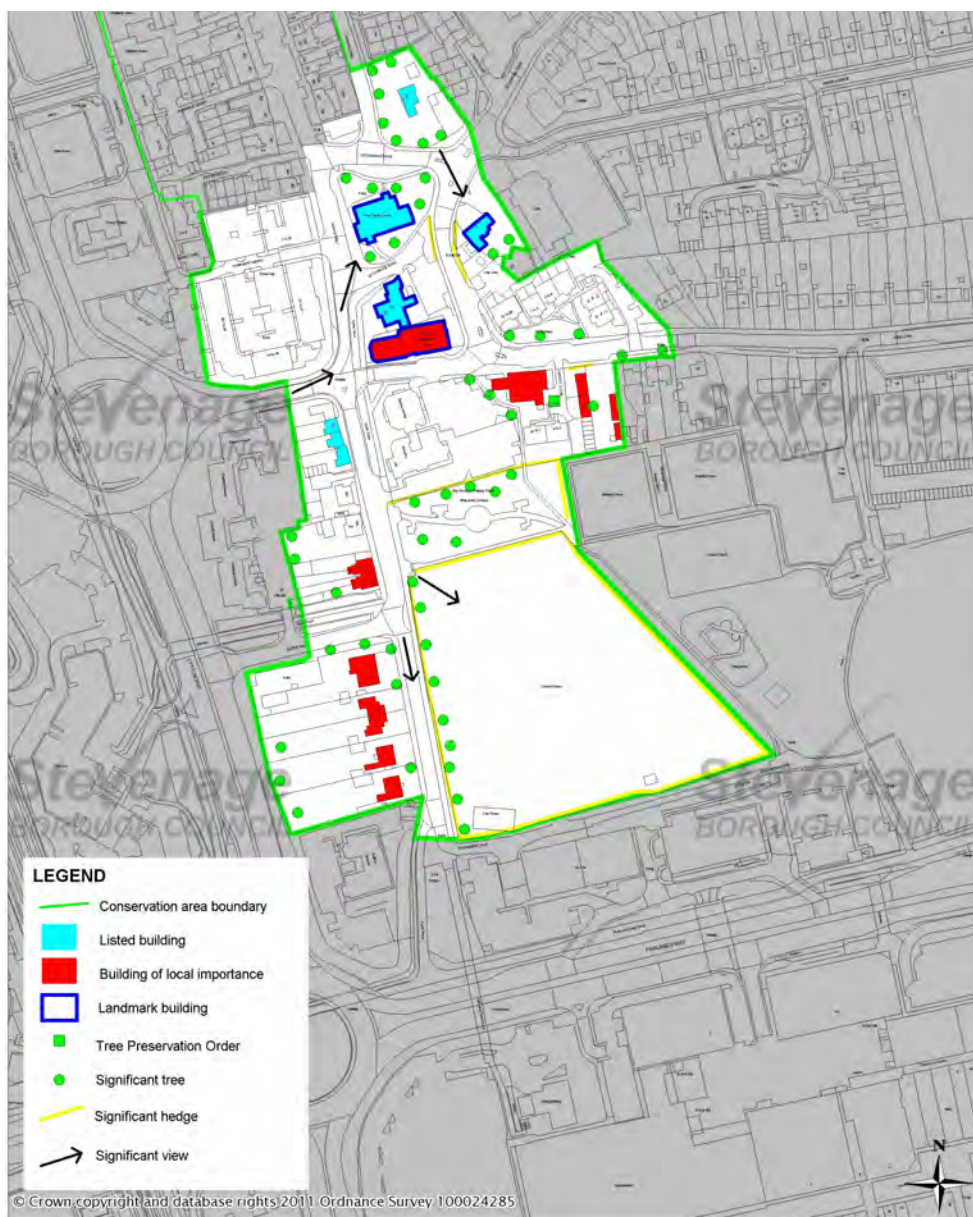


Figure 9 Character Zone 3: High Street (south)

Opportunities

6.25 The following measures have been identified:

- Use of a similar pallet of street furniture to that seen in zone for 1 for any future replacements or repairs;
- Improving the (quality of) links to the town centre as part of any future development proposals; and
- Discrete signage and / or interpretation boards to encourage pedestrian traffic from the town centre through to the High Street.

Threats

6.26 The following threat has been identified:

- No viable funding sources to improve links between the town centre and old town.

6.27 Taken together, the main strengths of the zone contribute towards a good quality built environment. However, it is evident that an uncoordinated approach to public realm improvements impacts negatively on the overall look of the zone. This is coupled with the impact of traffic route improvements which dissect the zone from the core (zone 1).

6.28 These weaknesses should be addressed through opportunities to introduce a more coordinated approach with the number of local stakeholders responsible for the street scene.

Character Zone 4: Church Lane / Walkern Road

6.29 This small zone consists of the cluster of houses at the junction of Church Lane / Walkern Road, the Pond Close industrial estate and The Almshouses.

6.30 Figure 10 illustrates some of the key features.

Strengths

6.31 The strengths of this zone include:

- 6 listed buildings and a further 10 unlisted (groups of) buildings or structures of importance to the area; and
- The recent sympathetic restoration of 11 Church Lane which had been 'at risk' for a significant time.

Weaknesses

6.32 The following weaknesses have been identified in this zone:

- The Pond Close industrial estate does little to add to the character of the area. One of the buildings fronting Pond Close has been demolished but no replacement development has taken place; and
- Garages to the rear of properties on Walkern Road facing Church Lane detract from the character of the area.

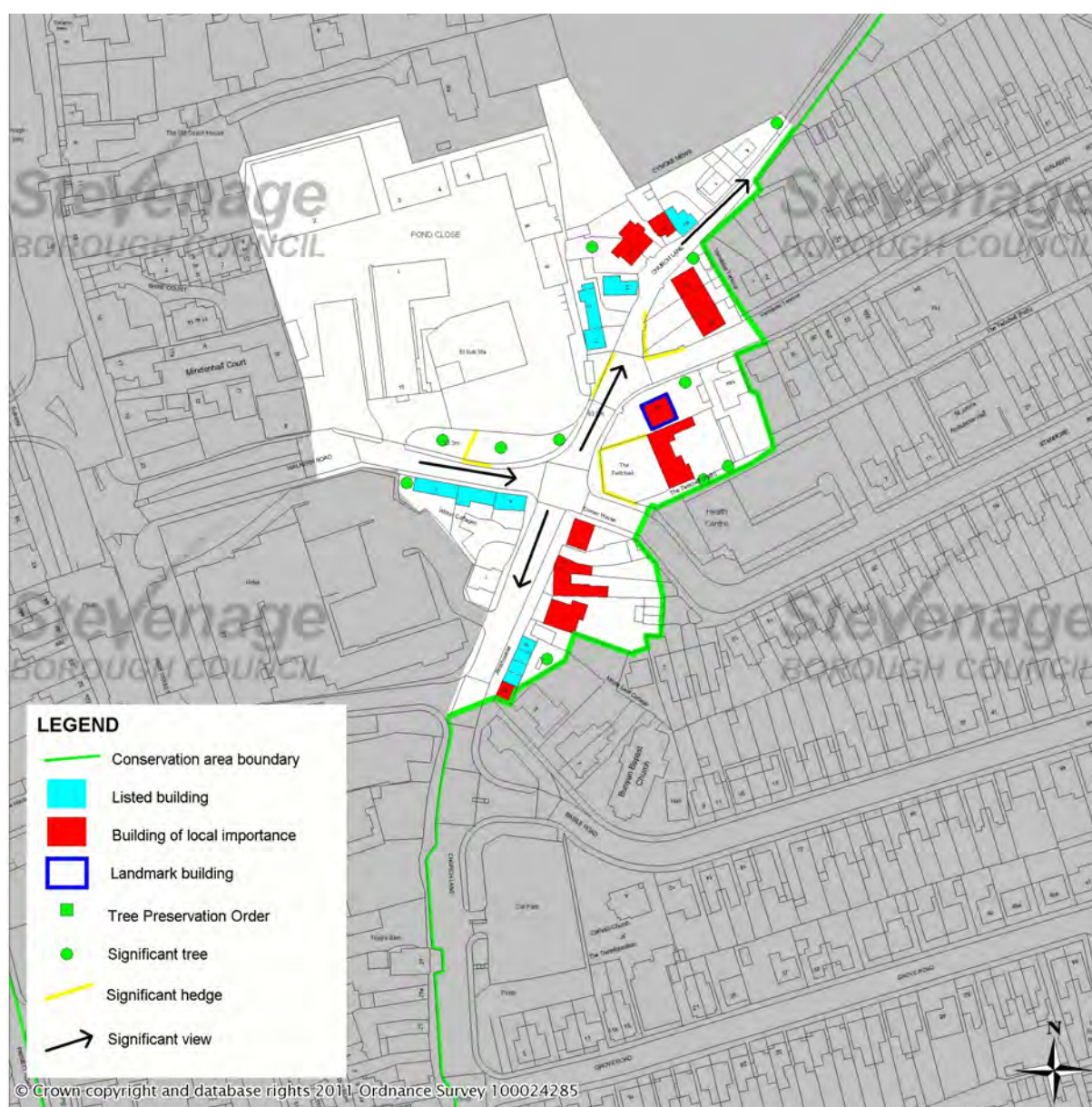


Figure 10 Character Zone 4: Church Lane / Walkern Road

Opportunities

6.33 The following measures have been identified:

- The future redevelopment of the Pond Close site.

