

Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area Appraisal 2009



CONTENTS

	Executive Summary	3
1.0	Introduction	4
2.0	Planning Policy Framework	5
3.0	Definition of Special Interest	6
4.0	Assessment of Special Interest	9
5.0	Historic Development and Archaeology	10
6.0	Spatial Analysis	22
7.0	Character Analysis	25
8.0	Community Involvement	66
9.0	Management Proposals	67
10.0	Bibliography	69
	Acknowledgements	70
	<i>Appendices</i>	
	Appendix 1. Conservation area designation map	71
	Appendix 2. Old Town Conservation Area; designation and boundary changes	72

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area map (north)	7
Figure 2.	Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area map (south)	8
Figure 3.	Engraving of the Six Hills in 1724	10
Figure 4.	Two early maps of Stevenage	11
Figure 5.	Extract from the 1834 Tithe Map of Stevenage	12
Figure 6.	Middle Row and the High Street, c1900	13
Figure 7.	Holy Trinity Church at the south end of the High Street c1900	14
Figure 8.	Cromwell Hotel, 1955	15
Figure 9.	Views of The Grange	16
Figure 10.	Views of Church Lane	17
Figure 11.	Views of Bowling Green	18
Figure 12.	Views of the High Street	19
Figure 13.	Views of Middle Row	20
Figure 14.	Views of the High Street looking north	21
Figure 15.	Landmark buildings within Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area	23

Figure 16. Key views and vistas	24
Figure 17. Views of Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area	25
Figure 18. Character Zones within Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area	26
Figure 19. Character zone 1; views of the High Street / Middle Row / Baker Street	27
Figure 20. Character zone 1; character analysis map	28
Figure 21. Listed buildings within character zone 1	31
Figure 22. Character zone 1, buildings of local importance	36
Figure 23. Paved / block paved pavements and black painted bollards on the High Street	37
Figure 24. Character zone 1; negative factors	38
Figure 25. Good examples of shop fronts on the High Street	39
Figure 26. Character zone 2; views of and around the Bowling Green	40
Figure 27. Character zone 2; character analysis map	41
Figure 28. Listed buildings within character zone 2	43
Figure 29. Character zone 2, buildings of importance	45
Figure 30. Building at risk within character zone 2	47
Figure 31. Heavy traffic on the Lytton Way / High Street gyratory system	47
Figure 32. Views within character zone 3	48
Figure 33. Character zone 3; character analysis map	49
Figure 34. A selection of the listed buildings with character zone 3	50
Figure 35. Buildings of local importance within character zone 3	52
Figure 36. Green spaces within character zone 3	53
Figure 37. View of the new residential development at Vincent Place	54
Figure 38. Views within character zone 4	55
Figure 39. Character zone 4; character analysis map	56
Figure 40. Listed buildings within character zone 4	57
Figure 41. Buildings of local importance within character zone 4	59
Figure 42. Building in an 'at risk' condition, 11 Church Lane	60
Figure 43. Views within character zone 5.	61
Figure 44. Character zone 5; character analysis map	62
Figure 45. Buildings of local importance to character zone 5	63
Figure 46. Trees along The Avenue (a), trees along Church Lane (b)	65

Front cover: Top, left to right – War Memorial, Bowling Green; view along Middle Row

Bottom, left to right – view up Church Lane; 2 Letchmore Road

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This appraisal was conducted to define the special interest of Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area in order to help preserve and enhance its character, and to provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future.

The conservation area comprises five separate 'character zones'. Each zone has a different built character, appearance and age, but together they reflect the development of Stevenage out from its medieval core.

Overall Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area is in a good condition and has a number of attributes / features which have a positive impact upon the character of the area. These relate to its spatial layout, green and open spaces, high number of historic listed and unlisted buildings and the use of traditional local building materials. However, there are some negative issues. A few buildings within the conservation area have either a negative or neutral impact upon the character of the area. Other negative issues relate to the loss of traditional architectural features, the busy gyratory system which effectively isolates the Bowling Green and two buildings in an 'at risk' condition.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 This appraisal of Stevenage's Old Town High Street Conservation Area was conducted by BEAMS Ltd, the trading company of the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust between August 2008 and March 2009. The appraisal was commissioned by Stevenage Borough Council in August 2008.
- 1.2 The Old Town Conservation Area was designated 24th March 1969. The boundary was extended in September 1979 to include Pond Close, part of Church Lane, part of Sish Lane and Ditchmore Lane (Appendix 1, Appendix 2).
- 1.3 A previous study of the conservation area was conducted by BEAMS Ltd in November 2005 in the document 'A Review of Stevenage Conservation Areas'.

Objectives

- 1.4 The main objectives of this conservation area appraisal are:
- To define the special interest of the Old Town Conservation Area by analysing its historical development, uses, landscape setting, views and spaces, and through assessment of the architectural and historic qualities of its buildings.
 - To identify neutral areas, negative features and spaces, and the problems, pressures and capacity for change.
 - To provide recommendations on how the conservation area may be enhanced.

Survey

- 1.5 A full photographic record of the Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area was made in line with recommendations by English Heritage (2006) to provide 'a baseline for measuring change and monitoring alterations / physical condition'. This will form part of the project archive for use / reference by Stevenage Borough Council. The omission in this report of any particular feature within the conservation area does not imply that it is of no significance or value.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 A Conservation Area is defined under Chapter 9 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) as *an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*. Each local planning authority is responsible for the designation of such conservation areas under the Act. Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to ‘... formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement...’ of these conservation areas.
- 2.2 Section 4.3 of Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15) recommends that local authorities should ‘...periodically review existing conservation areas and their boundaries...’ against established consistent local standards. Assessment of such conservation areas should then form the basis for local plan policies and development control decisions that aim to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.
- 2.3 As a result of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, local plans will be replaced by Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). Unlike local plans, the new LDF will be a series of documents. In combination with the regional spatial strategy (RSS) for the East of England the LDF will set out the statutory development and planning framework for Stevenage.
- 2.4 Some policies contained within the Hertfordshire Structure Plan 1998 and the Stevenage District Plan (2004) will continue to exist and will have statutory force until new development plan policies are in place. For further information please refer to the Planning Policy section of the Stevenage Borough Council website.
- 2.5 This appraisal utilised the guidance set by English Heritage, Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, published in February 2006, which offers advice to those undertaking conservation area appraisals.

3.0 DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- 3.1 Every conservation area has a distinctive character which is derived from its topography, historic development, current uses and features such as streets, buildings, monuments, place-names and green spaces.
- 3.2 Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area is formed by the long north-south high street along the alignment of the former Great North Road; it is a wide, busy High Street with houses and shops dating to a variety of periods fronting the road. The 'Bowling Green' towards the north end, is a focal point and key space within the conservation area. Bury Mead and The Avenue links the conservation area with Rectory Lane and the countryside to the north-east.
- 3.3 The principal features of Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area are:
- The wide linear High Street
 - The Bowling Green with its war memorial
 - The many historic listed buildings of various periods and styles within the conservation area
 - Other buildings of local importance and interest within the conservation area
 - The narrower, pedestrianised streets; Middle Row and Baker Street
 - The green spaces at the north and south ends of the High Street
 - The Avenue
 - The views from Bury Mead to the north-east towards the spire of St Nicholas' church, Rectory Lane

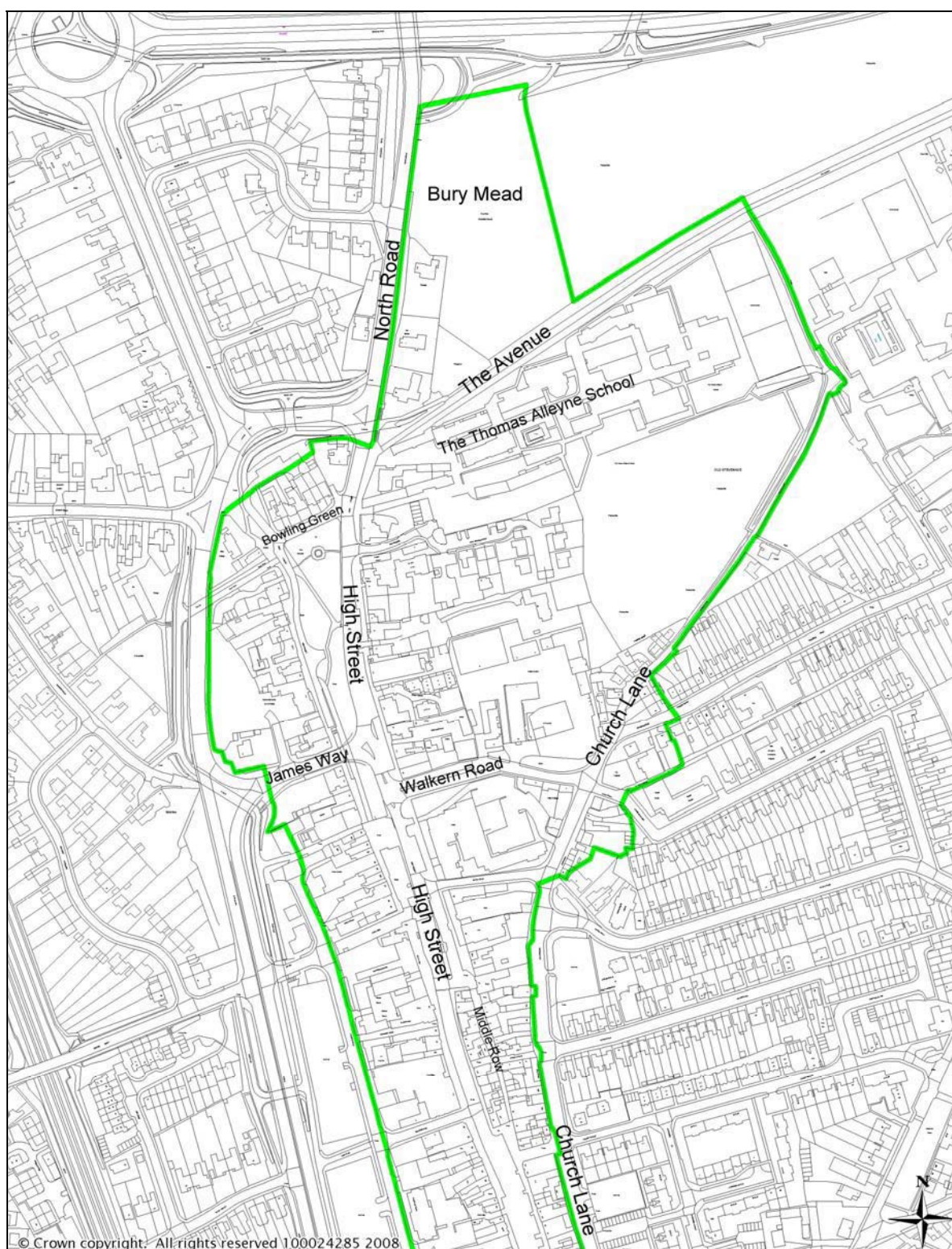


Figure 1. Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area map (north)
(Green line denotes Conservation Area boundary)

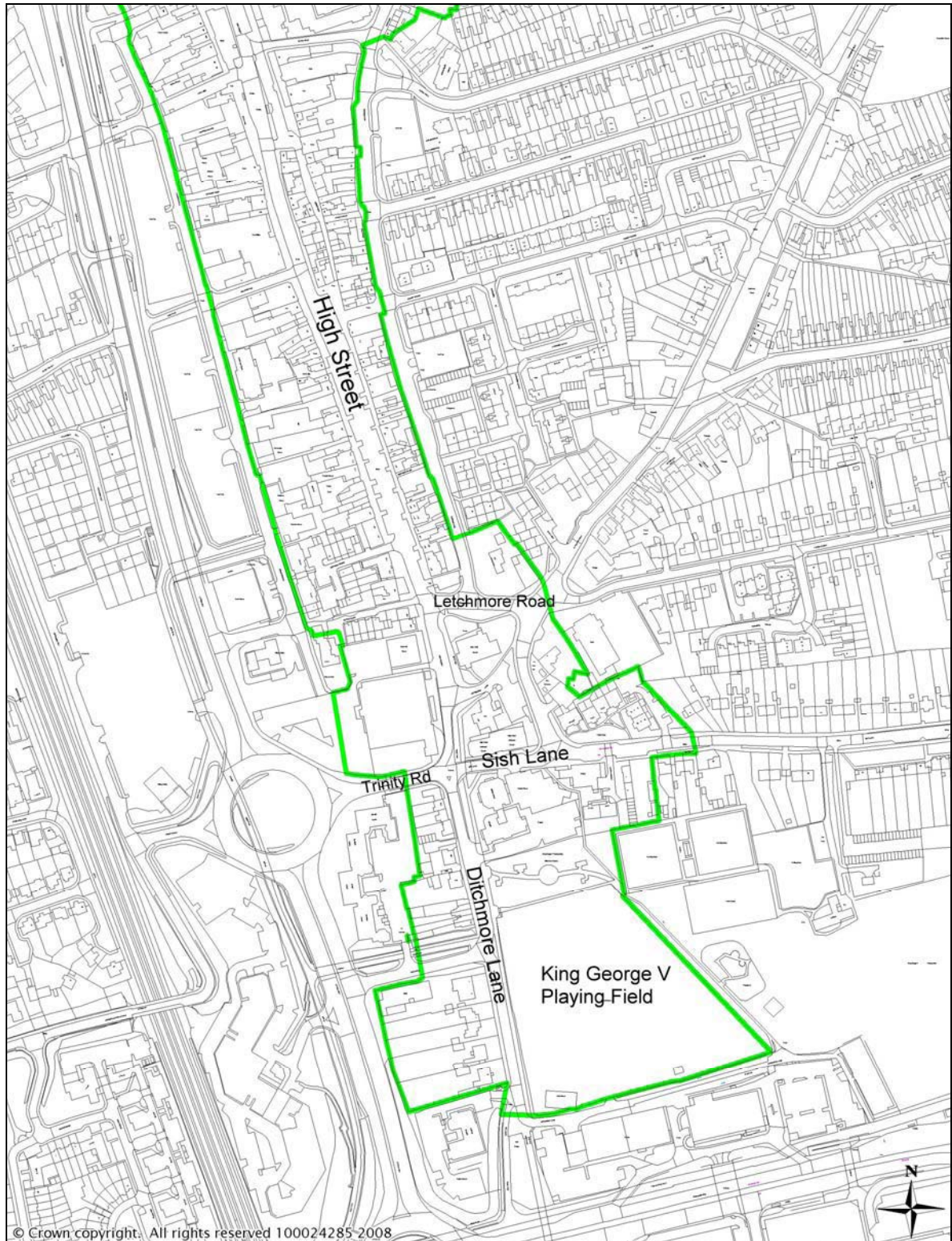


Figure 2. Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area map (south)
Green line denotes Conservation Area boundary

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Location and setting

- 4.1 Stevenage is a large town and borough in the centre of Hertfordshire. It is located between Welwyn Garden City (to the south) and Letchworth (to the north) and lies just to the east of the A1(M). The total population of the borough is approximately 79,400 with a large area of new town development to the south of Stevenage being the most densely populated. The Old Town High Street and the New Town shopping centre form the retail centres of Stevenage along with retail parks and local shopping centres.
- 4.2 The conservation area includes the linear High Street, Bowling Green and part of Church Lane, Walkern Road, Bury Mead and The Avenue at its north west end. At its south end the conservation area includes Ditchmore Lane and parts of Sish Lane and Letchmore Road. It comprises a variety of building types; two churches, a school, shops, offices, banks, public houses, restaurants and a number of private dwellings. The High Street is a busy and evidently viable centre. In general the conservation area is in good condition with most buildings being utilised and in a good state of repair.