Threats

6.34 No threats have been identified.

6.35 The strengths of the area relate to its built form, although the area of Pond Close is a recognised weakness in this respect. The sympathetic redevelopment of this area can be addressed through an opportunity to re-develop the site as it is a recognised housing allocation in the local plan.

Character Zone 5: Bury Mead, The Avenue, the Thomas Alleyne School

6.36 This zone contains the north and north-east corner of the conservation area. It includes part of the Great North Road, the modern school buildings at the Thomas Alleyne School and open spaces including the school playing fields and Bury Mead Recreation Ground.

6.37 Figure 11 illustrates some of the key features.

Strengths

6.38 The strengths of this zone include:

- The contribution of the open space at Bury Mead to the character of the conservation area;
- Long distance views to St Nicholas Church;
- The trees lining The Avenue which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO); and
- 2 unlisted (groups of) buildings or structures of importance to the area.

Weaknesses

6.39 The following weaknesses have been identified in this zone:

- The lack of signage and information.

Opportunities

6.40 The following measures have been identified:

- Discrete signage and / or interpretation boards as part of a pedestrian route from the town centre to 'Forster Country'; and
- Better integration between The Avenue and the Thomas Alleyne School site arising from any future redevelopment.

Threats

6.41 No threats have been identified.

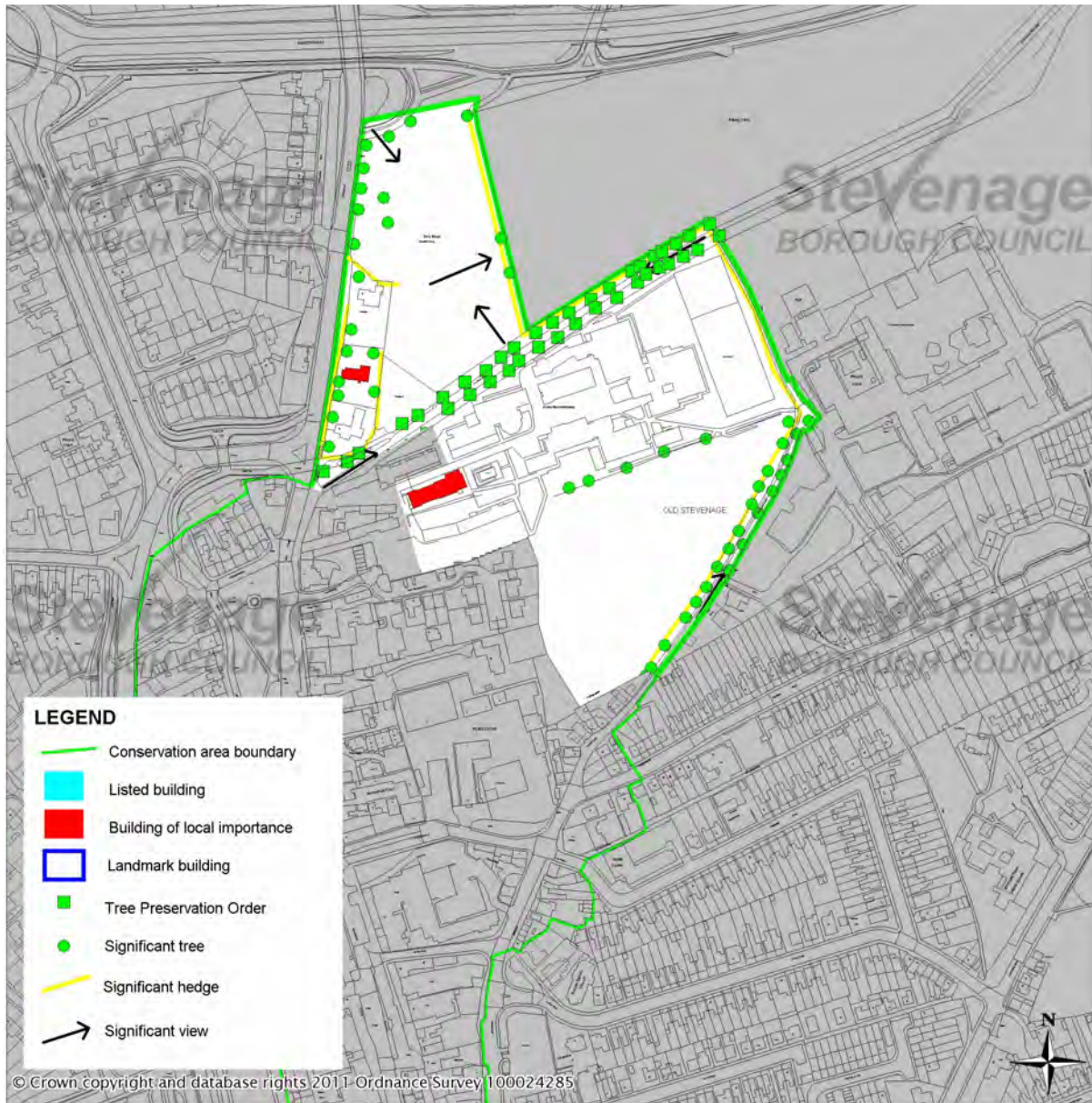


Figure 11 Character Zone 5: Bury Mead, The Avenue, the Thomas Alleyne School

6.42 Significant strengths of this zone relate to the open space to the north and east of the school. These areas are significant to the conservation area as a whole by providing links to the area of Rectory Lane and St Nicholas Church. Opportunities to improve signage will address

the weakness of the zone and this should be considered in a broad sense across the whole area. The improvement of pedestrian and cycle links is considered in each of the conservation area management plans.

7 Development issues

7.1 The size of the Old Town High Street Conservation Area means that it encompasses a wide range of architectural styles, building uses and site layouts. As such, there are issues specific to smaller areas. Issues are therefore discussed using the same zones as the previous analysis.

Zone 1: High Street (central)

7.2 This area of the town provides the historic core of the Old Town. It has the highest concentration of both listed buildings and buildings of local interest.

7.3 The area is highly developed with limited opportunities for infill, while the quantity of listed buildings means that there will equally be only a small number of opportunities to assemble sites for redevelopment.

7.4 Some sites in this area have been redeveloped in recent years, notably 126 - 130 High Street adjacent to the Marquis of Lorne public house. Developments such as this provide sensitive infill which enhances the overall character and quality of the area.



Figure 12 Recent developments include Howarde Court (l) and Ireton Court (r)

7.5 There have also been a number of developments at the rear of the High Street facing onto Primett Road. A balanced approach needs to be taken here. Historically, the land between the High Street and what is now Primett Road consisted of burgage plots. These plots are traditionally long and narrow and at right angles to the street.

7.6 Developments such as Broadlands House, Hertlands House and Stamford House can be considered a success in that they are sensitive in terms of their scale and relationship to the historic buildings on the High Street. They provide a welcome addition in terms of activity and natural surveillance to the Primett Road frontage. Occupants provide walk-in customers for the shops and restaurants on the High Street ensuring the area's continued vitality.

7.7 However, in assembling these sites for development, historic plot boundaries have been disturbed, disrupting the burgage pattern which forms an important component of the historic character of the Old Town.



7.8 These issues need to be carefully balanced in any further applications for development in this area.

7.9 There are similar issues on Church Road, which runs behind the eastern side of the High Street. However, the plots here are significantly shallower. This has limited the opportunities for new development resulting in large areas of blank frontages. It is considered that smaller, workshop type uses which allow the rear of these plots to be opened up may provide the greater opportunities here.