Topography

- 4.3 The core of the conservation area is the long north-south High Street, along the alignment of the former Great North Road. The High Street is on level ground, to the north-east of the conservation area the land rises up to St Nicholas Church and The Bury, the original settlement of Stevenage.

Geology

- 4.4 The underlying geology of the area is chalk but this lies well beneath gravel and clay-with-flints and surface well-drained loamy soils.

Landscape setting

- 4.5 The High Street follows the line of the former Great North Road. It is now contained by the mid-twentieth century highway system with Martins Way / North Road to the top, Lytton Way to the west and Fairlands Way to the south. The western boundary of the conservation area follows what was historically the rear line of plots fronting the High Street although development along the east side of Primett Road has altered many of the original plot boundaries. On the eastern side, Church Lane provides much of the boundary; it also runs along the rear of the plots fronting the High Street. Pedestrian access to the southern end of the conservation area is via a footbridge over Fairlands Way. The area to the east of the conservation area is predominantly residential, with both 19th and 20th century housing. The approach into the conservation area from the north is along the North Road; it is a wide straight road with some housing and trees either side.

5.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The origins and development of the area

- 5.1 Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area has been occupied since the early medieval period and probably earlier; it has gradually evolved into the High Street and surrounding areas seen today.

Early development

- 5.2 Stevenage and its surrounding landscape have been occupied since the prehistoric period (10,000BC – 100BC). Stone axes found buried in the Old Town, Fishers Green and Shephall suggest use of the open landscape by 'hunter gatherers' during the early period. However, the first signs of settlement date to the Bronze Age and Iron Age and have been identified from a number of pottery finds, burial sites and domestic pits. Occupation of the Borough increased into the Late Iron Age and Roman period (100BC to 450AD). Towards the end of the Roman period, the landscape probably comprised a series of small farmsteads with burial mounds and cemeteries. The most prominent monuments in Stevenage, Six Hills barrows, are thought to date to the Roman period and lie alongside London Road at the Six Hills Way roundabout. London Road linked the Hertfordshire Roman towns of Verulamium and Baldock, and later was used to form part of the medieval Great North Road between London and Edinburgh. The barrows are one of three scheduled monuments in the Borough (SM 27904; Fig. 3).

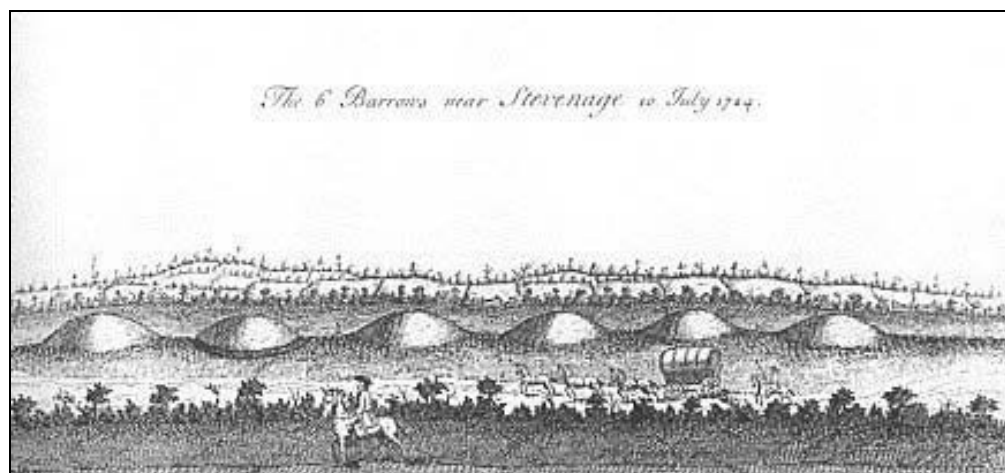


Figure 3. Engraving of the Six Hills in 1724 (Ashby 2002)

- 5.3 Part of the Saxon settlement of Stevenage is thought to have stood in the area around the parish church of St Nicholas on Rectory Lane. There might have been an early timber church sited on the higher ground where the existing church now sits with some form of manorial settlement nearby.

1066 - 1500

- 5.4 The first historical record of the manor of Stevenage is found in the Domesday Book dating to 1086, it was then known as *Sticenaece* which means a place 'at the strong oak'. The estate had been given to the newly founded Abbey of Westminster by King Edward in 1062. During the medieval period the manor of Stevenage appeared to very wealthy, especially in land. The Great North Road ran through the Borough, bringing trade and economic prosperity to Stevenage and it is along this road that settlement began to develop, what is now the Old Town High Street.

- 5.5 Stevenage was granted a market by the Abbot of Westminster in 1281 which would suggest some settlement and trade along the High Street already existed. At first, temporary structures would have been erected along the High Street, Middle Row and Baker Street; these were replaced by more permanent buildings set within burgage plots laid along either side of the main road. The Abbey of Westminster would have controlled the layout of these plots. The market place was wide to accommodate market stalls, and a market cross formerly stood in Middle Row, near the Old Castle Inn, now the Nat West bank. The town was limited at its northern end by a triangular green (Bowling Green) where the road to Hitchin left the highway. The Stevenage Brook ran down the High Street and provided water for the various ponds which were used by the livestock; there was a large pond at the south end of the High Street.

1500 – 1900

- 5.6 Two large timber frame houses were built to the south of the town in c1500 or earlier; 2 Letchmore Road and Southend Farm (131 High Street), this is an important example of a Wealden House. Several 16th century buildings are known to survive within the town centre such as 9a Middle Row and 84a High Street; many have been greatly altered. Thomas Alleyne, Rector of Stevenage in the 16th century, founded three grammar schools, one of which survives near Bowling Green at Bury Mead (the Thomas Alleyne School).
- 5.7 The highway was an important factor in the development of Stevenage. The Great North Road brought prosperity from trade and from the general traffic to and from London. Stevenage was the third posting stage out of London, after Barnet and Hatfield. Market traders, stage coaches, mail coaches and post-chaises stopped and rested in the town. Subsequently, a series of coaching inns and public houses were built; The Swan Inn, The Coach and Horses, The White Lion, The Red Lion, The White Hart, The Yorkshire Grey / White Horse, The Baker's Arms, The Old Castle Inn and The Falcon (84a High Street). The Falcon is thought to have been the oldest licensed building in the town. The Swan Inn on Bowling Green was the largest coaching station in the town and one of the largest in Hertfordshire. According to Samuel Pepys writing in 1667 The Swan was said to have 'the best host I know'. To supply some of the local inns and public houses Moulden's Brewery was established to the rear of 115 -117 High Street. The Old Castle Inn (Nat West bank) is famous locally for its publican, Mr Henry Trigg, who on his death in 1724 demanded that his coffin was laid to rest within a 17th century barn to the rear (Trigg's Barn).

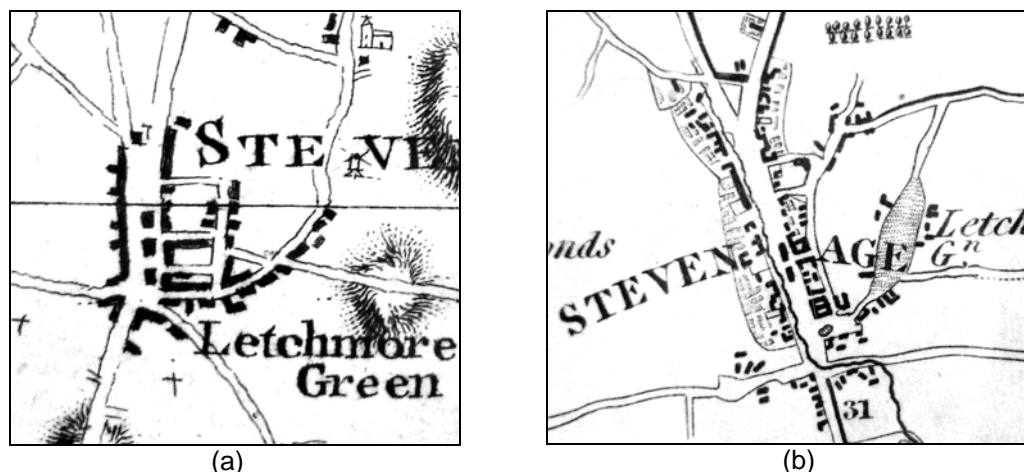


Figure 4. Two early maps of Stevenage Old Town; in 1766 by Dury and Andrews (a), in 1820 by Bryant (b)

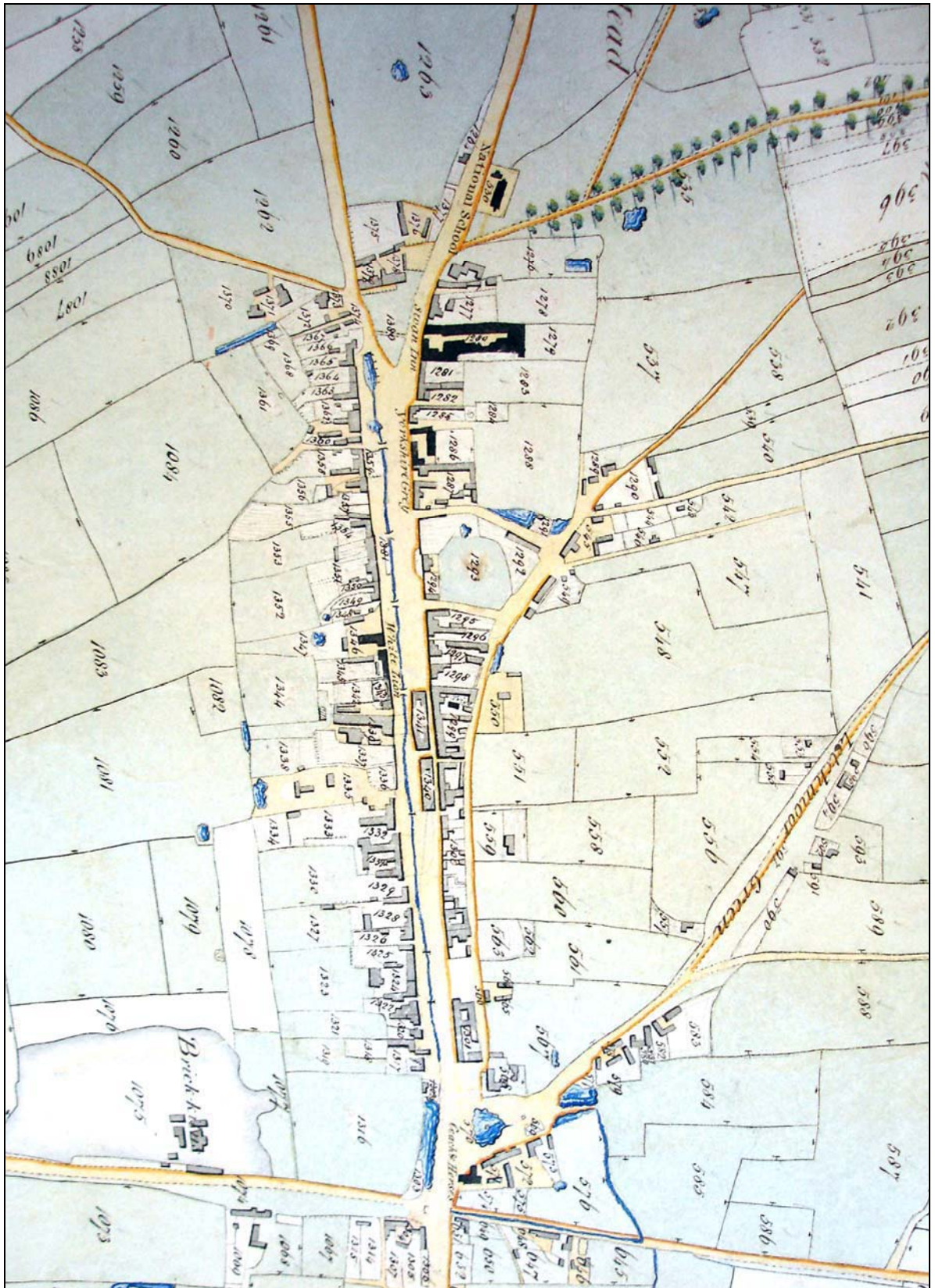


Figure 5. Extract from the 1834 Tithe Map of Stevenage (HALS)

- 5.8 By the 18th century, Stevenage had become a well-established town and was known for its cattle market, probably held near to Middle Row. At the south end there were ponds and fields where cattle could rest while being driven to London, bringing more trade to the inns.
- 5.9 During the 18th and 19th centuries a system of road tolls was introduced. In 1663 the Great North Road was the first turnpike road to be designated and in 1720 the Stevenage to Biggleswade Trust took over the organisation of repairs and toll collection. Outside The Coach and Horses Public House a tollgate was built, and members of the Trust held meetings at The Yorkshire Grey.
- 5.10 In 1756 a long established footpath leading from Bury Mead to the parish church of St. Nicholas, Rectory Lane, was partly planted with lime and horse chestnut trees by Nicholas Cholwell, the rector. In 1857 John Bailey-Denton funded the planting of further trees and it was completed in 1935 for the Silver Jubilee of King George V. The south-western end of this Avenue lies within the Old Town conservation area; The Avenue was almost completely re-planted in 1989 following the 1987 storms.
- 5.11 Further development occurred along Back Lane / Church Lane and Letchmore Road, towards Letchmore Green. The oldest remaining buildings on the High Street stand near Bowling Green and on the west side of the High Street. Fewer older buildings remain on the east side of the High Street due to a number of fires in the 19th century. In July 1807 there was a major fire, it burnt a number of houses southwards to Middle Row but was stopped by the deliberate demolition of three cottages. Unfortunately the wind then changed direction and the fire burnt down the almshouses on Church Lane. These had been built by Reverend Stephen Hellard in the 16th century but were re-built after the fire. A fire engine house was built adjoining the almshouses in 1835; it was later converted into the town's bath house.