7.10 Evidence work for the Council's plans has shown that the Elmes Arcade building may become available for refurbishment and / or redevelopment, though the ground floor has recently been occupied by a Tesco Express store. Elmes Arcade is a building of local interest in its own right and a sensitive approach will be required.

Zone 2: Bowling Green

7.11 There are few development opportunities in this character area. The majority of buildings on the inside of the Bowling Green itself are listed and the proximity of the main-road gyratory system negates any infill opportunities to the rear of these plots.

7.12 Similarly, to the east side of the High Street, any notable opportunities for development have already been realised including the properties at Mindenhall, Shire and Olde Swann Courts.

7.13 Preparatory work on the Old Town Area Action Plan identified the Thomas Alleyne School site as a potential future housing development. The future of this proposal is unclear as the proposed relocation of the school to Great Ashby is unlikely to proceed, at least in the short term.



Figure 13 The Thomas Alleyne School site

7.14 Nonetheless, that part of the site within this character zone contains three listed buildings and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. As such, conversion of the buildings would be the most appropriate option if a scheme were to come forward.

Zone 3: High Street (south)

7.15 The largest potential development site in this zone has been brought forward within the last three years, with the redevelopment of the former B&Q site to provide high-density flats. This development provides a gateway into the Old Town as well as a transition from the urban scale of the properties on Lytton Way to the historic core of the High Street.



Figure 14 Recent development at Vincent Court (l) and potential development opportunities at Saffron Ground (c) and Antelope House (r)

7.16 Proposals have previously been received for development in the rear garden of a Ditchmore Lane villa. It is considered that development could make more efficient use of these low-density plots given their highly accessible location. However, the retention of the original buildings in an appropriate setting should form an essential part of any future schemes here.

7.17 Other opportunities in this area lie just outside, but adjacent to, the conservation area. The sites currently occupied by Saffron Ground, the Atlantic / Sheffield / Ardent / Antelope House complex and the Snooker Hall on Letchmore Road have all been identified as having development potential in the medium to long-term. Any proposals will need to address these sites' relationship with the conservation area.

Zone 4: Church Lane / Walkern Road

7.18 The Pond Close industrial estate is the largest single site in this zone. It was identified for development in the 2004 review of the District Plan. Although this has yet to come forward, the site continues to be identified as a potential development site.

7.19 Supplementary Planning Guidance has been adopted to guide the redevelopment of the site⁽⁵⁾. The guidance requires, inter alia:

- Development of up to 3.5 storeys with a maximum of 2.5 storeys on the periphery to protect the visual amenity of surrounding properties;
- A high standard of design to any changes to the Walkern Road frontage; and
- High standard of design and traditional materials to maintain and enhance the character of the Old Town.



Figure 15 Development opportunities exist at Pond Close (l). Examples of more historic properties at Dymoke Mews (c) and Church Lane (r).

7.20 In the remainder of this zone, the significant majority of buildings are listed or of local importance. Given the residential scale of these buildings and their plots, any further (re)development is considered unlikely and should be resisted.

Zone 5: Bury Mead, The Avenue, the Thomas Alleyne School

The majority of this zone consists of open space which is protected through planning policies.

5 Pond Close, Stevenage Old Town Supplementary Planning Guidance, March 2004

It also contains the rear of the Thomas Alleyne School site (the remainder of which is in Zone 2). This is a relatively large site, in excess of 1 ha. However, development should be of an appropriate scale to respect the listed buildings at the front of the site and the nature of other nearby infill developments in Zone 2.



Figure 16 Green space at Burymead (l) and the Thomas Alleyne playing fields (r)

Any scheme should be of a high-quality incorporating traditional materials. Opportunities should be taken to enhance pedestrian linkages into The Avenue which runs to the north of the site.

8 Retail issues

"Shops and retailing form the lifeblood of many historic areas, providing vitality, vibrancy and an essential economic base." - Retail Development in Historic Areas, HELM, 2005.

8.1 The historic character of some centres acts as part of their retail brand and retailing can fulfil an important role in smaller historic centres. In historic market towns, retailing may primarily perform a convenience function, serving the local population's food retailing and wider day-to-day shopping needs. These areas can adopt a more specialist retail role in the local hierarchy.

8.2 In Stevenage, the Old Town High Street performs a supplementary role to the New Town centre. It is a linear centre set along the original High Street with the facilities of a district centre including two supermarkets, specialist stores and a number of restaurants and bars.

8.3 The importance of trading in the High Street is key to its durability. Shopping makes a key contribution to the culture and economy of the area, as well as allowing for the continued viability of historic buildings through their adaptation for new uses.

8.4 The economic viability of the High Street is important in an historic sense as there have been active traders in the area for hundreds of years. Economic movement brings people into the area and promotes the area as a place to shop, live, work and relax. It also encourages links to other historic areas such as the Orchard Road and St Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Areas.

8.5 Modern retailing trends indicate a requirement for larger unit sizes⁽⁶⁾ However, the smaller units available in the High Street are able to offer premises for independent, more specialist businesses. The area provides a shopping environment that is complementary to the town centre.

"Historic centres may be at an advantage in such a climate, because of the inherent interest and attractions which they hold for shoppers and other visitors." - Retail Development in Historic Areas, HELM, 2005.

8.6 An area which is able to offer a flexible range of non-retail attractions will also be more resilient to changes in patterns of retailing or during economic recessions. A mix of uses is important as it brings movement into the area throughout the day and evening. Locally, there

6 Retail Development in Historic Areas, HELM, 2005.

has been a general increase in the number of bars and restaurants but it is important that a range of services is available in this area. Clusters of food and drink uses undermine the primary retail function. We will seek to address this through emerging local planning policy.

8.7 Data⁽⁷⁾ shows that the occupancy rate of the High Street remains high and is stable. The area is attractive to businesses and is a popular district centre. In historic management terms, the most significant issue for the High Street is to strike a balance between building preservation and contemporary retailing needs.

8.8 The vitality of the High Street is due to the success of historic conversions and sympathetic alterations and new development. Retail owners are able to locate in an attractive historic centre whilst having access to the facilities required for modern business needs. These developments can maintain, or bring back into use, historic buildings. Their function is a positive addition to the street scene bringing activity into the area and encouraging use of the centre.



Figure 17 Businesses in the Old Town High Street

7 Stevenage Borough Council, Quarterly Retail Survey, April 2011

9 Transport issues

"Many problems in conservation areas can arise from, or be associated with, the measures required for traffic safety, control and calming." - Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, English Heritage, 2006.

9.1 The road gyratory system is highlighted in the appraisal as the major transport issue affecting the Old Town Conservation Area. This is the one-way system which surrounds the Bowling Green sending traffic into the High Street or onto Lytton Way.

9.2 The gyratory system was planned in the 1960s when it became clear that the A1(M) had not solved all congestion problems in the Old Town. Investigations revealed that significant amounts of traffic were still using the High Street as a through-route.

9.3 This led to the route that is now Lytton Way being built to the west of the High Street. It opened in 1976.

9.4 In terms of the conservation area, it is considered that the gyratory deters pedestrian use and enjoyment of the key open space at the Bowling Green and onward movements to The Avenue.

9.5 Solutions to this issue are being considered by Hertfordshire County Council through the Stevenage Urban Transport Plan (UTP). Within the UTP, potential solutions are not proposed as part of the current work programme, which runs until 2015.

9.6 Parking is a key issue within the conservation area. The width of the High Street means it can accommodate parking bays on both sides of the carriageway.

9.7 A new parking regime was introduced to the High Street in June 2010. The aim was to deter commuter parking, enhance the vibrancy of the Old Town and ensure the economic wellbeing of the retail area. The scheme delivers an increased turnover of parking along the High Street and Church Lane to improve passing trade and give visitors a better chance of being able to park during the daytime and at weekends.

9.8 In addition to the issues associated with the gyratory system, pedestrian and cycle access is also adversely affected at the southern end of the conservation area. Links across Fairlands Way to the town centre are generally considered to be of a poor quality. The appraisal also identified the poor quality of the transition from Ditchmore Lane to the southern end of the High Street.

9.9 The UTP recognises pedestrian and cycle access between the town centre and Old Town as an issue. Improvements to the existing Fairlands Way footbridge are included as a short-term measure within the UTP.