Figure 6. Middle Row and the High Street, c1900 (Madgin 2001)

- 5.12 By the late 19th century, the Old Town prosperity of the 17th and 18th centuries was affected by the construction of the railway in 1850 west of the town. Stagecoaches no longer passed through the centre of the old town which led to the closure of some inns and public houses. However the population of Stevenage increased and shops and offices thrived, the first Stevenage Post Office opened in the High Street at no. 63. Industries such as maltings, breweries, brick kilns, lime kilns and saw mills were well established within and around the town. In addition, the opening of the ESA factory in 1883 to the west brought new employment to Stevenage and

prosperity back into the town. Although the parish church of St Nicholas stood north of the town, the Church of the Holy Trinity was constructed in 1861 at the south end of the High Street. It was built by Arthur Blomfield, nephew of Canon Blomfield (Stevenage Rector and son of the Bishop of London) on the site of a former pond (Fig. 7).

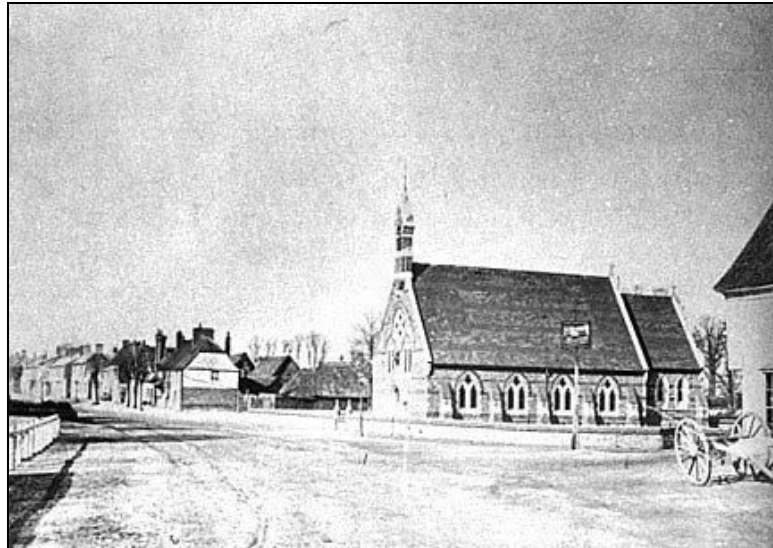


Figure 7. Holy Trinity Church at the south end of the High Street c1900 (Ashby 2002)

- 5.13 Along Church Lane at its north end a group of cottages was built by Edward Vincent Methold, a Stevenage builder and local historian (Fig. 10). They bear his initials, 'EVM', and the date 1895. South of these, a fire engine house and almshouses were constructed. Church Lane continued to provide access to fields, meadows, animal pounds and small holdings east of the High Street, it was also known as Dead Lane / Dead Land. The workhouse on the corner of Letchmore Road (2 Letchmore Road) closed in 1835 and was later rented by Stevenage Gas and Coke Company as offices and accommodation.

1900 – present day

- 5.14 Along the High Street in the town, the Cromwell Hotel obtained a license and opened in the early 1930s (Fig. 8). Although probably built in the 18th century and altered in the 19th century, it comprises two houses. Expansion at the edges of the town slowed down in the early to mid 20th century until the advent of the 1946 New Towns Act. Stevenage was designated as the first New Town, which included demolition of some buildings to the east of the Old Town and the construction of a neighbourhood. The first building of new town development was Stony Hall, Sish Lane a seven-storey block of flats designed by Yorke, Rosenberg & Mardall in 1952 with a planted area and a number of four-storey flats. The year before they had also designed Barclay School located at the north end of the High Street to the east near the allotments. Some late 20th century development has occurred within the conservation area including office blocks located to the rear of the High Street properties and fronting on to Primett Road. Modern housing has been built to the rear of The Grange (Olde Swann Court); Warren Court and Ireton Court were built to the rear of properties on the west side of the High Street. A new development, Vincent Place is currently under construction on the corner of Trinity Road and High Street, part of which is within the conservation area.



Figure 8. Cromwell Hotel 1955 (Ashby, 2002)

The archaeological significance and potential of the area

- 5.15 Human activity has been recorded in and around Stevenage since prehistory. Of the 200 sites that currently appear on the Historic Environment Record for Stevenage, 44 are sited within the Old Town Conservation Area. These records include listed and unlisted buildings / structures and sites of historic structures.
- 5.16 There are two scheduled monuments in the conservation area; Thomas Alleyne's School (The Old Grammar School) and the Old Malthouse and Kiln at Thomas Alleyne's School, High Street; these are also grade II listed buildings.
- 5.17 Some archaeological investigation has taken place within the old town area prior to development;
- 6/6a High Street; monitoring of ground works for rear extension and car park
 - Cromwell Hotel, 25 High Street; 2 trenches were excavated ahead of proposed extension, they revealed no archaeological features
 - 33 High Street; archaeological assessment and trench excavated to rear of existing building in advance of an extension. Recorded two undated post holes and part of a brick foundation relating to an earlier building on the site
 - Land to rear 12 – 16 High Street; monitoring recorded only modern activity
 - 134 – 140 High Street, no archaeological activity recorded
- 5.18 Much of Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area falls within a designated 'Area of Archaeological Significance' (Stevenage District Plan, 2004). There is potential for further archaeological sites to be found in relation to the development of the High Street, its buildings, stream beds and pond features.



The Grange, early 20th century (Ashby, 2002)



The Grange seen from a similar position, 2008

Figure 9. Views of The Grange



Church Lane in 1914 (Ashby, 2004)



Church Lane seen from a similar position, 2008

Figure 10. Views of Church Lane



North end of Bowling Green, c1900 (Ashby 2004)



North end of Bowling Green, 2008

Figure 11. Views of Bowling Green



High Street, c. 1950 (Ashby, 1995)



Similar view of the High Street, 2008

Figure 12. Views of the High Street



Middle Row, c. 1900 (Ashby, 1995)



Middle Row in 2008

Figure 13. Views of Middle Row



South end of the High Street c1945 (Appleton, 1993)



South end of the High Street, 2008

Figure 14. View of the south end of the High Street looking north

6.0 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

The character and interrelationship of spaces within the area

6.1 The Old Town Conservation Area has retained much of its medieval layout and road network although new roads have been introduced. The linear High Street and the village green (Bowling Green) have both survived.

6.2 The High Street is wide along its entire length and comprises mostly adjoining properties of 2 or 2 ½ storeys which line each side along the street frontage. Towards the north end the High Street widens with the cluster of shops along Middle Row and Baker Street (the location of the original market) projecting out into the street; it widens out further when it reaches the Bowling Green. There are small gaps between a few of the properties leading to rear plots although most rear plots are only accessible from the rear. A few roads and alleys link the High Street to Church Lane and Primett Road. The busy gyratory system currently isolates Bowling Green from the rest of the High Street. To the north-west of the Bowling Green is the large site covered by the Thomas Alleyne School including a playing field. To the north of this lies Bury Mead and The Avenue, an ancient footpath linking the High Street to the Church of St Nicholas and The Old Bury, Rectory Lane. On the east side of the conservation area is Church Lane and the cluster of houses fronting onto the junction with Walkern Road. At the southern end of the conservation area development is less dense and includes two churches, large modern office and residential developments and substantial semi-detached Victorian villas set back from the road. The cricket ground and King George V Millennium Garden are on the east side of Ditchmore Lane.

Focal point

6.3 Due to the size of the conservation area there are several focal points along its length.

- Towards the north end, the Bowling Green and War Memorial form a key space and focal point
- Both ends of Middle Row are a focal point within the High Street
- Holy Trinity church and the Methodist Church are focal points at the Letchmore Road / Sish Lane end of the conservation area

Landmark Buildings

6.4 Within the conservation area are a number of landmark buildings dating to different periods (Fig. 15). These are visually important structures that make a statement, form a full stop at the beginning or end of a view, hold an important corner position, can be seen at a distance or stand above the general roofline of the surrounding buildings. These landmark buildings are:

- Holy Trinity Church, High Street
- The Coach and Horses Public House, High Street
- Methodist Church, High Street
- 2 Letchmore Road
- The Grange, High Street
- 3 High Street
- 61 and 63 High Street
- Vincent Place, High Street
- 14 Walkern Road
- Bayley House, corner of Sish Lane and Ditchmore Lane
- Malthouse and kiln at Alleyne's School



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)



(g)



(h)

Figure 15. Landmark buildings within Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area; Holy Trinity Church (a), The Coach & Horses PH (b), Methodist Church (c), 2 Letchmore Road (d), The Grange (e), 3 High Street (f), Vincent Place (g), 63 High Street (h)

Open spaces

6.5 There are a number of important open spaces within Stevenage Old Town conservation area. These are:

- Bury Mead including The Avenue
- Bowling Green
- Cricket ground
- King George V Millennium Garden
- Playing field at the Thomas Alleyne School

All these areas will be discussed in greater detail in section 7, character analysis.

Key views and vistas

6.6 Within the Old Town conservation area are several important views or vistas which relate to its historic development and the surrounding topography (Fig. 16), these are;

- Distant views of the spire of the Church of St Nicholas, Rectory Lane from Bury Mead
- Views along The Avenue
- Views of the Bowling Green and the housing surrounding the Green
- Views along the High Street and within Middle Row / Baker Street



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Figure 16. Key views and vistas; towards the spire of St Nicholas church, Rectory Lane (a), along The Avenue (b), on to Bowling Green (c), along Middle Row (d)

7.0 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Character zones

- 7.1 The Old Town conservation area is based around the historic High Street which has developed since at least the 13th century. There are five distinct zones within the conservation area; each zone has a different character and appearance that relates to its past and present functions, the design of the street layout and its buildings. These zones are shown on the accompanying maps and have been analysed separately. Observations of the plan form, uses, style, materials, and the quality and contribution of the buildings are described for each character zone along with green spaces, trees and hedgerows that together form the character of each zone. Negative factors such as damage, intrusion, gap sites and neutral areas are also identified for each. Some buildings are listed / described as a group, rather than individually. Where buildings are included within a joint listing / description they are indicated separately on the relevant character analysis map (Figs. 20, 27, 33, 39 and 44).



Figure 17. Views of Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area

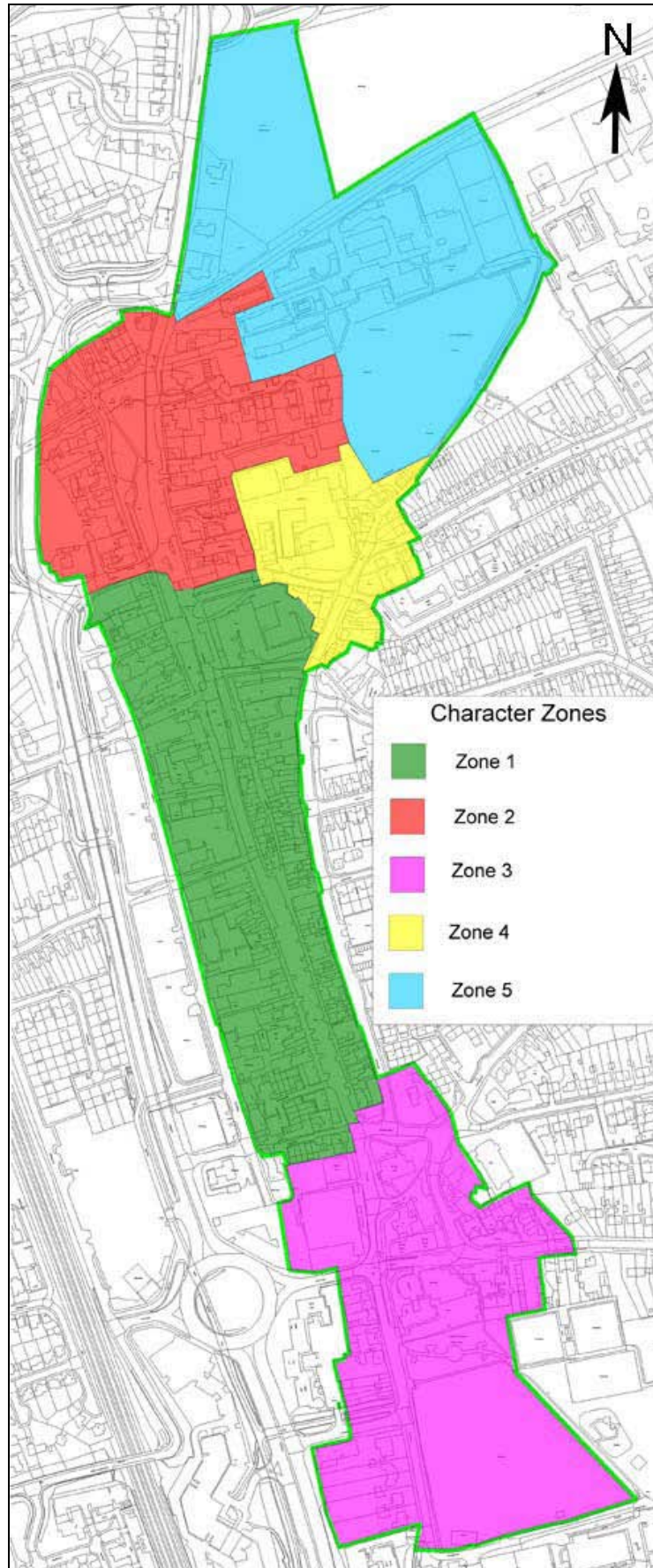


Figure 18. Character Zones within the Old Town Conservation Area

Character Zone 1: High Street (central)

- 7.2 Character zone 1 comprises the core of the linear High Street. Most buildings face the wide High Street and most stand on the street frontage; others front Church Lane and Primett Road. Plot widths along the High Street form a regular, dense pattern, most properties are attached and form a continuous row – this has developed from the medieval layout of the town with long, narrow burgage plots established either side of the main road. Rear plots are reached from doorways to the rear of the property or from a small passage to the side of the property. A number of public houses have retained their carriage entrances and rear outbuildings. The rear plots on the east side of the High Street, backing on to Church Lane have retained a number of their outbuildings, mostly 19th and early 20th century structures, many of which add to the character of these rear plots. The High Street is so wide that it allows for car parking on either side of the road along much of its length. Primett Road runs parallel to the High Street on its west side. Buildings at the rear of the High Street facing onto Primett Road are generally offices and commercial premises with some residential development at Howarde Court and Ireton Court; these are included within the conservation area but Primett Road itself is not.
- 7.3 Character zone 1 has a predominantly commercial use; offices, shops, restaurants, public houses, cafes, estate agents, banks and a supermarket. There is some residential use of flats above the shops. The High Street is generally well-maintained; a recent enhancement scheme has involved the addition of street-lighting and street furniture.