Figure 18 The Bowling Green (l), High Street parking (c) and the Fairlands Way pedestrian footbridge (r)

10 Open space and public realm issues

10.1 The Old Town High Street Conservation Area contains a number of important open spaces including (from north to south): Bury Mead, the Bowling Green, the Millennium Gardens and the cricket ground.



Figure 19 The Bowling Green (l), the Millennium Gardens (c) and the cricket ground (r)

10.2 The Council's evidence studies have identified that, in the main, these areas are of good and high quality. There are some issues surrounding low usage levels though, in relation to Bury Mead and the Bowling Green these can be attributed in large part to the issues already discussed.

10.3 In terms of public realm, recent schemes have resulted in the use of a consistent, and high quality, palette of materials within the core of the conservation area ~ broadly within Zone 1. However, outside of this area there are inconsistencies. There are, for example, varying styles of lamp column in different locations while the quality of the street furniture also varies.

11 The Management Plan

11.1 All development in the conservation area, or which forms part of its setting, must respond to its immediate environment and context, in terms of scale, alignment, form, materials and detailing. This plan sets out a series of guidelines aimed at ensuring appropriately designed development in the conservation area.

Layout

11.2 Any developments within the Old Town High Street should seek to retain or reflect the historic burgage plot layout.

11.3 Infill development within the rear of existing plots is a common feature of the conservation area. Any development in rear plots facing Primett Road should seek to minimise disruption to the burgage layout. Any development in rear plots facing Church Road should focus on smaller, workshop type units within existing plot boundaries. Any development to the rear of properties in Ditchmore Lane should seek to retain the existing villas and safeguard an appropriate proportion of the existing plot for their continued use.

11.4 Elsewhere in the conservation area, proposals should reflect prevailing layout and plot styles. Should larger sites within the conservation area come forward for redevelopment, proposals should generally avoid large building footprints as these would be out of scale and character.

11.5 On sites adjacent to the conservation area, larger format buildings, such as flat blocks, are considered acceptable though care should be taken over the relationship with / transition between sites within the conservation area boundary.

Scale and massing

11.6 The significant majority of buildings within the conservation area are of a small, or modest scale. New development should seek to reflect and enhance this characteristic.

11.7 Building heights, with a few exceptions, generally do not exceed two or three storeys. On larger developments it may be possible to 'conceal' modestly larger-scale buildings towards the centre of sites with development around the boundary in keeping with adjacent plots and properties.



Figure 20 Modest development in the Old Town (l). At Vincent Place (r) the gradual scale of development increases away from the High Street and the larger scaled section faces onto Lytton Way.

Detailing

11.8 Windows and doors are important components of a building. Any alteration or replacement can significantly affect its character and appearance. Wherever possible original windows and doors should be retained and repaired. This is in order to keep the integrity of the original design and preserve the character and proportions of the building. The energy efficiency of windows can be increased through the use of appropriate secondary glazing.



Figure 21 Modern mock sash frames (l) can appear bulky when compared with traditional timber sash windows (r)

11.9 Imitation replacement window styles and inappropriate replacement window materials are poor alternatives for traditional single pane, timber, vertical sliding sash windows. Mock sliding sash windows generally have heavy top opening casements, whilst UPVC windows generally have thicker, cruder frames than timber windows. These unsuitable styles and material

impact on the proportions and overall appearance of a window and a building. Individually and cumulatively this can have a detrimental impact on the overall appearance of a townscape and a conservation area.

11.10 The roof is one of the most important parts of a property as it makes the building wind and watertight and can bring harmony to a landscape. It would be preferable to retain, repair or replace (on a like for like basis) original roof material, ridge tiles and hip tiles. Within the Old Town High Street Conservation Area, slate and red clay tiles are the traditional and predominant roofing material.

11.11 Chimney stacks can contribute greatly to the local character and should be retained and repaired. When retained they provide a dominant and attractive feature of the roofscape.

11.12 Functioning and decorative features such as soffits, fascias, barge boards and porch brackets are attractive elements of many of the properties within the conservation area. Their maintenance and repair, with traditional materials, greatly adds to the attractiveness of the area.

11.13 The conversion of loft space and the installation of inappropriate dormer windows and/or rooflights may have a negative impact on the appearance of a building and detract from the character of a roofscape. A number of properties within the conservation area have original 'cottage-style' attic dormers within the roof. Any proposals to add or alter roof windows which are inappropriately designed or out of scale with original examples will be resisted.

11.14 Aerials, satellite dishes and alarm boxes can have a detrimental impact on the appearance of a building. Where possible they should be situated inside or to the rear of a property or carefully located to minimise the impact on the character of the building.



Figure 22 Satellite dishes and aerials can create clutter on buildings which detracts from the historic setting of a conservation area

11.15 Various sources offer guidance when dealing with the maintenance or restoration of period homes. English Heritage provide a great deal of information on heritage protection and understanding your property. It is recommended that you engage professional help to manage a project, such as an architect or building surveyor. Only a small proportion of qualified

professionals specialise in the repair of old buildings. English Heritage offer advice on how to determine the most appropriate tradesperson for your property. See www.english-heritage.org.uk for further details.

Materials

11.16 Given the size of the conservation area, there are clearly variations in the use of the materials. However, the predominant building materials include:

- Red brick or timber-framed walls
- Slate or red-clay tile roofs;
- Timber sash windows and timber doors; and
- Chimneys projecting above the roofline in materials to match.

11.17 For new planning applications in conservation areas, the applicant has the opportunity to illustrate how the predominant building materials will be incorporated within the design and access statement.



Figure 23 Chimney stacks, original windows and decorative features and finishes in the Old Town Conservation Area

11.18 Some properties in the conservation area have undergone alterations which have utilised more contemporary materials. The cumulative effect of such alterations can erode those features which support the special architectural or historic interest of the area. An Article 4 direction is one means of managing such changes. See 'Opportunities for an Article 4 Direction' later in this plan.

Shopfronts and signage

11.19 Within the High Street, the majority of traditional shop fronts span the width of the ground floor with a stall riser, pilaster and console. Doors are in the centre or to one side with a fascia above.

11.20 A number of shops still have these traditional features and their continued retention will be strongly encouraged. However, some modern shop fronts have been inserted into older properties. When shop fronts are to be replaced, or if new fronts are to be created, traditional designs and materials should be used wherever possible.

11.21 There are a few instances of steel roller shutters. These are generally not considered appropriate and timber doors provide a more appropriate solution.

11.22 Shop signage is of varying quality. There are a number of good examples of retained, traditional shop fronts with hanging boards and / or sensitive spotlighting.

11.23 However, advertising which is insensitive to the local environment can detract from the appearance of buildings. Advertisements which are poorly designed and sited can appear obtrusive or out of place. The Council will ensure that advertisements are of an appropriate size and scale, are well designed and are sympathetic to both the building on which they are to be displayed and the general characteristics of the local environment.

11.24 Standardised or corporate displays that have no regard to the character of the specific building or the general locality will not be acceptable.

Alterations and extensions

11.25 Alterations and extensions should not dominate an existing building's scale or alter the composition of its main elevations. Any alterations, including partial demolition, should respect an existing building and its materials. All new work should complement the old in quality, texture and colour as well as method of construction. Walls and detailing which have traditionally not been painted should remain undecorated.

Boundaries and site-level landscaping



Figure 24 Boundary treatments vary in the conservation area. New developments incorporate these details too (r).

11.26 Original boundary treatments such as walls, railings and hedges play an important part in the character and appearance of the conservation area and they should be retained, maintained or reinstated where possible. Where reinstated or replaced, traditional materials, proportions and design should be reflected.

Parking



11.27 The recent changes to the parking regime on the High Street were introduced under an Experimental Traffic Order (ETO). This requires the scheme to be monitored to assess its success in achieving the original aims. ETOs have a maximum life of 18 months and must be made permanent or discontinued before the end of this period.

11.28 The ETO was monitored for 18 months and included consultations with local residents and business owners. The scheme was successful and has now been implemented permanently.