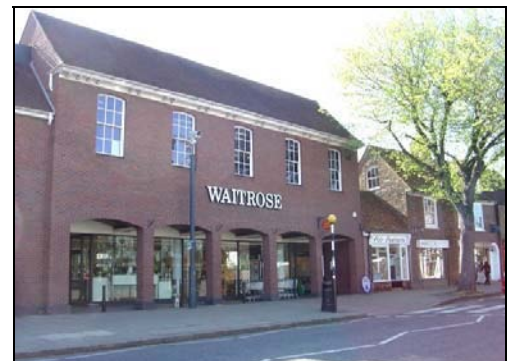


Figure 19. Character Zone 1: views of the High Street / Middle Row / Baker Street

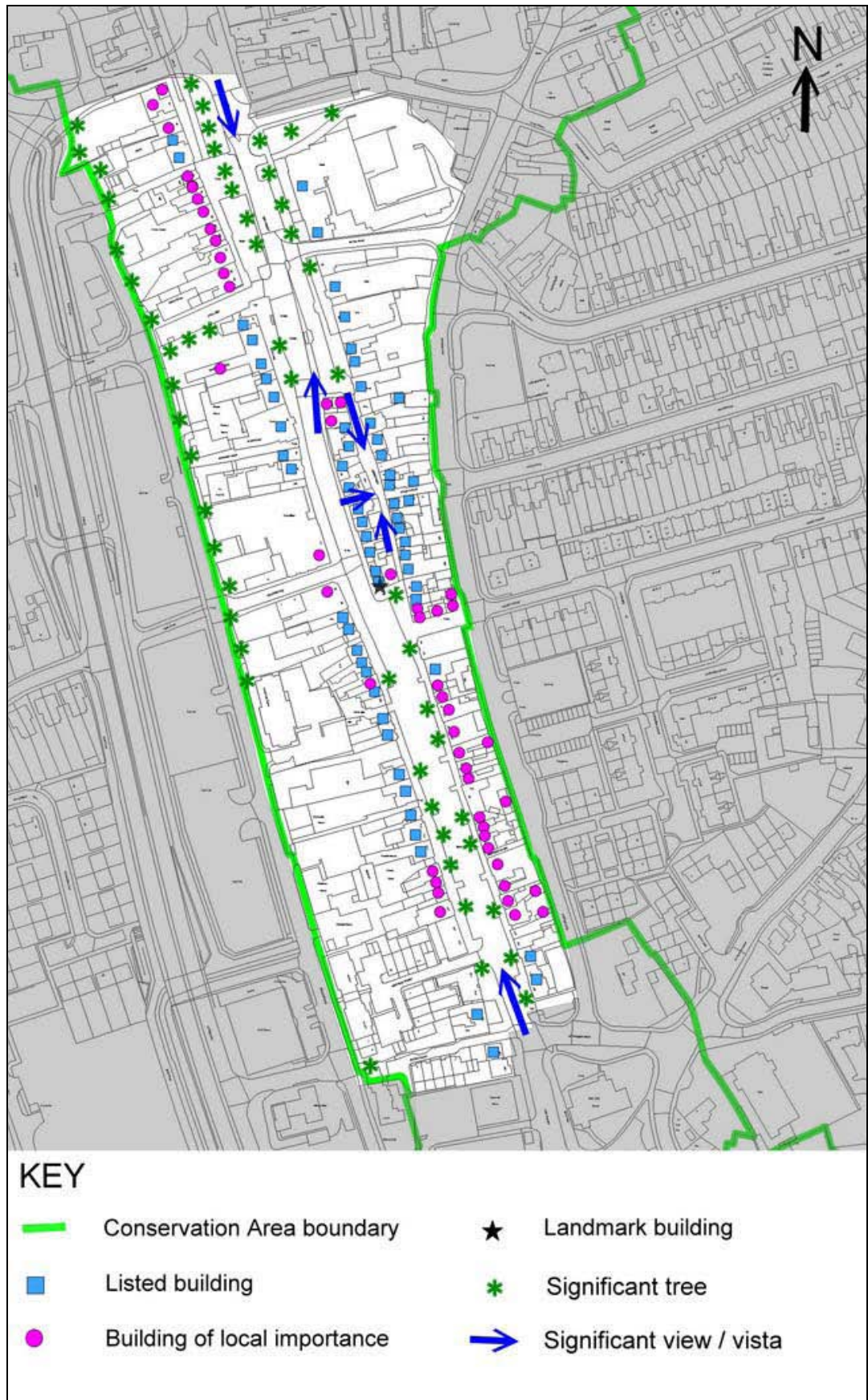


Figure 20. Character zone 1; character analysis map

Architectural and historic qualities of the buildings and their contribution to the area

- 7.4 This central core of the conservation area contains a large number of historically and architecturally important buildings. The appearance of the buildings in character zone 1 is mixed and relates to their period of construction and original function however most buildings are of two storeys and constructed in brick or timber frame with brick / plaster infill or render. The buildings would appear to date to the 18th and early 19th century which relates to Stevenage's importance as a major coaching stop at this time. A number of buildings are actually older, they were re-fronted with red brick in the 18th or early 19th century to conceal their timber framed origins; good examples of these are 40 – 42, 106 and 136 High Street. 68 High Street (Barclays Bank) was built of high quality red brick in the late 17th or early 18th century as a private residence; this clearly illustrates the wealth of the town at this time. 66 High Street (Wye Lodge) stands out as a grey brick property within a High Street of red brick buildings. Nos. 94 – 98 High Street is listed grade II* denoting their particular importance, the building is a 16th century hall house with later alterations.
- 7.5 The Cromwell Hotel is a notable building within character zone 1 due to its large size and architectural detailing. There remain a number of inns and public houses, some with rear yards and outbuildings, which are historically important features within the High Street, for example The Red Lion Inn, The White Lion Inn and The Marquis of Lorne Public House. No 79 High Street was formerly The Unicorn Public House.
- 7.6 The group of buildings associated with Middle Row / Baker Street (the old market area) project out into the High Street as it widens out and, as such, they stand out; particularly noticeable is the timbered 63 High Street (Putterills Estate Agents) on the south-western corner. Baker Street and Middle Row are narrow pedestrianised streets and make an interesting contrast to the wide High Street.
- 7.7 Nos 79 to 117 High Street (east side) are a row of predominantly 19th century buildings and are considered to be local buildings of importance. 106 High Street stands out as an attractive 3-storey red brick property with a symmetrical façade and a central door with pedimented doorcase. Elmes Arcade is also noticeable as a 3-storey 1930s building within a High Street which has the appearance of a predominantly 18th and 19th century market town; it is an interesting example of early to mid 20th century infill development.
- 7.8 Some modern housing developments have been constructed to the rear of the High Street, mostly on the west side such as Ireton Court.
- 7.9 There are 87 listed buildings within Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area, of these, 48 are within character zone 1;
- 2, 4 and 6 Baker Street. Grade II. 1/19. Listed 1948
 - 7 Baker Street. Grade II. 1/20. Listed 1948
 - 25 (Cromwell Hotel) High Street. Grade II. 1/14. Listed 1976
 - 27 High Street. Grade II. 1/89. Listed 1976
 - 31 High Street. Grade II. 1/16. Listed 1948
 - 33 High Street. Grade II. 1/90. Listed 1976
 - 35 and 35A High Street. Grade II. 1/91. Listed 1976
 - 37 High Street. Grade II. 1/17. Listed 1948
 - 47 High Street. Grade II. 1/92. Listed 1976
 - 49 and 51 High Street. Grade II. 1/18. Listed 1976

- 53, 55, 57 and 59 High Street. Grade II. 1/93. Listed 1976
- 61 and 63 High Street. Grade II. 1/94. Listed 1976
- 67 and 69 High Street. Grade II. 1/95. Listed 1976
- 79 High Street. Grade II. 1/96. Listed 1976
- 123 and 125 High Street. Grade II. 3/21. Listed 1948
- 127 and 129 High Street. Grade II. 3/103. Listed 1948
- Trigg's Barn High Street. Grade II. 733/0/10016. Listed 2003
- 40 and 42 High Street. Grade II. 1/46. Listed 1976
- 60 (The White Lion Inn) High Street. Grade II. 1/45. Listed 1948
- 62 High Street. Grade II. 1/44. Listed 1976
- 64 High Street. Grade II. 1/43. Listed 1948
- 66 High Street. Grade II. 1/42. Listed 1948
- 68 High Street. Grade II. 1/41. Listed 1948
- 70 and 72 High Street. Grade II. 1/39. Listed 1948
- 72A High Street. Grade II. 1/40. Listed 1976
- 80 (The Red Lion Inn) High Street. Grade II. 1/38. Listed 1948
- 82 High Street. Grade II. 1/37. Listed 1948
- 84 and 84A High Street. Grade II. 1/36. Listed 1948
- 86, 86A and 88 High Street. Grade II. 1/35. Listed 1948
- 92 and 92A High Street. Grade II. 1/33. Listed 1976
- 94, 96 and 98 High Street. Grade II*. 1/32. Listed 1948
- 104 High Street. Grade II. 1/119. Listed 1976
- 106 High Street. Grade II. 1/31. Listed 1948
- 108 High Street. Grade II. 1/120. Listed 1976
- 110 and 112 High Street. Grade II. 3/30. Listed 1976
- 114 High Street. Grade II. 3/121. Listed 1976
- 132 (Marquis of Lorne Public House) High Street. Grade II. 3/122. Listed 1976
- 136 High Street. Grade II. 3/123. Listed 1976
- 1 and 3 Middle Row. Grade II. 1/128. Listed 1976
- 5 Middle Row. Grade II. 1/129. Listed 1948
- 7 and 9 Middle Row. Grade II. 1/130. Listed 1948
- 9A Middle Row. Grade II. 1/131. Listed 1976
- 11 Middle Row. Grade II. 1/13A. Listed 1948
- 13 Middle Row. Grade II. 1/133. Listed 1976
- 15 and 17 Middle Row. Grade II. 1/134. Listed 1976
- 23 and 25 (Watton Cottage) Middle Row. Grade II. 1/135. Listed 1976
- 2 Middle Row. Grade II. 1/136. Listed 1976
- 4 Middle Row. Grade II. 1/137. Listed 1976



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Figure 21. Examples of the variety of listed buildings within character zone 1; Trigg's Barn (a), The Marquis of Lorne Public House (b), 68 High Street (c), 47, 49 & 51 High Street (d)

7.10 Unlisted buildings of importance to the conservation area are indicated on the character analysis map forming part of this report (Fig. 20) and in Figure 22, these are:

- 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 crittal 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.
- 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.

7.11 Some of the buildings referred to above have appeared in the Urban Characterisation Study and in the Stevenage Extensive Urban Survey Report (Thompson 2002). Other buildings have been added during this review. This list is not intended to be an exhaustive record of buildings located in the conservation area.



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)



(g)



(h)

Figure 22. Character Zone 1; Examples of buildings of local importance. 39 & 41 High Street (a), Elmes Arcade (b), 93 – 101 (odd) High Street (c), building to rear 115 High Street (d), 27 Church Lane (e), building to rear 42 High Street (f), 76 & 78 High Street (g), 44 & 46 High Street (h)

Prevalent and traditional building materials

7.12 Most of the properties in character zone 1 are two storey (a few are three storey, some rear outbuildings are single storey); with gabled roofs running parallel with the High Street. A number of different building materials have been used, but the most common are:

- *Walls:* Red / yellow brick – rendered / painted; timber frame, re-fronted in red brick, and / or plastered / rendered. Timber weatherboard to some rear outbuildings.
- *Roofs:* old red clay tile or slate; small gabled attic dormers.
- *Windows:* recessed timber sash windows (various types; 6-over-6, 1-over-1) of the Georgian / Victorian style with gauged brick headers, keystones, projecting sills. Casement windows, timber, metal. Some uPVC replacement windows have been inserted, both sash and casement style.
- *Doors:* timber doors with full or part glass panels, fanlights, hoods or doorcases.
- *Chimney stacks:* brick, to match the brick colour of the property, projecting above roofline with chimney pots. Some of the older properties have very large red brick stacks; they are notable features within the streetscape.
- *Shop fronts:* Timber. Ground floor, spanning the width of the property with stall riser, pilaster, console, central or side doorway with a fascia board above. Some awnings.

7.13 The public realm along the High Street is generally attractive and well-maintained. Traditional street furniture helps to maintain the historic character of the High Street in the form of black painted lampposts, black and gold bollards, planters, rubbish bins and cycle bays. The pavements are paved / block paved.



Figure 23. Paved / block paved pavements and black painted bollards on the High Street

Contribution made to the character of the area by green spaces

- 7.14 There are little or no green spaces within character zone 1, even within rear plots. A number of trees and planters are sited along either side of the High Street helping to enhance its character and appearance.

Negative factors

Loss of traditional architectural features

- 7.15 A number of original timber sash and casement windows have been replaced in some properties on the High Street with plastic uPVC or aluminium framed equivalents (Fig. 24b). Historic doors and door furniture have also been lost.
- 7.16 Although many older style shop fronts have been retained, modern shop fronts have been inserted into older properties that are not in keeping with the character of the building or the historic High Street. When shop fronts are to be replaced the use of appropriate design and materials should be given the highest consideration.
- 7.17 A number of timber windows at first floor and attic / dormer levels are rotting and in poor condition due to lack of maintenance.
- 7.18 A steel roller shutter is sited on the side elevation of the Taj Mahal restaurant, 70 High Street (a grade II listed building). This type of shutter detracts from the character of the listed building and does not enhance the appearance of the conservation area. Timber doors would have been more appropriate in this case.

Buildings that make a negative impact

- 7.19 No. 12 Middle Row, a small single storey 19th century building is boarded up and presumably vacant or used as a store; its gutters are full of moss. In its present state it does not enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area (Fig. 24a).



(a)



(b)

Figure 24. Character zone 1, negative factors; vacant / boarded up building - 12 Middle Row (a), inappropriate uPVC replacement window on 17 High Street, a listed building (b)

Shop signage

- 7.20 Shop signage is, on occasion, cluttered and can detract from the high architectural quality of the conservation area.



Figure 25. Character zone 1; good examples of retained / traditional shop fronts

The existence of neutral areas or buildings

- 7.21 Areas or buildings that neither enhance nor detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area, but might have potential for enhancement are:

- 29 High Street, a modern property on the corner of Basils Road and fronting on to the High Street.
- Tyre Pros Centre, 100 High Street. Set to the rear of the High Street the existing large pre-fabricated building with a low pitched roof does not sit easily within the High Street, fortunately its location minimises its impact on the conservation area.

Character Zone 2: Bowling Green

- 7.21 Character Zone 2 comprises the triangular Bowling Green and the properties fronting on to it on all three sides; it also includes properties contained within the Lytton Way gyratory system. The older buildings now forming part of the Thomas Alleyne school site and fronting onto the High Street are included within this character zone because of their relationship with the High Street; the modern buildings forming the rest of Thomas Alleyne school fall within character zone 5. The Bowling Green is a focal point and key space within the conservation area.
- 7.22 Character zone 2 has a mixed use; commercial with some residential building and also educational use (Thomas Alleyne School).