Pedestrian and cycle links

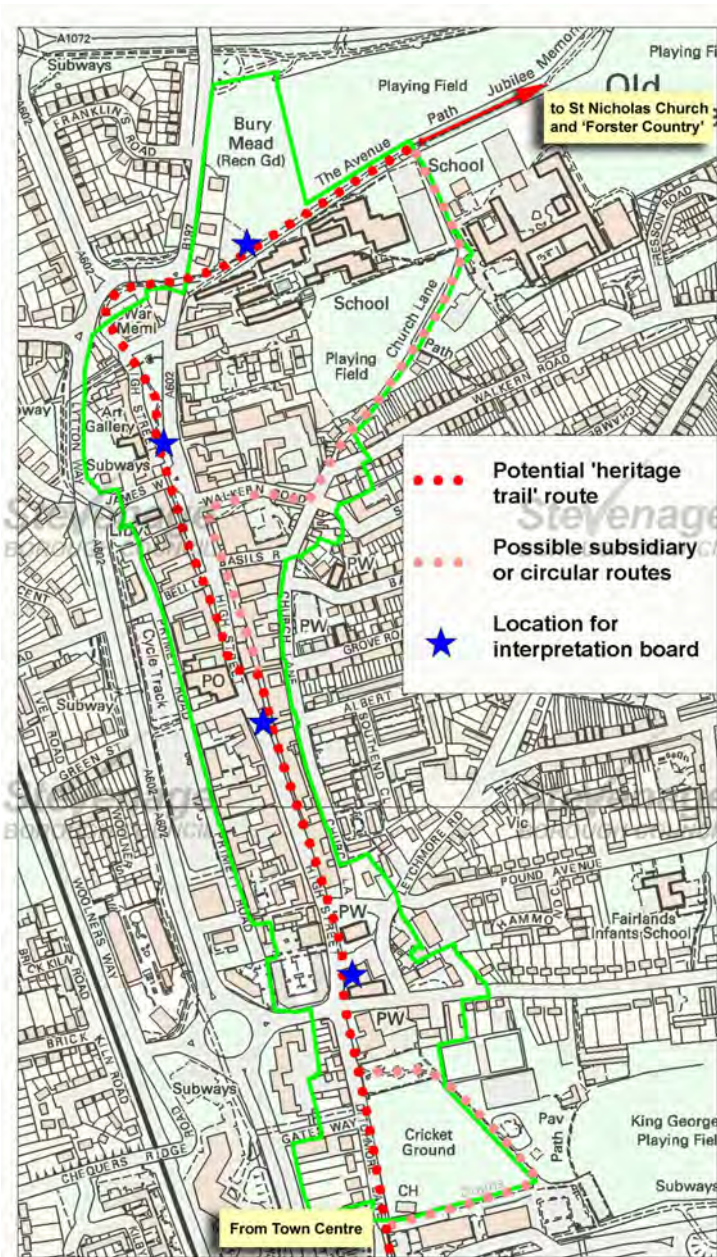
11.29 There are a number of links through and near the conservation area. The High Street itself provides a major pedestrian thoroughfare. Public rights of way provide connections to the King George V playing fields (footpath 10) and Letchmore Road (footpath 62) from the southern end of the High Street and Orchard Road (footpath 5) and The Avenue (footpaths 3 and 4) to the north.

11.30 The Great North Cycleway, which forms part of the national cycle network (Route 12) runs just to the west of the conservation area crossing through the corner of the Bowling Green.

11.31 The footpath and cycle network is generally well integrated into the conservation area. However, there are some exceptions. Some intersections between the High Street and connecting lanes and alleys are poor quality compared to the surrounding public realm. Any opportunities to secure small-scale funding to improve these links will be supported.

11.32 The UTP seeks small-scale improvements to the Fairlands Way footbridge. This will be achieved through a combination of capital funding from Hertfordshire Highways and developer contributions.

11.33 Larger-scale developments, either within the town centre or of previously identified sites in the Old Town such as Saffron Ground and the Antelope House complex may provide scope for a more comprehensive redesign / replacement of these links in the future through the limited gathering of pooled contributions.



Map 1 Potential route to connect to STOOP

Landscaping and open space

11.37 The Green Space Strategy (2010) contains an action plan with recommendations on how green spaces across the town are maintained and improved. The Biodiversity Action Plan (2010) additionally contains policies and action for wildlife species and habitats.

11.34 The impact of the road gyratory system is flagged up at several points in this plan. In particular, the adverse impact (perceived or actual) which deters pedestrians from using the Bowling Green and The Avenue is highlighted. Any action to remedy this will only happen in the long-term. The Council will continue to lobby and work with Hertfordshire County Council to realise an effective solution.

11.35 However, this route has already been identified as part of a major walking project. The Stevenage Outer Orbital Path (STOOP) is a 27-mile circular walk through the countryside around the town, utilising existing public rights of way. A project to fully signpost STOOP was completed in 2008. A number of link routes from the town centre have been defined, including one via the Old Town High Street and The Avenue.

11.36 The possibility of further, small-scale works to highlight this route in the short- to medium-term, either as part of the STOOP project or as an urban 'heritage trail' in its own right using discretionary funding sources will be investigated. This might include discrete signage and/or interpretation boards at key locations.

11.38 The potential presence of protected species associated with older buildings should be acknowledged. We will support the improvement of existing habitats and encourage the development of new nesting areas for protected species as appropriate.

11.39 For the Old Town area there is a particular need for us to engage with and encourage local residents and businesses to preserve the existing nest sites and to create new sites for a local Swift colony. Swifts are almost entirely dependent on built structures for their nests. We will protect them through the breeding season and will encourage the development of nesting spaces in new buildings and developments.

11.40 The open spaces identified throughout this Plan are a key feature of the conservation area. Their continued maintenance will be monitored by the Council and emergency ad-hoc works will be completed as necessary. Open spaces will generally be subject to a regular programme of maintenance.

11.41 Green infrastructure assets within the Old Town High Street Conservation Area are currently protected by a number of specific District Plan policies and these policy designations will be carried forward in future iterations of the document to offer similar level of protection.



Figure 25 Green infrastructure and views in the Old Town High Street Conservation Area

11.42 The appraisal identified a significant number of trees which are important to the character of the conservation area. The most significant of these are covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). These require that consent be sought before significant works, such as lopping, topping or felling, are carried out.

11.43 In addition to this, all other trees within a conservation area are subject to a prior-notification procedure. 6-weeks notice must be given to the Council of any intended works. This gives the Council the opportunity to decide whether a TPO should be applied to the affected tree(s).

11.44 We will also adopt a Amenity Tree Management Policy which will support the importance and protection of trees across the town. All matters relating to trees in the conservation area will be considered by the Council's arboricultural officer.

11.45 Zones 2 and 5 within the conservation area are part of a Green Link between the Bowling Green to the south and St Nicholas Church to the north. This forms an important green wedge providing a link between open spaces and opportunities for informal recreation. The link is an essential part of the urban structure of the town and protected through policy within the Stevenage District Plan (2nd Review). We will continue to protect this link through emerging planning policies.

Public realm

11.46 Within the core of the Old Town High Street there has been a concerted effort to ensure that street furniture is picked from a co-ordinated, high quality palette. However, this consistency fades as you radiate out from the Old Town core.

11.47 Street lighting improves the night-time safety of road users and members of the community and can reduce crime and the fear of crime during the hours of darkness. Hertfordshire County Council are moving to a part-night street light operation to reduce carbon emissions and overall costs. There are some exceptions to this programme, particularly where safety is an issue.

11.48 Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for around 115,000 street lights across the County. In 2008 Hertfordshire County Council undertook a programme of street light replacement works in the Old Town High Street. These energy efficient columns are black and of a more traditional design than other lampposts in the area. They are fitted with sensors which enable a team at Hertfordshire County Council to monitor them remotely, dimming the lights through the early hours.

11.49 We will continue to support the use of light fittings which are appropriate to their location in terms of material, scale, design and illumination, particularly for listed buildings and conservation areas.

11.50 There is a need to ensure that columns across the whole conservation area are appropriate for their setting. Analysis shows that this is a particular issue in character zones 2 and 3. Hertfordshire County Council does not include the replacement of these columns within their current 5 year rolling programme. As the street lights are in perfect working order, and given current financial restraints, it will not be possible to develop a County funded project to

rectify this issue. We will work with Hertfordshire County Council to ensure that, when a scheme is identified, more traditional designs in a scale more in keeping with the rest of the conservation area are proposed.

11.51 Signage in the area is generally well proportioned and, where possible, is attached to existing columns to prevent clutter. We will continue to encourage this approach. It is recommended that redundant signage is removed as it becomes redundant or is replaced to reduce visual clutter.

11.52 It is recommended that consideration is given to the siting of new signage. Where possible existing poles should be used. Where supplementary poles are required these should be dark in colour unless pedestrian safety is compromised. Signs should be grouped to avoid visual clutter. Street signs or finger posts should be carefully planned in a comprehensive manner and should consider a simple but bespoke design to create distinctiveness.