Figure 26. Character zone 2; views of and around the Bowling Green

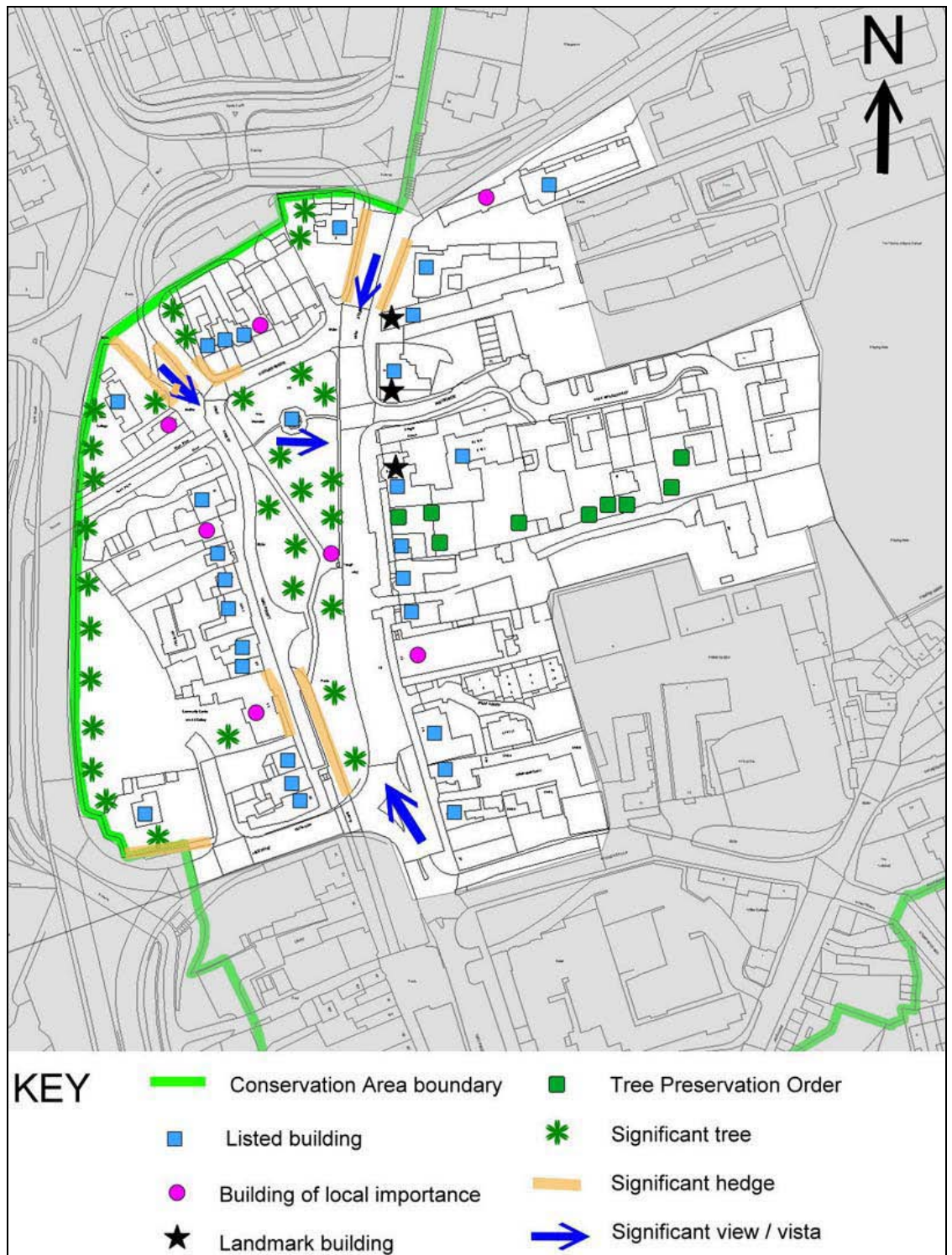


Figure 27. Character zone 2; character analysis map

Architectural and historic qualities of the buildings and their contribution to the area

- 7.23 The appearance of the buildings in Character Zone 2 is mixed and relates to their period of construction, however most buildings are two storey dwellings and constructed in brick / timber frame. The Bowling Green developed as a triangle of land at the point where the road to Hitchin divided off from the Great North Road; it is possible that the annual Stevenage fair would have been held on the Green. The Bowling Green contains a listed war memorial and also a water trough and drinking fountain, these features all add interest to the Green.
- 7.24 The properties on the east side of the High Street and facing the Bowling Green are, in general larger and occupy substantial plots. Of note is The Grange, a grade II* listed building, formerly The Swann Inn and one of the largest inns in Hertfordshire, the author Samuel Peyps apparently stayed at The Swann and played bowls on the Bowling Green. Olde Swann Court is a modern housing development to the rear of The Grange and includes four large detached houses. 3 High Street is another large old timber frame property fronting the High Street; it has a steeply pitched clay tile roof and dormers. The house is renowned for being where Philip Vincent, creator of the Vincent motorbike lived and worked from 1928 to 1955, part of the Vincent factory was the adjacent timber frame old malt house and kiln (it now forms part of the Thomas Alleyne School) to the north.
- 7.25 Character zone 2 includes two historic public houses although they have both unfortunately been re-named or changed use; The Yorkshire Grey Inn, now an 'Ask' restaurant, has been established since at least the early 19th century. The Two Diamonds Public House is now a wine bar, named '2 dry'; it occupies a red brick building that was rebuilt after the disastrous fire of 1807.
- 7.26 Smaller properties run along the north and west sides of the Bowling Green, the majority of which are statutory listed or are considered to be of local importance. 18 High Street stands out as part of the property has its gable end and red brick chimney stack fronting on to the Bowling Green. The properties along the north side of the green are in residential use whereas the properties along the west side of the green are in commercial use, mainly as offices, with some residential accommodation at first floor levels.
- 7.27 There are 87 listed buildings within Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area; of these, 26 are within character zone 2:
- 1 Bowling Green. Grade II. 2/49. Listed 1976
 - 2 Bowling Green. Grade II. 2/75. Listed 1976
 - 3 Bowling Green. Grade II. 2/50. Listed 1948
 - 8 Bowling Green. Grade II. 2/72. Listed 1976
 - War Memorial Bowling Green. Grade II. 2/51. Listed 1948
 - Alleyne's School (The Old Grammar School) High Street. Grade II. 2/4. Listed 1948
 - 1 High Street. Grade II. 2/5. Listed 1948
 - Old Malthouse and Kiln at Alleyne's School High Street. Grade II. 2/6. Listed 1948
 - 3 High Street. Grade II. 2/7. Listed 1948
 - 5 (The Grange) High Street. Grade II*. 1/8. Listed 1948
 - 7 High Street. Grade II. 1/87. Listed 1976
 - 9 and 11 High Street. Grade II. 1/88. Listed 1976
 - 15 (The Yorkshire Grey Inn) High Street. Grade II. 1/9. Listed 1948

- 17 High Street. Grade II. 1/51. Listed 1973
- 19 (The Two Diamonds Public House) High Street. Grade II. 1/10. Listed 1976
- The Old Cottage High Street. Grade II. 2/105. Listed 1948
- 6 High Street. Grade II. 1/47. Listed 1948
- 10 High Street. Grade II. 1/106. Listed 1976
- 12 High Street. Grade II. 1/107. Listed 1976
- 14 and 16 High Street. Grade II. 1/108. Listed 1976
- 18 High Street. Grade II. 1/109. Listed 1976
- 20 High Street. Grade II. 1/110. Listed 1976
- 26 High Street. Grade II. 1/113. Listed 1980
- 28 and 28A High Street. Grade II. 1/114. Listed 1980
- 30 High Street. Grade II. 1/115. Listed 1980
- 2 James Way. Grade II. 1/141. Listed 1976



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)

Figure 28. Listed buildings within Character Zone 2; 3 High Street (a), 26, 28 & 30 High Street (b), 8 Bowling Green (c), The Grange (d), The Yorkshire Grey (e), 1, 2 & 3 Bowling Green (f)

7.28 Buildings of importance to the conservation area are indicated on the conservation area map forming part of this report; these are:

- 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.

7.29 Some of the buildings referred to above have appeared in the Urban Characterisation Study and in the Stevenage Extensive Urban Survey Report (Thompson 2002). Other buildings have been added during this review. This list is not intended to be exhaustive record of buildings located in the conservation area. The location of both listed buildings and those of local importance are marked on the character analysis map (Fig. 27).



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Figure 29. Character zone 2, buildings of importance. Victorian school building at the Thomas Alleyne school (a), stone trough on the Green (b), drinking fountain on the Green (c), Springfield House (d)

Prevalent and traditional building materials

- 7.30 Most of the houses in character zone 2 are of two or 2 ½ storey with gabled roofs running parallel with the High Street / Bowling Green. There are many different types of building materials, but the most common are:

Walls: Red brick is the prevalent building material; this often encases an earlier timber frame. Rendered / plastered timber frame or brick is also common.

Roofs: old red clay tile or slate; small gabled attic dormers.

Windows: timber sash windows (various types; 6-over-6) of the Georgian / Victorian style with gauged brick headers, keystones, projecting sills. Casement windows, timber, metal. Some uPVC replacement windows, both sash and casement style.

Doors: timber doors with full or part glass panels, fanlights, hoods or doorcases.

Chimney stacks: brick, to match the brick colour of the property, projecting above roofline with chimney pots. Some of the older properties have very large red brick stacks, they are notable features within the streetscape.

Shop fronts: ground floor, spanning the width of the property with stall riser, pilaster, console, central or side doorway with a fascia board above.

Contribution made to the character of the area by green spaces

- 7.31 The Bowling Green is a large grassed area with trees; it is a focal point and key space within the conservation area and contributes greatly to the visual appearance and character of the northern end of the High Street. Character zone 2 is more open and green in appearance in comparison with the central High Street area (character zone 1). Some of the residential properties facing on to the Bowling Green have retained their small front garden; other properties such as 2 James Way, The Old Cottage and 8 Bowling Green have larger front and rear gardens.

- 7.32 There is one site with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) within Character Zone 2; The Grange (TPO 61). The Tree Preservation Order covers a number of trees within the site and includes land to the side and rear now occupied by Old Swann Court. The courtyard garden to the rear of The Grange forms an attractive setting to this historically and architecturally important building.

Negative Factors

Loss of traditional architectural features

- 7.33 Some replacement of timber sash and casement windows with uPVC alternatives has occurred.

Buildings at risk

- 7.34 The Old Malthouse and Kiln at Alleyne's School is included within the Heritage at Risk Register 2008 (English Heritage) due to its poor structural condition; it is currently under scaffold pending implementation of repairs (Fig. 30a).
- 7.35 Some of the glass window panes to 1 High Street (which also forms part of the Thomas Alleyne School site) have been broken. The property also appears vacant or at least it is not in regular use putting it in a vulnerable condition (Fig. 30b).



(a)



(b)

Figure 30. Building at risk: The Old Malthouse and Kiln at Alleyne's School (a); Building in a vulnerable condition: 1 High Street (b)

Gyratory system around the Bowling Green

7.36

The most significant issue that affects the character of the Bowling Green and the northern end of the conservation area in general is the road layout and traffic system into the top of the High Street off North Road / Lytton Way. This road system effectively turns the Bowling Green and housing on its north and west sides into a roundabout (Fig. 31). Most of the traffic using the upper part of the High Street is through traffic routed into the top (one-way) system of the High Street, it includes heavy goods vehicles and is fast moving. The consequences are high noise levels, difficulty for pedestrians and sterilisation of the Green. The Bowling Green has been reduced to an area of 'visual amenity' – pleasant to look at but not pleasant to spend time in.



Figure 31. Heavy traffic on the Lytton Way / High Street gyratory system

Character Zone 3: High Street (south)

- 7.37 Character zone 3 comprises the southern end of the High Street, Ditchmore Lane, the cricket ground (King George V Playing Field), King George V Memorial Garden and the western ends of Sish Lane and Letchmore Road. This area is far more open with a number of roads crossing through it. It contains larger buildings on individual plots and is clearly different in character to the medieval core of the High Street (character zone 1). The area once contained a number of ponds and was used for watering the cattle when they came to Stevenage for market. This zone includes part of the former B & Q site on the corner of Trinity Road and the High Street which is currently undergoing residential redevelopment (Vincent Place).
- 7.38 Character zone 3 has a largely commercial use; most of the properties are used as offices at ground floor level although there is also some residential use, two public houses and two churches.



Figure 32. Views within character zone 3

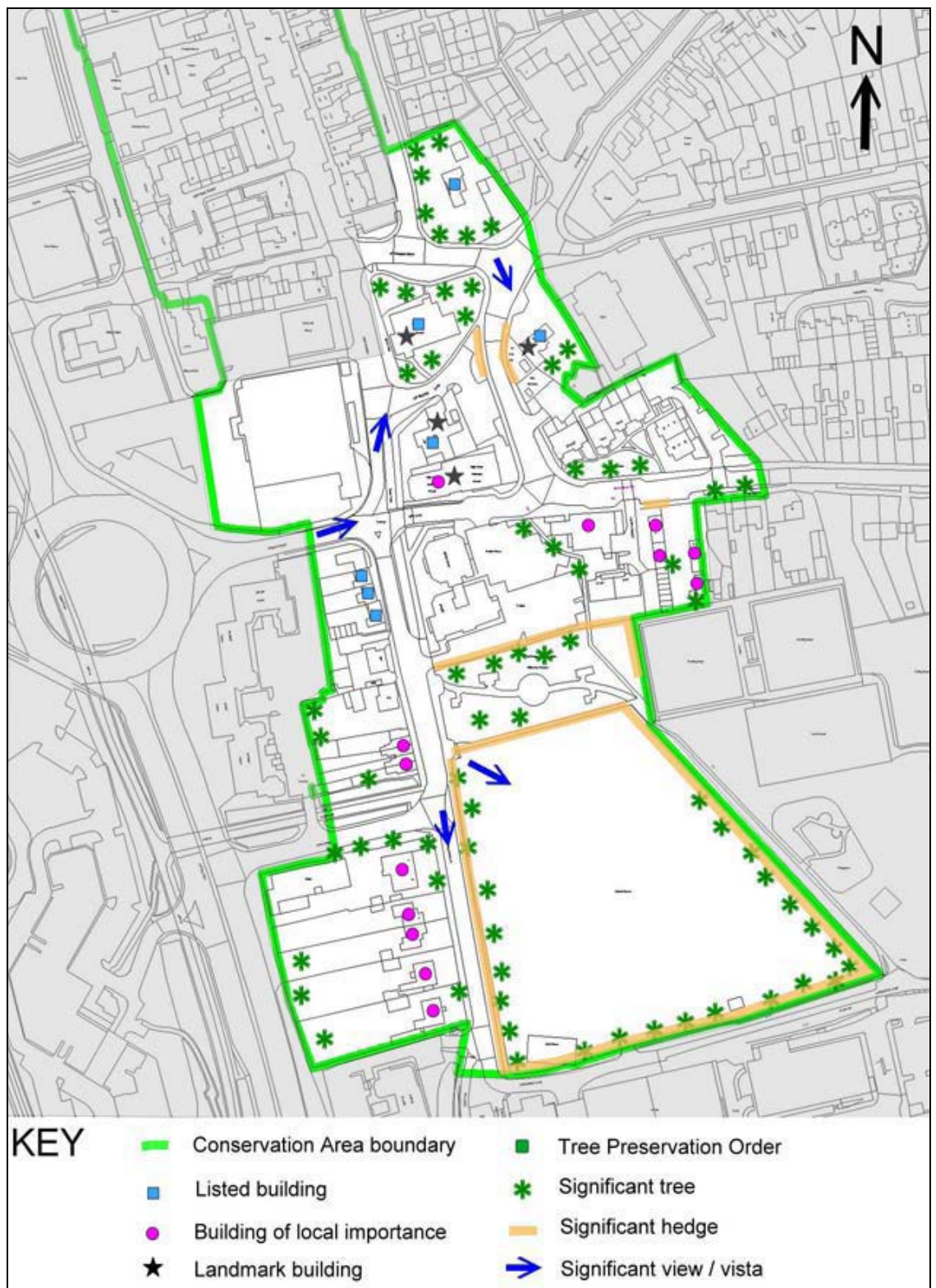


Figure 33. Character zone 3; character analysis map

Architectural and historic qualities of the buildings and their contribution to the area

7.39 Character zone 3 contains buildings dating from the 15th century to the present day. Three of the buildings within character zone 3 are notable due to their age and historic interest, and as such are listed Grade II*. 131 High Street is a late 15th century timber frame 'Wealden' house, 2 Letchmore Road is a late 15th / early 16th century hall house and 154 High Street is an early 16th century house, it has an 18th century frontage but has retained its original crown post roof structure. Further development occurred at the south end of the High Street in the 19th century with the construction of Holy Trinity Church, the Methodist Church and a series of large detached Victorian villas along Ditchmore Lane. The large Victorian villas along the west side of Ditchmore Lane have retained a number of their original features such as detailed brickwork, slate roofs, sash windows and cornicing; they have also retained their gardens. There are some large modern commercial developments such as Bayley House and Surgery on the corner of Sish Lane and Ditchmore Lane.

7.40 There are 87 listed buildings within Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area, of these, 7 are within character zone 3;

- 131 High Street. Grade II*. 3/22. Listed 1948
- Church of The Holy Trinity High Street. Grade B. 3/104. Listed 1976
- 133 (The Coach and Horses Inn) High Street. Grade II. 3/24. Listed 1976
- 154 High Street (4 London Road). Grade II*. 3/68. Listed 1975
- 156 - 8 High Street (6 and 8 London Road). Grade II. 3/69. Listed 1975
- 160 High Street (10b Moss Villa London Road). Grade II. 3/127. Listed 1976
- 2 Letchmore Road. Grade II*. 3/23. Listed 1948



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Figure 34. A selection of the listed buildings with character zone 3. 131 High Street (a), 2 Letchmore Road (b), 154, 156-158 & 160 High Street (c), The Coach and Horses Inn (d)

7.41 Buildings of importance to the conservation area are indicated on the conservation area map forming part of this report; these are:

- 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.
- Stevenage Knitting Company Clothing Factory, Sish Lane
Single storey brick building, plastered with buttresses. Slate gabled roof. Some timber boarded to end. Mixture of timber and UPVC windows. Two doors. 19th century. Attached at west side is a single storey mid 20th century brick structure with a gambrel style roof with a flat top in corrugated iron/asbestos, with a series of windows in the roof. Door and window to west wall.
- 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.

7.42 Some of the buildings referred to above have appeared in the Urban Characterisation Study and in the Stevenage Extensive Urban Survey Report (Thompson 2002). Other buildings have been added during this review. This list is not intended to be exhaustive record of buildings located in the conservation area.



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)

Figure 35. Buildings of importance within character zone 3. Methodist Church (a), 166 – 172 High Street (b), 3 & 4 Ditchmore Lane (c), 5 Ditchmore Lane (d), 6 Ditchmore Lane (e), 8 Sish Lane (f)

Prevalent and traditional building materials

- 7.43 Most of the buildings in character zone 3 are of two storeys with hipped or gabled roofs running parallel with the road. There are many different types of building materials, but the most common are:

Walls: Red / grey brick. Timber frame with brick / plaster infill. Flint / stone dressings (church).

Roofs: old red clay tile or slate; small attic dormers.

Windows: timber sash windows (various types; 6-over-6) of the Victorian style with gauged brick headers, keystones, projecting sills. Casement windows, timber, metal. Some uPVC replacement windows, sash and casement style.

Doors: timber doors with full or part glass panels, fanlights, hoods or doorcases.

Chimney stacks: brick, to match the brick colour of the property, projecting above roofline with chimney pots. The older properties have very large red brick stacks, they are notable features within the streetscape.

Contribution made to the character of the area by green spaces

- 7.44 The cricket ground is an important green open space within this character zone; it is surrounded by hedges and trees and is a much used recreational area. The King George V Playing Fields Millennium Garden was created for residents and visitors to Stevenage. It was designed to reflect the passage of time along the Great North Road and includes gardens from the Roman, Medieval, Tudor, Victorian and Modern periods. Local artist Dennis Heath carved many of the seats provided and the sculpture 'Bird in Hand'.



(a)



(b)

Figure 36. Green spaces within character zone 3; the Cricket Ground (a), King George V Millennium Garden (b)

- 7.45 There are a number of trees bordering the cricket ground, several large trees along Ditchmore Lane and within rear gardens; all help to enhance the character of the area.

Negative Factors

Impact of new development

- 7.46 The new development at Vincent Place includes a new residential block which fronts on to the High Street, it rises up to 3 ½ storey and is a great deal higher than most other High Street properties and has uncharacteristic steeply pitched roofs, increasing its dominance within the street scene (Fig. 37). However, this site is located to the south of the main historic High Street and on a junction which contains other large corner buildings such as Bayley House.



Figure 37. View of the new residential development at Vincent Place (left)

- 7.47 Some of the lamp-posts are taller and modern; they are not so well suited to the character of the area and do not follow the style of lamp post used along the High Street.
- 7.48 The route into the rest of the Old Town via the Sish Lane underpass is visually unappealing. The poor quality of the public realm detracts from the Holy Trinity Church and the Coach and Horses Inn.

Character Zone 4: Church Lane / Walkern Road

- 7.49 Character zone 4 comprises the cluster of houses near the junction of Church Lane and Walkern Road; it also includes the Pond Close Industrial Estate and The Almshouses. This area was not included within character zone 1 (High Street centre) as the properties are mostly residential and do not relate to the pattern of development along the High Street. The northern part of Church Lane becomes a footpath and is included within character zone 5.
- 7.50 The Pond Close Industrial Estate contains a number of modern commercial buildings. Most of the buildings are set to the side and rear of the site and so do not have an immediate impact upon the character of the area although the 3-storey flat roofed brick building (Fig. 38b) does not enhance the character of this part of the conservation area. It is understood the neighbouring site at 11 Walkern Road is currently under redevelopment for housing.



Figure 38. Views within character zone 4.

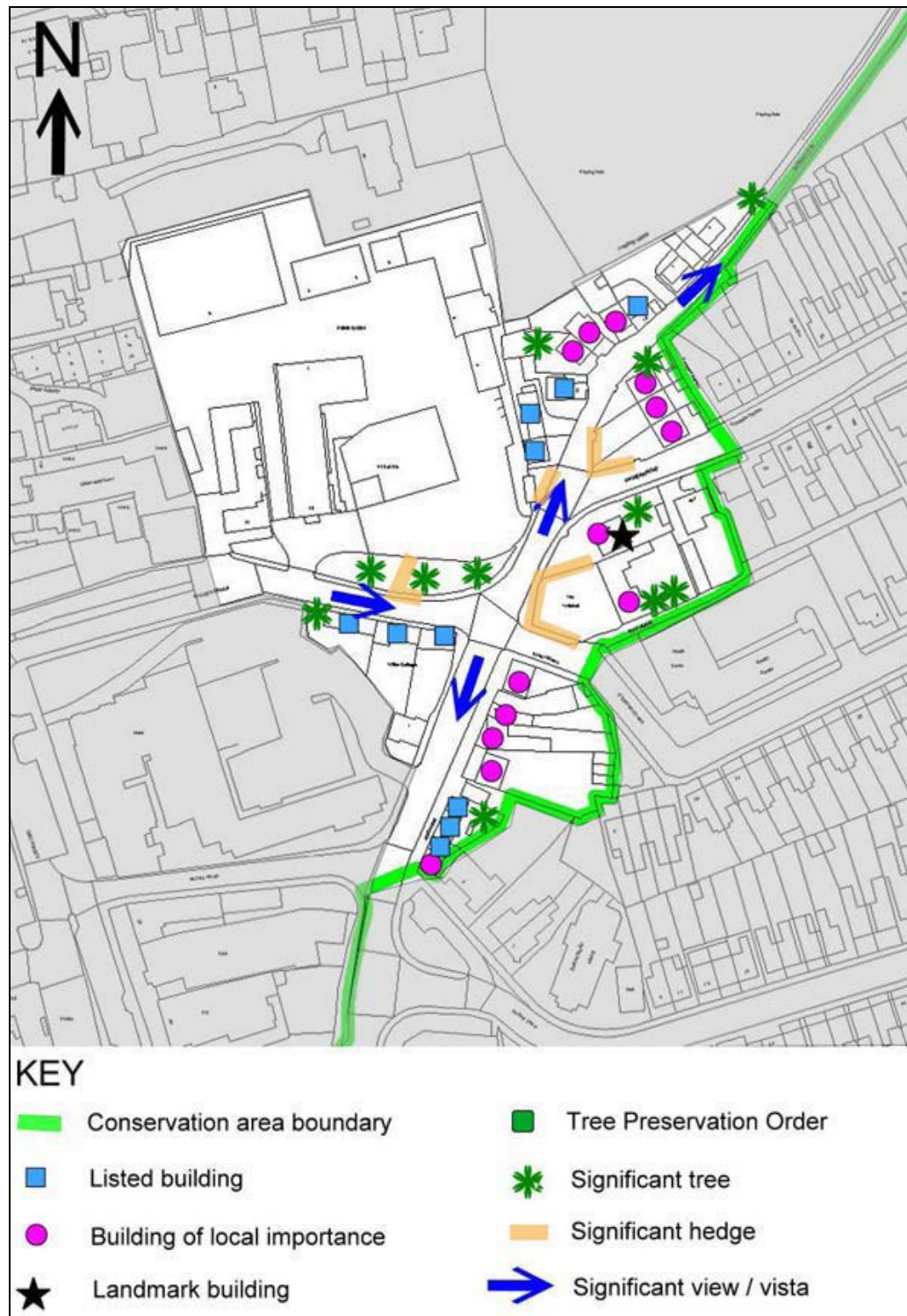


Figure 39. Character zone 4; character analysis map

Architectural and historic qualities of the buildings and their contribution to the area

7.51 The properties within character zone 4 are generally smaller, vernacular cottages dating to the 18th and 19th centuries, commonly single storey with attics or two storeys. The Almshouses on Church Lane were rebuilt in 1809 after the fire of 1807, on the site of and possibly incorporating an earlier structure of the almshouse known as “All Christian Souls House” which was founded in 1501 by Stephen Hellard, Rector of Stevenage. The almshouses have recently been refurbished; the work was funded by Stevenage Borough Council, the Garfield Weston Foundation and Stevenage Consolidated Charities. A few of the houses on Church Lane were constructed by Edward Vincent Methold, a Stevenage builder and local historian; they bear his initials, ‘EVM’, and the date 1895 (13, 15 and 17 Church Lane). 14 Walkern Road stands out as it is in a prominent position on the corner of Walkern Road. This character zone also includes the Pond Close Estate and its 20th century workshop buildings; these contrast in style and design to the High Street buildings and to those on Church Lane.

7.52 There are 87 listed buildings within Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area, of these, 6 are within character zone 4.

- 1 and 3 Church Lane. Grade II. 1/11. Listed 1976
- 11 Church Lane. Grade II. 1/81. Listed 1976
- 19 Church Lane. Grade II. 1/82. Listed 1976
- 8, 10, 12 and 14 The Almshouses, Church Lane. Grade II. 1/13. Listed 1948
- 38 Church Lane. Grade II. 1/83. Listed 1976
- 2 – 12 Walkern Road. Grade II. 1/12. Listed 1976.



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Figure 40. Listed buildings within character zone 4; 2 – 12 Walkern Road (a), 1 & 3 Church Lane (b), The Almshouses, Church Lane (c), 19 Church Lane (d)

7.53 Buildings of importance to the conservation area are indicated on the conservation area map forming part of this report; these are:

- 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).

7.54 Some of the buildings referred to above have appeared in the Urban Characterisation Study and in the Stevenage Extensive Urban Survey Report (Thompson 2002). Other buildings have been added during the 2005 Conservation Area review. This list is not intended to be exhaustive record of buildings located in the conservation area.



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Figure 41. Buildings of local importance within character zone 4. 14 Walkern Road (a), 17 Church Lane (b), 13 & 15 Church Lane (c), 4 & 6 Church Lane (d)

Negative Factors

Building at Risk

- 7.55 11 Church Lane, a grade II listed building, is a long-standing 'Building at Risk'. The property is vacant and remains in very poor condition; its associated small plot is also neglected. The property has recently been purchased and the new owner is sensitively restoring this small historic cottage.



Figure 42. 11 Church Lane, in an 'at risk' condition

Loss of traditional architectural features

- 7.56 A number of the older properties have replaced their timber sash and casement windows with uPVC alternatives.

Neutral areas

Pond Close Industrial Estate

- 7.57 The Pond Close Industrial Estate contains a number of small industrial units and a three storey office block. The office block in particular does not enhance the character of this part of the conservation area. It is understood this site is proposed for future redevelopment.

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

- 7.58 Character zone 5 comprises the north and north-east corner of the conservation area and includes part of the Great North Road, Bury Mead Recreation Ground, The Avenue, the modern school buildings at the Thomas Alleyne School with its associated playing field, and the northern part of Church Lane which becomes a public footpath.
- 7.59 The zone is predominantly green and open in appearance; The Avenue, a public footpath, links the Old Town Conservation Area and the St Nicholas / Rectory Lane Conservation Area together and views of the spire of St Nicholas Church on higher ground can be gained from Bury Mead – associating the original settlement of Stevenage with the ‘old town’.