11.53 Yellow lines for parking restrictions may have a negative effect on the visual character of a conservation area. The Council will consider the narrower 'primrose lines' where new schemes are implemented, although traffic regulations do not always allow this as an option.

11.54 Benches can provide an opportunity for people to stop, relax and reflect upon their surroundings. The opportunity for people to sit and relax creates a feeling of safety for other users as they move through the area. We will encourage the maintenance of existing furniture and any proposals to include new facilities in appropriate areas.



Figure 26 Street furniture within zone 1

Pre-application discussions

11.55 Any proposed works within a conservation area require special consideration and all applicants are encouraged to seek pre-application advice prior to submission. For extensions, alterations and significant development proposals, applicants are advised to employ the services of an agent or architect with extensive knowledge of conservation areas.

11.56 Proposals for development which fall within the conservation area, or which affect its setting, including views into and out of the area, will not be permitted unless they include a detailed assessment which identifies how the proposals will preserve or enhance, or otherwise complement the special character and appearance of the area. We will pay particular regard to the Old Town High Street Conservation Area Appraisal⁽⁸⁾ when considering development proposals in, or adjacent to, the area.

Enforcement

11.57 Local planning authorities have a duty to consider taking enforcement action where they believe there to have been a breach of planning control. Key aspects of the enforcement service are to investigate alleged breaches of planning control, listed building control and advertisement control. Wherever possible the Council will seek to resolve breaches without the need to take formal action.

Opportunities for an Article 4 Direction

11.58 Article 4 Directions can be used to withdraw certain permitted development rights under the 1995 Town and Country Planning [General Permitted Development] Order. In order to implement such a direction it is necessary to prove that works carried out under the Order have a direct and detrimental impact on the character and/or appearance of the conservation area. It is clear that the incremental changes using non traditional materials is a recognised issue and has a direct impact on their appearance and contribution to the appearance of the conservation area.

11.59 It is recognised that a significant number of buildings within this conservation area are listed. This affords far greater controls over internal and external works for those structures. In the short-term, it is considered that applications for planning permissions along with listed building and conservation area consents will provide an adequate basis for controlling changes to buildings. We will continue to monitor change in the conservation area and assess whether an Article 4 Direction might be appropriate in the future.

8 Old Town High Street Conservation Area Appraisal, June 2009, BEAMS

Summary

11.60 In conclusion, we will seek to strengthen those elements of the built environment which warranted the designation of the area. The retention of traditional architectural features will be monitored. Proposals to reinstate lost features or repair existing features and/or buildings will be welcomed. We will also support applications for new listed buildings.

11.61 We would seek to maintain the structure and layout of existing buildings, particularly those of historical merit and where they reflect the character of the conservation area. The success of the conservation area will depend in some part upon the care which owners take with the maintenance and repair of their properties and in any alterations or extensions they make. We will promote the conservation area to ensure that local residents are aware of the contribution they are able to make when considering even small alterations to their properties.

11.62 Many of the challenges for local authorities lie with changes to the public realm and the management of development sites. The focus in conservation areas must be on the careful maintenance of public space, and the use of appropriate signage and materials for traffic management and street furniture. We will work with local stakeholders to ensure that, in particular, the most appropriate traffic management schemes are considered for the Old Town.

11.63 There are significant development opportunities in the Old Town High Street Conservation Area due, in part, to the sustainable location. We will continue to support growth in a way which enhances the local environment. Emerging local planning policy will protect those key elements of the High Street that contribute to the special character.

11.64 The area can contribute to local historical knowledge and develop lifelong learning and improved health. The development of links which introduce people to the historic diversity of the town are encouraged. The Old Town High Street can be regarded as the core of the historic heritage of the town. Strengthening connections to the past can be achieved through promotional literature. This will bring movement into the area and encourage use of local facilities and open space.

11.65 Conflicts between the interests of residents, local businesses and visitors must be sensitively managed, with solutions tailored to the specific circumstances of the place. Good working relationships between authorities and with relevant external agencies are vital. We will work closely with all stakeholders to deliver local projects which preserve or enhance the conservation area.

12 Monitoring measures

"Changes in the appearance of conservation areas ... should be monitored regularly" - Guidance on the management of conservation areas, English Heritage, 2006.

12.1 The management plan will be subject to a five year review, subject to staff resources, commencing from the date of adoption. The conservation area appraisal and this conservation area management plan provide a benchmark for assessing change. This may result in a revision or expansion of the existing appraisal and management plan and will include:

- Recording changes;
- Re-assessing the definition of special interest that warrants designation;
- Identifying new issues affecting the conservation area and revising the management plan accordingly.

12.2 Reviews will, where possible, link with relevant policies and documents of the Council's Development Plan so that development opportunities can be properly considered against the heritage interests of the Old Town High Street Conservation Area.

12.3 Projects identified within this Plan, such as the new parking regime in the Old Town High Street are subject to their own monitoring and review procedures. Any changes arising as a result of these will be reflected in future iterations of this plan.

12.4 The input of stakeholders including local conservation groups in this process, and in the wider management of the historic environment, such as monitoring buildings at risk, will be welcomed.

12.5 Stevenage Borough Council's Historic Environment Champion will take an active role in championing the importance of Stevenage's historic environment. Officers will meet the Historic Environment Champion and local Council Members as issues arise and these meetings will be used to monitor and review the Conservation Area Management Plan.

12.6 Future iterations of the appraisal and management plan will be subject to public consultation with the local community, relevant stakeholders, and others with an interest in the area. They will be made available on the Council's website and hard copies will be placed in local libraries. Adverts will be placed in local press. Comments received will be taken into consideration in the final drafting of these documents.



Appendix 1

Appendix 1

191 At the time of writing, the following buildings are listed:

2-6 (evens) Baker Street	Grade II
7 Baker Street	Grade II
War Memorial, Bowling Green	Grade II
1 Bowling Green	Grade II
2 Bowling Green	Grade II
3 Bowling Green	Grade II
8 Bowling Green	Grade II
1 and 3, Church Lane	Grade II
8-14 (evens) Church Lane (Almshouses)	Grade II
11 Church Lane	Grade II
19 Church Lane	Grade II
38 Church Lane	Grade II
Church of the Holy Trinity, High Street	Grade II
Old Malthouse and Kiln, Thomas Alleyne's School, High Street	Grade II
The Old Cottage, High Street	Grade II
Thomas Alleyne's School, High Street	Grade II
Triggs Barn, High Street	Grade II
1 High Street	Grade II
3 High Street	Grade II
The Grange, 5 High Street	Grade II*
6 High Street	Grade II
7 High Street	Grade II
9 and 11 High Street	Grade II
10 High Street	Grade II

Appendix 1

12 High Street	Grade II
14 and 16 High Street	Grade II
The Yorkshire Grey Inn, 15 High Street	Grade II
17 High Street	Grade II
18 High Street	Grade II
The Two Diamonds Public House, 19 High Street	Grade II
20 High Street	Grade II
Cromwell Hotel, 25 High Street	Grade II
26 High Street	Grade II
27 High Street	Grade II
28 and 28a High Street	Grade II
30 High Street	Grade II
31 High Street	Grade II
33 High Street	Grade II
35 and 35a High Street	Grade II
37 High Street	Grade II
40 and 42 High Street	Grade II
47 High Street	Grade II
49 and 51 High Street	Grade II
53-59 (odds) High Street	Grade II
The White Lion Inn, 60 High Street	Grade II
61 and 63 High Street	Grade II
62 High Street	Grade II
64 High Street	Grade II
66 High Street	Grade II
67 and 69 High Street	Grade II



68 High Street	Grade II
70 and 72 High Street	Grade II
72a High Street	Grade II
79 High Street	Grade II
The Red Lion Inn, 80 High Street	Grade II
82 High Street	Grade II
84 and 84a High Street	Grade II
86, 86a and 88 High Street	Grade II
92 and 92a High Street	Grade II
94-98 (evens) High Street	Grade II*
104 High Street	Grade II
106 High Street	Grade II
108 High Street	Grade II
110 and 112 High Street	Grade II
114 High Street	Grade II
123 and 125 High Street	Grade II
127 and 129 High Street	Grade II
131 High Street	Grade II*
Marquis of Lorne Public House, 132 High Street	Grade II
The Coach and Horses Inn, 133 High Street	Grade II
136 High Street	Grade II
156 High Street (formerly known as 4 London Road)	Grade II*
158 High Street (formerly known as 6 and 8 London Road)	Grade II
Moss Villa, 160 High Street (formerly known as 10b London Road)	Grade II
2 James Way	Grade II
2 Letchmore Road	Grade II*

Appendix 1

1 and 3 Middle Row	Grade II
2 Middle Row	Grade II
4 Middle Row	Grade II
5 Middle Row	Grade II
7 and 9 Middle Row	Grade II
9a Middle Row	Grade II
11 Middle Row	Grade II
13 Middle Row	Grade II
15 and 17 Middle Row	Grade II
Watton Cottage 23 and 25 Middle Row	Grade II

Table 4

192 For detailed descriptions of each listing, please refer to the English Heritage website at www.english-heritage.org.uk.