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)

Figure 43. Views within character zone 5. View down The Avenue with its associated gate piers (a); view of school buildings at Thomas Alleyne School from The Avenue (b); view of Burymead (c); view down the Great North Road (d); view along footpath to rear of the Thomas Alleyne School (e), view across Burymead towards the Thomas Alleyne School (f)

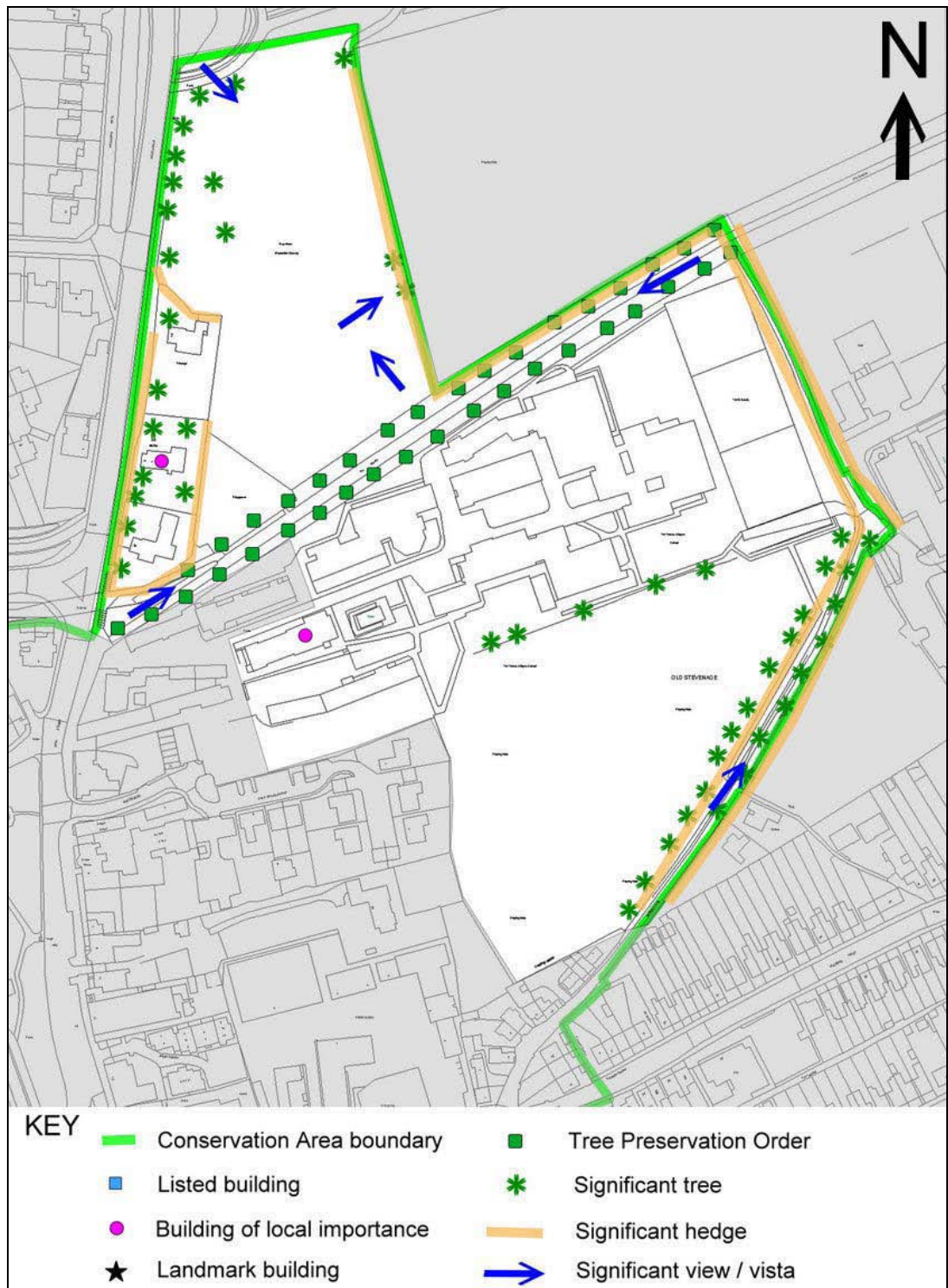


Figure 44. Character zone 5; character analysis map

Architectural and historic qualities of the buildings and their contribution to the area

7.60 There are fewer buildings within character zone 5 in comparison with the other character zones; the character of this zone derives from its footpaths and green spaces rather than its buildings. The school buildings to the rear of the older buildings at the Thomas Alleyne School are generally mid 20th century or later. The buildings are mostly single or two storey with flat or low pitched gabled roofs and are of brick or timber construction; they are well screened by hedges. There are no listed buildings within character zone 5 however there are two buildings of local interest within this zone, one of which has been mentioned in the Urban Characterisation Study (Thompson 2002).

- 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.

7.61 2 North Road is all that remains of the Stevenage National School; its bell tower is a notable feature. There were school buildings to the north and south of 2 North Road covering much of the west side of Bury Mead, these were demolished in the mid 20th century. Two modern houses were later constructed on Bury Mead and are accessed from North Road; these properties sit on good sized plots and are well screened by trees and hedges.



(a)



(b)

Figure 45. Buildings of local importance to character zone 5; 2 North Road (a), 1930s school building at the Thomas Alleyne School (b)

Prevalent and traditional building materials

- 7.62 The style and period of construction of the buildings within character zone 5 varies but most are brick built with hipped or gabled roofs.

Walls: Brick; red / brown brick is the prevalent building material; with some areas of hung tile. Some of the mid 20th century school buildings are of timber construction.

Roofs: Red / brown clay tile. Flat felt roofs to some modern school buildings.

Windows: Timber sashes / casements. Modern houses have uPVC windows.

Doors: Timber, uPVC.

Chimney stacks: Brick, to match the brick colour of the property.

Contribution made to the character of the area by green spaces

- 7.63 The green and open space of Bury Mead is vital to the character of the conservation area as a whole. Views of the spire of the church of St Nicholas, Rectory Lane are gained from Bury Mead, reinforcing the connection between the original village settlement of Stevenage near St Nicholas Church and the town which gradually developed in the valley to the south. The Avenue, an ancient lane, which connects these two distinct areas of Stevenage settlement together also falls within this character zone. Bury Mead is protected as a principal open space and as a green link. The Avenue is protected as an ancient lane with associated hedgerows.

- 7.64 The school playing field is also included within this character zone; it is an open area of grass – views of which are obtained from Church Lane where it narrows and becomes a public footpath. Church Lane continues to the north east and then turns to the north, following a long established field boundary / footpath, which is now the rear boundary of the Thomas Alleyne School. This part of the lane is narrower with high hedges either side giving a rural feel to this footpath. The lane then joins with The Avenue; this point is the north-western corner of the conservation area.

Trees

- 7.65 The trees running along either side of The Avenue are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO 11); The Avenue is of great historic interest as an ancient lane linking St Nicholas Church and the Old Bury to the town centre and also due to its formal tree-planting scheme over the centuries. The trees at the south-west end of The Avenue have been replanted as many of the older trees were uprooted during the 1987 storms. The trees along Church Lane enclose it on either side and give it a strong sense of age and history. The Tree Preservation Order (TPO 61) which covers The Grange also includes some trees which now appear to be within the Thomas Alleyne School site.



(a)



(b)

Figure 46. Formal line of trees along The Avenue (a), trees along Church Lane (b)

Negative Factors

- 7.66 There is a lack of signage and general local information regarding the use of The Avenue as an important Green Link from the High Street towards Rectory Lane and the area known as Forster Country.

8.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 As part of the BEAMS 2005 'Review of Stevenage Conservation Areas' public consultation was conducted through press releases, access to the Council's website and targeted invitation to local interest groups.
- 8.2 No public consultation was undertaken by Stevenage Borough Council in 2007 for the Old Town Conservation Area because no boundary changes were suggested in the Review of Stevenage Conservation Areas (BEAMS Ltd, 2005).

9.0 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Unlisted buildings / buildings of local importance:

- 9.1 The appraisal has noted that the architectural integrity of some unlisted properties within the conservation area has already been compromised by the use of modern materials such as uPVC windows, modern roofing materials or the removal of chimney stacks. The Council may wish to consider the introduction of Article 4(2) Directions to restrict permitted development. Article 4(2) Directions would be a useful tool in strengthening controls over the unsympathetic alteration of unlisted buildings which cumulatively have an adverse effect on the character of the conservation area. This could be developed further in future detailed Management Plans.
- 9.2 The appraisal has identified a number of unlisted 'buildings of local importance' to the conservation area for example some of the brick / timber storage buildings to the rear of the High Street, fronting on to Church Lane such as the old Moulden's Brewery building. They are of historic / architectural interest and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. As such they should be retained and the impact of any alterations or change of use considered in relation to their existing character.

North Road / Lytton Way gyratory system:

- 9.3 The issue of the road layout / traffic problems caused by the North Road / Lytton Way gyratory system feeding through James Way and isolating the Bowling Green has an adverse impact upon the character of the conservation area. The Council should encourage Hertfordshire County Council as the highways authority to consider alternative solutions.

New development:

- 9.4 Design briefs should be produced for any significant development sites. There are only a few opportunities for development / redevelopment within the Old Town Conservation Area due to the tight urban form. Sites that have been highlighted for possible re-development (or rear development) within the conservation area include the Pond Close Industrial Estate, Elmes Arcade and the MOT centre on the High Street, the Thomas Alleyne School and an area to the rear of houses on Ditchmore Lane (Stevenage Borough Council, 2008).

General principles should be applied regarding any new development:

- Proposals to develop / redevelop sites or convert buildings to new uses will be required to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area.
- The design, position, scale, massing and materials of new development will be expected to respect the existing character of the conservation area.
- Roofs to be of simple pitched, gabled form and characteristic building orientation to be maintained.

Listed buildings:

- 9.5 In cases where owners are unwilling to reinstate timber windows in listed buildings, enforcement action should be taken. Enforcement against unauthorised alterations to listed buildings is not time limited.

Buildings at Risk:

- 9.6 Two buildings within the conservation area are recognised as being in an 'at risk' condition; the Old Malthouse and Kiln at Alleyne's School (English Heritage 2008 Heritage at Risk Register) and 11 Church Lane. The owners of the Old Malthouse

and Kiln at Alleyne's School should be encouraged to repair the building. 11 Church Lane is to be renovated.

Shops:

- 9.7 The use of upper floors of shops as offices or residential accommodation should be encouraged where appropriate. This will result in the full use of existing buildings and better maintenance of upper floors which would benefit the appearance of the conservation area.

Shopfronts:

- 9.8 The production of design guidance or specific Development Control policies in relation to shopfront design and appropriate advertising would be beneficial. The use of metal roller shutters within the conservation area should be avoided. It must be ensured that shopfront grilles on units in Middle Row continue to be of the current demountable type.

Enhancement of historic buildings:

- 9.9 The Council could consider establishing a grants scheme to encourage sympathetic repairs to older buildings within the Old Town (including for example, roofing in appropriate slates / tiles, sympathetic repair of older shopfronts, timber windows rather than uPVC etc).

Public Houses:

- 9.10 A number of historic public houses have changed use and / or changed their name. The retention of historic public houses and their original names should be encouraged.

Public realm:

- 9.11 The High Street has, in recent years, undergone enhancement with the consistent use of lampposts, black and gold bollards cycle bays and planters. Footpaths are block paved with cobbled borders. Unfortunately this has not extended to the southern end of the conservation area; the south end of the High Street and Ditchmore Lane would benefit from a similar enhancement scheme and in particular the replacement of the tall, modern lampposts.
- 9.12 The route from Ditchmore Lane into the rest of the Old Town via the Sish Lane underpass is visually unappealing. The poor quality of the public realm in this area detracts from the setting of listed buildings such as Holy Trinity Church and the Coach and Horses Inn. This area would benefit from enhancement.
- 9.13 The yards running between and behind some buildings along the High Street often relate to the medieval plot layout of Stevenage, they should be retained.
- 9.14 Retain and maintain existing open spaces such as Bury Mead, Bowling Green, the cricket ground and King George V Millennium Gardens.
- 9.15 The Council may wish to consider discreet sign posts to The Avenue and St Nicholas Church, Rectory Lane.

10.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and reports

- Appleton, M. 1993. *Stevenage in old photographs*. Alan Sutton, Stroud.
- Ashby, M. 1982. *The Book of Stevenage*. Barracuda Books Ltd, Buckingham
- Ashby, M. 1995 *Stevenage Past*. Phillimore & Co Ltd
- Ashby, M. 2002. *Stevenage. History and Guide*. Tempus, Stroud.
- Ashby, M. 2004. *Images of England. Stevenage Streets*. Tempus, Stroud.
- Ashby, M. Cudmore, A and Killick, C. 2008 *Historic Buildings of Stevenage*. The Stevenage Society for Local History
- Balchin, J. 1980. *First New Town. An autobiography of the Stevenage Development Corporation 1946 – 1980*. Stevenage Development Corporation, Stevenage.
- English Heritage. 2006. *Guidance on conservation area appraisals*. English Heritage, London
- English Heritage. 2001. Notes on Stevenage Town Centre and Sish Lane housing, Provided by Elaine Harwood, (unpublished).
- Green, G. 1988. *British Aerospace. A proud heritage*. Geoff Green, Charfield
- Hertfordshire County Council. 1973. *Notes on Buildings of Local Interest. Shephall Green*. Hertfordshire County Council
- Hertfordshire County Council. 1979. *Notes on Buildings of Local Interest. Old Stevenage*. Hertfordshire County Council
- Mullan, B. 1980. *Stevenage Ltd. Aspects of the Planning and Politics of Stevenage New Town 1945 – 78*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.
- Fisher, D. Undated. *Fairlands Valley Park*. Hertfordshire County Council & Stevenage Borough Council.
- Pevsner P. & Cherry B. 2002. *The Buildings of England. Hertfordshire*. Yale University Press, London.
- Planning Act 1990: *Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas*
- PPG15. 1994. *Planning Policy Guidance no. 15. Planning and the historic environment*.
- Newman, M.E. 1975. *Hertfordshire Countryside*. Vol 30; No. 190; February; 32 – 34.
- Stevenage Borough Council & Stevenage Museum. undated *Stevenage. The story of the first new town*.
- Stevenage Borough Council. 2004. *Stevenage District Plan Second Review 1991 – 2011*.
- Stevenage Borough Council. Feb. 2008. *Local Development Framework, Old Town Area Action Plan*.
- Stevenage Museum. 1986. *Greens of Stevenage*.
- Stevenage Urban District Council. 1973. *Shephall Green. A study for the conservation of an old village within a new town*. Stevenage Urban District Council
- 'Factories in Caxton Way, Stevenage New Town, Herts' in *The Architects' Journal*, April 1st 1954.
- Thompson, I. 2002. *Stevenage Extensive Urban Survey Project Assessment Report*. Hertfordshire County Council.
- Thompson, I. 2005. *Stevenage Urban Characterisation Project*. Hertfordshire County Council.
- Unsourced material, 1958. *This is the Co-op Mural* (possibly a newspaper cutting copies from Stevenage Borough Council files).
- Vincent, L. 1967. *Stevenage Master Plan 1966. Volume 1; planning proposals*. Stevenage Development Corporation, Stevenage.

- Vincent, L. 1972. *Stevenage 72. Updating of the Master Plan 1966. Written Statement*. Stevenage Development Corporation, Stevenage.
- Wilcox, S. 2003. *Historic Building Assessment: The Old Rectory, Shephall Green, Stevenage, Hertfordshire*. ASC Ltd, Milton Keynes.
- Wotherspoon, M; Goldsmith, A; Henry, K. Roberts, B. 2004. *Bragbury House, Bragbury End, Stevenage, Hertfordshire. Historic Building Recording. Report. No. 1440*. Archaeological Solutions Ltd, Hertford.

Maps

- Bryant, A. 1882. *Map of Hertfordshire*.
- Dury and Andrews. 1766. *Map of Hertfordshire*.
- Tithe Map & Award of Stevenage, 1834. Hertfordshire Archive and Library Service, Hertford.
- Ordnance Survey map, 1881, Stevenage. Hertfordshire Archive and Library Service, Hertford.
- Ordnance Survey Map 1898, Stevenage. Hertfordshire Archive and Library Service, Hertford.
- Ordnance Survey Map 1923, Stevenage. Hertfordshire Archive and Library Service, Hertford.

Websites

- www.old-maps.co.uk (First Edition Ordnance Survey Maps)
- www.stevenage.gov.uk/museum/history (Trow-Smith. R. 1958. *A History of Stevenage*. Updated 1999)
- www.jisc.ac.uk/coll_newtowns.html (New Town Record Online)
- www.davidharding.org (Harding. D. 2005. *Public Art in the British New Towns*)
- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/festival_of_britain (Public Art)
- www.bartleby.com/65/cr/Craig-Ed.html (The Columbia Encyclopedia, 2001. *Edward Gordon Craig*)
- www.hvaf.org.uk/sculspot.htm. (*Sculpture spotting for the HVAF/PMSA Sculpture Trail*. Last updated 7 April 2004 (Public Art in Stevenage)
- www.rootsinholland.com/emigr/lijnbaan.htm (Lijnbaan, Rotterdam, Netherlands)
- community.middlebury.edu/~slides/HA220/views/aoc317_view.html (Lijnbaan, Rotterdam, Netherlands)
- www.archinform.net/arch/2696.htm?ID=m39jBI3nrCFD1INL (Dutch architect Broek)
- www.cuci.nl/~ibelings/exhibitions/vbenb.html (Dutch architects Broek & Bakema)
- www.xs4all.nl/~couvreur/engl/rdam/architec.htm (Dutch architect Broek)
- www.xs4all.nl/~couvreur/engl/rdam/wand3.htm (A walk through the centre of Rotterdam)
- www.stevenage.gov.uk/council/dev-planning/developing/dist-plan/index.htm (Stevenage Borough Council's Website)
- www.stevenage.co.uk/regen/stev_west.htm (Stevenage Borough Council's Website)

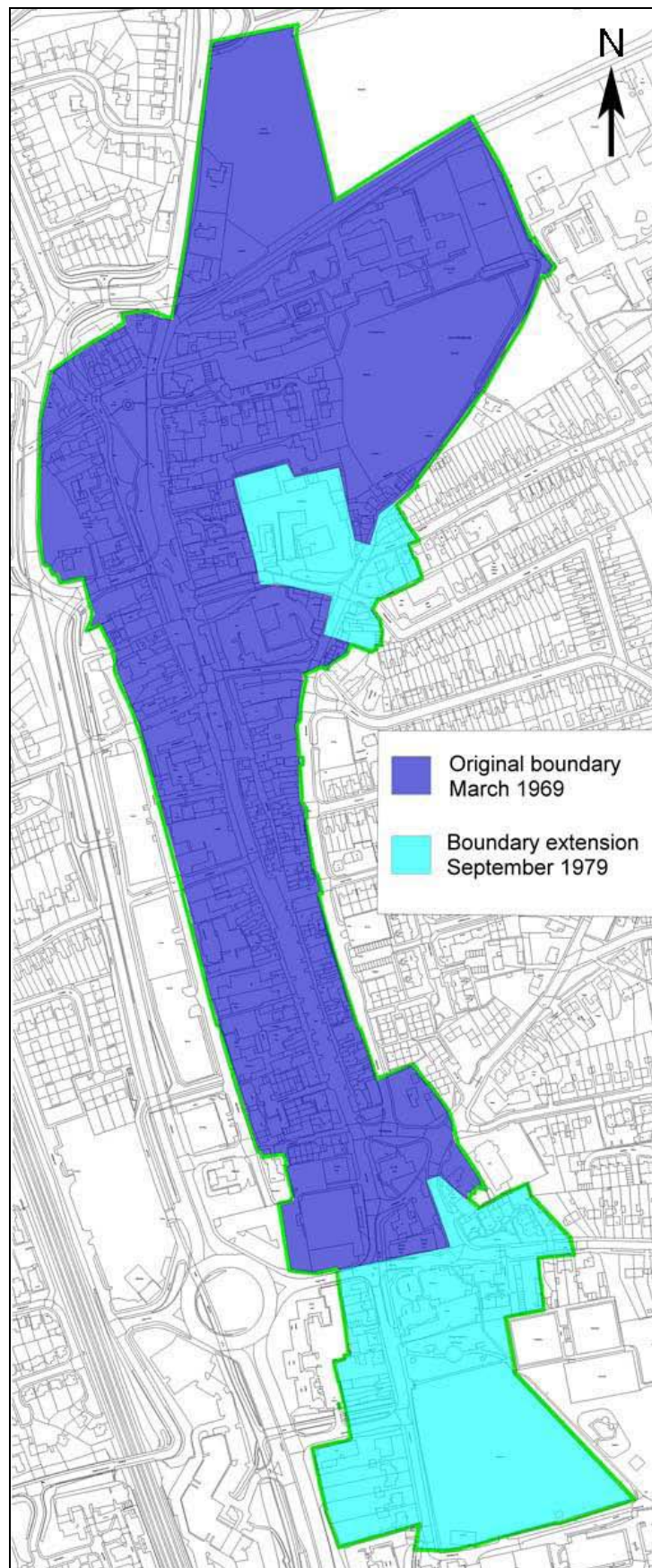
Acknowledgements

BEAMS would like to thank Stevenage Borough Council, in particular Richard Javes and Sarah Williams, for the commission of this project and for their assistance in its compilation.

Thank you also to the staff at the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies and Stevenage Museum.

This report was written by Helen Cal-Fernandez and Christian Brady. The project was managed by Christian Brady, and additional assistance was provided by Anna Borovikov and Anne Haworth.

Appendix 1. Old Town Conservation Area boundary designation and changes



Stevenage Old Town Conservation Area; designation and boundary changes

Appendix 2. The London Gazette record of designation / boundary alteration

THE LONDON GAZETTE, 18TH APRIL 1969		4139
<p>fordshire County Council as local planning authority on 24th March 1969.</p> <p>A copy of each of the designated area maps has been deposited at the appropriate District Council offices. Copies of the maps are also deposited at the West Herts Divisional Planning Office, and at the County Planning Office, County Hall, Hertford where they may be inspected during normal office hours from Mondays to Fridays inclusive.</p>		
SCHEDULE		
<i>Berkhamsted Urban District</i>		
<i>Central Area</i>		
<p>The area commences at its eastern end approximately 300 feet west of Little Bridge Road and runs along the length of the High Street including properties on both sides, terminating on the western boundary of the Friends' Meeting House. The boundary continues north-eastwards along St. John's Well Lane and crosses the Grand Union Canal and runs eastwards increasing in depth adjacent to Lower Kings Road to include the railway station. The area is bounded for about 1,200 feet by the railway and then continues at the rear of the footpath on the north side of the canal until it returns to meet the High Street at its eastern end.</p>		
F. P. Boyce, Clerk of the County Council.		
County Hall, Hertford.		
18th April 1969.	(302)	
HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL		
<i>Conservation Areas</i>		
<p>Notice is hereby given, pursuant to section 1 of the Civic Amenities Act 1967, that the areas briefly described in the Schedule hereto being areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, were designated as Conservation Areas for purposes of section 1 of the said Act by Hertfordshire County Council as local planning authority on 24th March 1969.</p>		
<p>A copy of each of the designated area maps has been deposited at the appropriate District Council Offices. Copies of the maps are also deposited at the West Herts Divisional Planning Office, and at the County Planning Office, County Hall, Hertford where they may be inspected during normal office hours from Mondays to Fridays inclusive.</p>		
SCHEDULE		
<i>Potters Bar Urban District</i>		
<i>South Mimms</i>		
<p>The area commences at its northern end at the White Hart Public House, and extends southwards along Blanche Lane to where this road joins the bridge over the by-pass, the properties on each side of the road and to the south of New Road being included.</p>		
<i>Elstree Rural District</i>		
<i>Shenley</i>		
<p>The area includes Pound Green and the properties surrounding it and extends to the junction of Woodhall Lane with London Road, the properties on either side of London Road being included within the area.</p>		
F. P. Boyce, Clerk of the County Council.		
County Hall, Hertford.		
18th April 1969.	(301)	
HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL		
<i>Conservation Areas</i>		
<p>Notice is hereby given, pursuant to section 1 of the Civic Amenities Act, 1967, that the areas briefly described in the Schedule hereto being areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, were designated as Conservation Areas for purposes of section 1 of the said Act by Hertfordshire County Council as local planning authority on 24th March 1969.</p>		
<p>A copy of each of the designated area maps has been deposited at the appropriate District Council offices. Copies of the maps are also deposited at</p>		
the North Herts Divisional Planning Office, and at the County Planning Office, County Hall, Hertford where they may be inspected during normal office hours from Mondays to Fridays inclusive.		
SCHEDULE		
<i>Hitchin Urban District</i>		
<i>Central Area</i>		
<p>The area takes in the core of the town and is bounded on its southern end by the junction of St. John's Road with London Road from which it extends some 1,200 feet down Gosmore Road running northwards to the west of this road at an average depth of 100 feet. The boundary then crosses the Priory Park, joining the eastern side of Charlton Road and going westwards along Wratten Road to take in Tilehouse Street Baptist Chapel and then runs along the northern side of Tilehouse Street, Nuns Close, and takes in Paynes Park and Grammar School Walk and an average depth of 200 feet to the west of Bancroft. The boundary terminates at the north 400 feet east of the junction of Nightingale Road with the junction with Bancroft, and then runs southwards taking in the whole of Bancroft Recreation Ground, and continues southwards to take in the properties fronting onto the east side of Bancroft. The boundary then travels in an easterly direction to include the properties on the northern side of Hermitage Road, then goes north-east along the southern side of Walsworth Road, southwards down Highbury Road, south of Hollow Lane and down Stonehouse Lane and including Park Street and London Road, and the properties facing onto both of these roads.</p>		
Stevenage Urban District		
<i>Old Town</i>		
<p>The area commences at its southern end at the north side of Trinity Road and extends northwards along the High Street taking in the properties on both sides, together with those around Bowling Green and extends north-west to include Bury Mead to the east of the Great North Road and the grounds of Alleyne's Grammar School.</p>		
F. P. Boyce, Clerk of the County Council.		
County Hall, Hertford.		
18th April 1969.	(300)	
HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL		
<i>Conservation Areas</i>		
<p>Notice is hereby given, pursuant to section 1 of the Civic Amenities Act, 1967, that the areas briefly described in the Schedule hereto being areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, were designated as Conservation Areas for purposes of section 1 of the said Act by Hertfordshire County Council as local planning authority on 24th March 1969.</p>		
<p>A copy of each of the designated area maps has been deposited at the appropriate District Council offices. Copies of the maps are also deposited at the West Herts Divisional Planning Office, and at the County Planning Office, County Hall, Hertford, where they may be inspected during normal office hours from Mondays to Fridays inclusive.</p>		
SCHEDULE		
<i>St. Albans Municipal Borough</i>		
<p>The area is bounded on the south-west by King Harry Lane, on the north-west by Bluehouse Hill, at the northern end of which the boundary continues eastwards along Verulam Road to include Victoria Playing Field, the St. Albans and Mid-Hertfordshire Hospital, Christ's Church, Verulam House and the properties on the northern side of Spencer Street. The spur at the north-east of the area includes St. Peter's Street as far as the northern end of Pemberton Almshouses, together with St. Peter's Church and churchyard extending about 700 feet along the Hatfield Road to include the Marlborough Almshouses. The eastern boundary is then formed by Bricket Road and runs parallel to Victoria Street continuing southwards about 100 feet east of Chequer Street and Holywell Hill. There is then a spur to the east taking in Albert Street and Sopwell Lane and the properties fronting on these roads, the boundary then</p>		
For any late Notices see Contents list on first page		

Extract from The London Gazette, 18th April 1969

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971 AS AMENDED
BY THE TOWN AND COUNTRY AMENITIES ACT 1974

*Designation of an Extended Conservation Area
Old Stevenage, Hertfordshire*

Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 (as amended by section 1 of the Town and Country Amenities Act 1974) that the area described below being an area of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, was designated as a Conservation Area for purposes of section 277 of the said Act by Stevenage Borough Council as Local Planning Authority, on 18th September 1979.

Within the designated area no building other than such building as is referred to in The Direction made by the Secretary of State for the Environment in paragraph 15 of Circular 174/74 may be demolished without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority, as though it were a building contained in the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest prepared by the Secretary of State.

In addition trees within the Conservation Area may not be lopped, topped, felled, uprooted or wilfully damaged or destroyed, unless notice of the proposed action has been given to the Local Planning Authority and written permission to proceed has been received, or the authority has failed to take any conclusive action regarding the notice within 6 weeks from the date of service. There are certain exceptions to this rule, in general terms, these cover trees subject to the exemption already contained in the Second Schedule of the Form of Tree Preservation Orders and trees not exceeding 75 millimetres (approximately 3 inches) in diameter (or 100 millimetres where the growth or other trees would be improved by forestry operations). Trees already included in Tree Preservation Orders are not subject to the above procedure but are subject instead to the more stringent requirements of the Order concerned.

The existing Conservation Area includes all the properties in the High Street of the Old Town, Burymead Recreation Ground and the grounds of Alleynes Grammar School.

The extensions to the Conservation Area are as follows:

To the east, Church Lane and the following properties on its eastern side:

2, 4 and 6 Church Lane; Corner House; The Twitchell; 14 Walkern Road; 15, 17 and 19 Church Lane and the old electricity board site in Walkern Road.

To the south-east, the former gasworks site bounded by 21 Sish Lane, the properties on the south side of Sish Lane as far as the eastern boundary of 12 Sish Lane,

To the south, the Cricket Ground bounded by Ditchmoor Lane.

To the west, Nos. 152 to 172 High Street and Nos. 1 to 6 Ditchmore Lane. Continuing northwards the western boundary now coincides with the eastern kerb of Primett Road where this exists.

Copies of the map showing the exact boundaries of the Conservation Area have been deposited at the Borough Council Planning Office, Manulife House, St. George's Way, Stevenage, and also at the County Planning Office, County Hall, Hertford, and may be inspected during normal office hours from Monday to Friday inclusive.

M. L. Banks, Chief Executive

Southgate House,
Southgate,
Stevenage, Herts, SG1 1HN.

6th March 1980.

(777)

Extract from The London Gazette, 6th March 1980