Appendix 2

Appendix 2

193 Further to the statutory listings as catalogued in Appendix 1, a number of the buildings could be considered of local importance to the conservation area:

Character zone 1	
34 and 36 High Street (shops)	Two storey building divided into two properties. Shop fronts to both. Low pitch gabled slate roof. Decorative timber framing to first floor with crittall windows. Side sloping roof with diamond leaded window. 18th century, later facade.
38 High Street (Library)	Two storey red brick building, now library. Shop front to ground floor with door. Brick and stone bay to first floor with columns and dentilled cornice. Tiled gable roof facing the road. Timber sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
Building to the rear of 40 High Street (offices)	Two storey red brick building. Slate gable roof. Timber sash windows to first floor. Possible 19th century workshop.
Building to the rear of 42 High Street (offices)	Two storey brick building with render to first floor. Painted cream and peach with doors to ground floor and large window/door above. Slate gable roof with brick decoration at gable eaves. West elevation with timber windows, small modern coloured glass window to east side. Security bars to all openings. Possible former chapel/meeting house.
44 High Street (takeaway)	Single storey building with attics and two dormers. Probably timber framed with tiled gable roof. Front bay with timber windows and door. Timber casement to dormers. Possibly 17th century, later facade.
46 High Street (takeaway)	Two storey red brick building. Shop front to ground floor with door. Canted bay to first floor with gable and decorative timber framing. Tiled gable roof. Timber casements to first floor. Early 20th century.
Elmes Arcade, 50 High Street (shops / offices)	Three storey red brick building with moulded stone string course, stone dressings around windows and herringbone brickwork panels between first and second floor windows. Central brick bay slightly recessed. Hipped clay tile roof concealed by brick parapet. Crittall windows (some UPVC). 1930s.
54 High Street (shop)	Two storey red brick building. Projecting ground floor shop front with dentilled cornice and a door. Tiled gable roof. Four timber sashes to first floor. Probably dates to the 19th/20th century.
56 High Street (shop)	Two storey red brick building. Shop front with door. Tiled gable roof. Dentilled brick cornice to eaves. Two windows with a pair of timber sashes to first floor. Probably dates to the early 19th century.
58 High Street (shop)	Two storey red brick building. Shop front with door. Tiled gable roof. Dentilled brick cornice to eaves. Two timber sash windows to first floor. Some timber windows, some UPVC windows to side elevation. Probably dates to the 19th century.
Buildings to rear 62 High Street (The White Lion Inn)	A one and a half storey and a single storey building, both with several large openings with timber doors, some since brick blocked. Tiled hipped roof. Two loading hatches in roof, one with gablet. Former stables and carriage store.

74 High Street (shops and offices)	Three storey red brick building. Hipped slate roof. Shop front to ground floor with two doors. Seven UPVC windows to first floor and repeated to third floor. Timber surrounds with scroll bracket supporting a plain cornice to all first floor windows. Timber surrounds to third floor windows. Brackets to cornice at eaves. 19th century.
76 and 78 High Street (restaurant and offices)	Two storey red brick building with four attic dormers. Tiled gable roof. Timber shop front to ground floor. Two doors, south door with timber Greek style doorcase, plain fanlight labelled with 'Lines House'. North doorway is on the corner of the building. Four single pane sash windows to first floor. Four timber casement dormers. 19th century.
90 High Street (bank)	Two storey brick building, plastered front. Tiled gable roof. Timber shop front to ground floor with cornice and doorway. Four single pane sash windows to first floor. Two UPVC windows to first floor. 19th century, possibly earlier.
116 High Street (restaurant)	Two storey brick building. Tiled gable roof. Timber shop front to ground floor with doorway. A bay, a single and a pair of sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
118 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Tiled gable roof. Projecting timber shop front to ground floor with cornice and doorway. Two brick headed casement windows to first floor. 19th century.
120 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Tiled gable roof. Timber shop front to ground floor with doorway. One brick headed casement window to first floor. 19th century.
122 High Street (Dew Drop Inn - Restaurant)	Single storey brick building. Part timber part cast iron shop front with pilasters (Corinthian style heads) and dentilled cornice. Recessed front door with mosaic tile floor to doorway. Possibly 18th century, later facade.
39 and 39A High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building, partly pebble dashed, with large tile hung dormer. Tiled gable roof. Modern shop front to ground floor, entered from the side in single storey 20th century rear extension. Tile hung wall to north side gable. Two windows to first floor, each divided into three sashes. Casement window to dormer. Late 19th / early 20th century.
41 and 41A High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building, partly pebble dashed, with large tile hung dormer. Tiled gable roof. Timber shop front to ground floor with door. Single storey 20th century rear extension. Two windows to first floor, each divided into three sashes. Casement window to dormer. Possibly 19th century core, later alteration to insert dormers and rear extension.
65 High Street (shop and offices)	Three storey brick building. Tiled gable roof, with decorative barge boards. Shop front to ground floor with door. Two sash windows to first floor and second floor. 19th century.
71 and 71A High street (café and shop)	Two storey brick building. Some decorative timber framing to ground floor. Tiled hipped roof, brick dentils to eaves. Timber shop front to ground floor with door, other windows to front and side elevation on Albert Street. Four critical windows to front, eight to side elevation. Early 20th century.
81 - 83 High Street (shops)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Timber shop front to ground floor with two doors and cornice. Three sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
85 - 87 High Street (shops)	Two storey red brick building. Tiled gabled roof with central gable facing the street. Timber shop front to ground floor with two doors. One awning. Three windows to first floor. 19th century.

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89 - 91 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate/asbestos tile gabled roof. Timber shop front to ground floor with central and side doors. Five sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
93 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Timber shop front to ground floor with central and side doors. Five UPVC windows to first floor. 19th century.
Buildings to rear of 93 High Street	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Large modern door, two casement windows and single door facing onto Church Street. 19th century.
95 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Shop front to ground floor with a door. A sash window to first floor. 19th century.
97 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Shop front to ground floor with a door. Three sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
99 High Street, The White Hart Public House	Two storey brick building. Pebble dashed first floor. All front painted yellow. Tiled gabled roof. Four windows to the ground floor, two sash, two casement. Pilastered doorcase with scrolls supporting gabled head. Four sash windows to first floor, one is a canted bay. 18th century, rebuilt 1829 after a fire.
Buildings and wall to rear 99 High Street	Single storey yellow brick building. Slate gabled roof. Hatch facing onto Church Street. 19th century.
101 and 101A High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Two shop fronts to ground floor with two pilasters and two doors. Three sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
103 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Shop front to ground floor with a door. One UPVC window to first floor. 19th century.
105 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Large windows to front on ground floor with a door. Timber doorcase with hood and panelled sides. Three sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
107 – 109 High Street (takeaway and shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Projecting bay shop fronts to ground floor with a door. Door to south end with awning. Carriage way with iron gates. Five sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
111 High Street (shop)	Two storey brick building. Slate gabled roof. Projecting shop front to ground floor with a door. Two sash windows to first floor. 19th century.
113 High Street (takeaway)	Two storey brick building. Tiled gabled roof. Projecting shop front to ground floor with a door. Two UPVC windows to first floor. 17th/18th century, altered façade.
Buildings to rear 115 and 117 High Street	Two buildings. One single storey red brick building with slate roof and some openings into courtyard. Brick boundary wall attached. One two storey red brick building with slate gabled roof. Several openings into courtyard; carriage way, three windows and a first floor loading hatch. Loading hatch to gabled end facing Church Street. Brick boundary wall also attached. 19th century. Mouldens Brewery.

1 and 1A Albert Street	Two storey red brick angled building. Tiled gabled roof, hipped at corner. Decorative timber framing with yellow brick infill to ground floor, some in herringbone pattern. Two crittall windows to first floor.
27 Church Lane (buildings and wall to rear 69 High Street)	Two storey red brick building. Slate gabled roof. Ground floor door (partly in-filled with brick from a larger carriage way) and two windows, first floor loading hatch. 19th century.
Character zone 2	
Alleyne's School, Bowling Green (Victorian extension to front)	Single storey red brick building with side buttresses. Flemish bond. Tiled roof with open timber bell tower (gothic style) and bell. Mullion and transom timber windows to north elevation. Large pointed arched timber window to west elevation. Single storey building attached to west elevation with decorated parapet and smaller windows. Boundary wall abuts. 19th century.
4 Bowling Green	Two storey brick symmetrical house. Tiled gabled roof. Two storey bays to front each with sloping roof into a gablet and central door with fanlight. Decorative barge boards and finials to each gablet. Mainly timber sash windows. Brick dentil decoration to ground floor above windows. 19th century.
Trough on the Bowling Green	Stone trough with inscription from the 'Sermon on the Mount' Blessed are the merciful for they will obtain mercy (Matthew 5:7). Erected by the Stevenage Band of Mercy. Dated 1908.
Drinking fountain on the Bowling Green	Probable marble drinking fountain. Not in use. May date to the late Victorian/early Edwardian period.
2 High Street (shop)	Single storey red brick building with room in attic. Tiled half-hipped roof facing road. Shop front and doorway with sash window above and awnings to both. Currently named 'Florist on the Green'. May date to the late 18th century. Possible out building to the neighbouring 'Old Cottage', a timber framed listed building.
8 High Street	Two storey red brick building. Slate gabled roof. Stone lintels to UPVC windows. Carriage way to south with doors. Late 19th century.
22 High Street	Two storey red brick building. Mainly Flemish bond with blue headers. Blue brick quoins and around windows. Tiled hipped roof behind a parapet. Timber windows with Tudor-style drip moulding to first floor. 6 panelled door with square fanlight. 19th century.
24 High Street, Springfield House (Community Centre)	Two storey red brick building. Mainly Flemish bond. Yellow stock brick around windows. Tiled hipped roof, kneelers to central gable. Pointed arch opening to gable with drip moulding. Closed brick front porch with tile kneelers, Tudor-style arched opening with drip moulding. Timber windows with Tudor-style drip moulding to first floor and fish scale tiled hoods to projecting ground floor windows. Octagonal shafts to chimneys. 16th/17th century timber framed cottage survives as kitchens, but mainly 19th century.
13 High Street, The Post Office and Clubhouse	Two storey brick building, plastered to first floor with brick to edges exposed as quoins. Slate gable roof. Stone block sill. Timber shop front with cornice. A pair and two single timber sash windows to first floor. Semi-circular decoration above first floor window in gable. Some UPVC windows to side elevation. Boundary wall intact with posts. Late 19th / early 20th century.
Character zone 3	

Appendix 2

166 – 172 High Street	Two storey brick building. Slate gable roof with some decorative barge boards. Three doorways to the front with stone lintels and a large brick headed carriage opening with timber doors at the north end. Four windows to ground floor, five windows to first floor. Some timber sashes, some UPVC. All with stone lintels. Decorative canted timber bay first floor window to north side with arch headed multi-paned window below. 19th century.
1 and 2 Ditchmore Lane	Semi-detached brick villa style two storey house. Slate hipped roof. Two ground floor bays with dentilled cornices. Two front doors. Four first floor windows, two with rounded heads. 19th century.
3 and 4 Ditchmore Lane	Semi-detached red brick gothic style two storey house. Tiled gable roof with fish scales, two gables facing the road. Slate hipped roof. Two ground floor bays with UPVC windows, dentilled cornices and sloping roofs. Two front doors set in gothic style rendered porch with decorative parapet. Six first floor UPVC windows. Brick decoration above windows in gables. 19th century.
5 Ditchmore Lane	Detached brick symmetrical villa style two storey house. Slate hipped roof. Two ground floor bays with sash windows and sloping roofs. Central front door with plain fanlight. Three first floor sash windows. 19th century.
6 Ditchmore Lane (veterinary centre)	Detached grey brick symmetrical villa style two storey house with dormers. Slate hipped roof. Two ground floor sash windows, three first floor sash windows. Central front rendered porch door with cornice and plain fanlight. 19th century.
Stevenage Methodist Church, High Street	Single storey red brick building with some white render and yellow brick dressings. Slate gabled roof. Semi-circular tower to west front corner Corinthian style pilasters. Large rounded headed windows. Decorative windows to west above double doorway. Date stone of 1876. Large 1970's extension to rear, not included.
8 Sish Lane	Two storey brick house, divided into two properties. Tiled gable roof to main house and extension, and also to attached garage. Four first floor windows, three ground floor windows. Some casements, some sash, some possibly decorative iron framed. Two porches with doorways. Large chimney to rear. 18th century, possibly earlier.
12 Sish Lane	Two storey brick house, plastered and painted. Slate gable roof. 19th century, possibly earlier. Unable to see clearly.
Character zone 4	
15, 17 and 19 Walkern Road	Two storey red brick building. Rendered with decorative timber work to the first floor. Projecting central bay with gable and two gablets to properties either side. Slate gabled roof with three small box dormers. Three ground floor bay windows and three casements. Mixture of timber and UPVC windows. Three porches, two open sided. 1894 date stone, and EVM initials. (Edward Vincent Methold).
14 Walkern Road (dental practice)	Two storey brick building. Slate gable roof with ridge tiles and finials. Painted brickwork. Some decorative timber work to the jettied first floor and also side gable. Canted bay window to side elevation. Selection of timber casements. Late 19th century.
The Twitchell, Church Lane	Two storey red brick building, part rendered, with two gabled dormers. Flint walling and weather boarding to west wall. Slate gable roof. Mixed timber casements and UPVC windows. Two large doorways with timber doors to end of property. Late 18th / early 19th century.

The Corner House, Church Lane/Stanmore Road	Two storey red brick building. Slate gable roof. Four windows with timber sashes facing Church Street, one ground floor bay with slate sloping roof. Door facing Stanmore Road with three other timber windows, two sash. Late 19th century.
2 Church Lane	Two storey red brick building. Slate gable roof. UPVC window, door and carriage way with gates to the ground floor. Two UPVC windows to first floor. Late 19th century.
4 Church Lane	Two storey red brick building. Tiled gable roof. UPVC windows throughout, two to ground floor, one bay with sloping tiled roof, and two to first floor. Door recessed. Late 19th century.
6 Church Lane	Two storey red brick building. Tiled gable roof. UPVC windows throughout. Two storey bay with hung tiles with two windows. Ground floor bay with hood, single window above. Door with gabled porch. Early 20th century.
13 and 15 Church Lane	Semi-detached two storey red brick building. Slate hipped roof with ridge tiles and finials. Rendered first floor with decorative timber work. Two projecting bay windows to ground floor with slate canopy across and over door doorways. All UPVC windows. Dated 1895.
16 Church Lane	Building originally housed the town's fire engine. Built 1835 following the 1829 fire in the town. Abuts almshouses. Single storey red brick building. Hipped tile roof. Two double doors to front. By 1913 it had outgrown its original purpose and was converted into the town's bath house. Closed in 1960 but fixtures and fittings remain.
17 Church Lane	Two storey red brick building with tower of three floors to front. Tiled gable roof with ridge tiles and finials. Conical tiled roof to tower. Rendered first floor with decorative timber work. One timber window to ground and first floor, and ground floor door next to tower. Dated 1895 with initials EVM (Edward Vincent Methold).
Character zone 5	
2 North Road (Bury Mead)	Two storey red brick building with three-tier bell tower (top tier is octagonal and pierced with rounded headed arches). Slate gabled roof. Gothic style arched doorway at base of tower and lead cover to roof with finial. UPVC windows throughout. Part 19th century with large 20th century extension to rear. Former Old School Masters House for the Stevenage National School.
School building at Thomas Alleyne School	Single storey red brick building. Tiled gabled roof with small flat headed dormers. Red brick pilasters divide tall multi-pane casement windows, segmental brick arches with central keystone. Projecting eaves with moulded timber soffits. Red brick chimney to corner. Smaller red brick gabled addition to north in similar style. Modern addition to south. Typical 1930s purpose built school building.

Table 5

194 This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

