

# Symonds Green

## Conservation Area Appraisal

### 2009



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Front cover: Top left, The Crooked Billet P H, Symonds Green; Top right, Nursery Cottages;  
Bottom left, Thatched Cottage; Bottom right, Symonds Green Lane

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

Symonds Green Conservation Area is in a good to fair condition and has a number of attributes and features which have a positive impact upon the character of the area. These relate to its open area of common land, ponds, drains, early land boundaries, hedgerows, listed buildings and buildings of local importance.

There are, however, some negative issues regarding the impact of new development and a building at risk.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

- 1.1 This appraisal of Symonds Green 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 Symonds Green Conservation Area was designated on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1977. The boundary was amended on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2007 removing the Blakeney Road housing which formed the northern part of the conservation area.

### **Objectives**

- 1.3 The main objectives of this conservation area appraisal are to:
- Define the special interest of Symonds Green 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.
  - Identify neutral areas, negative features and spaces, and the problems, pressures and capacity for change.
  - Provide a summary of issues with a list of improvements and actions

### **Survey**

- 1.4 A full photographic record of Symonds Green 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 which 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 (PPG15, Section 4.4).
- 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, archaeological monuments, buildings, green spaces and place names.
- 3.2 Symonds Green Conservation Area is largely an open space of common land, with a few historic properties situated around the perimeters of the Green. Some modern housing has encroached on to farmland which borders the Green, but the emphasis is on common land, rather than a residential area. The conservation area was designated to protect the buildings and their historic context as a remnant of a small agricultural hamlet within the New Town area and typical of that part of Hertfordshire to the west and north of Stevenage.
- 3.3 The principal features of Symonds Green Conservation Area are:
- The common with Symonds Green Lane, running north-south through it.
  - The ponds to the north west of the conservation area and the drain that feeds them.
  - The Crooked Billet Public House, isolated and prominent to the west of the Green.
  - The hedges and trees that form the boundary of the conservation area
  - The rural character of Symonds Green.
  - The architectural and historic merit of statutory listed buildings and buildings of local importance within the conservation area.



**Figure 1.** Symonds Green Conservation Area (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.
- 4.2 Symonds Green lies on the western side of Stevenage and remained as an isolated hamlet until the mid twentieth century. The conservation area is centered on the village green - the common, the ponds and the public house. These provide a sudden, surprising oasis of a rural hamlet amongst an area of denser modern housing.

### **Topography**

- 4.3 Symonds Green occupies a flat area of ground containing a number of small streams and ponds.

### **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 Despite being located at the western edge of Stevenage and close to the A1(M) Symonds Green has managed to retain a sense of its earlier rural identity, the open space of the green is particularly important.
- 4.6 The A1(M) now forms the western boundary of Symonds Green although it is well screened from the road by trees. The eastern approach (and the only vehicular access) to the Green is from Eastbourne Avenue. From the south, the Green is approached from a narrow lane (a footpath) which widens into a road (Symonds Green Lane). Symonds Green Lane runs in a north to south direction, at its southern end there are houses on both sides and access roads leading to modern cul-de-sac development to the west. At 'Thatched Cottage' and 'Longmeadows' the vista to the Green opens out. Symonds Green Lane runs through the Green and then becomes a footpath once more as it leaves the Green at its northern end.
- 4.7 Other than the expanse of the Green, the most arresting focal point is The Crooked Billet Public House. Its visual appearance is therefore of major importance to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Green itself is framed predominantly by the hedges and trees around its edges. Buildings are few at this end and so not as strong a feature in the vistas towards the top of the conservation area as the natural landscape.

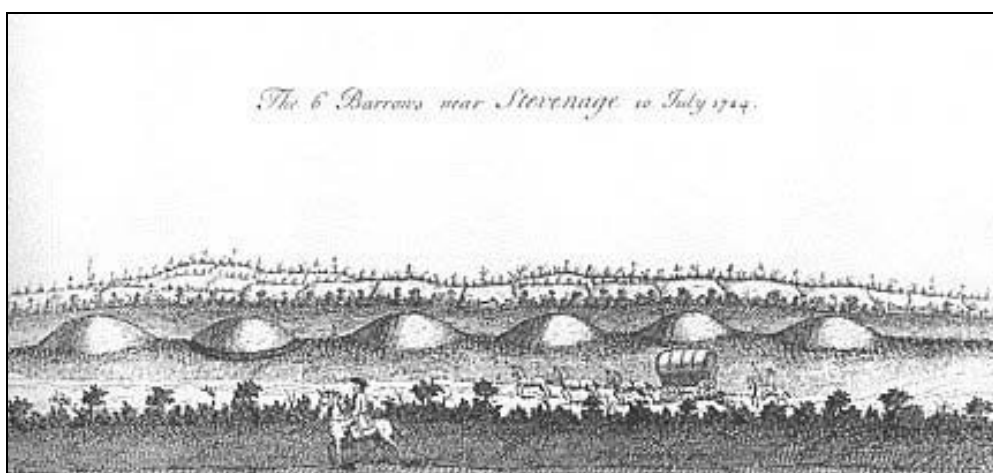
## 5.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

### The origins and development of the area

Symonds Green has been occupied since the eleventh century and possibly earlier however it is not until the mid twentieth century that the area has undergone any significant development.

### Early development

- 5.1 Stevenage and its surrounding landscape has 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. 2).



**Figure 2.** Engraving of the Six Hills in 1724 (Ashby 2002)

- 5.2 Evidence of Saxon occupation has been identified from both excavation and historical documentation. Settlements have been found in Broadwater and possibly also around St Nicholas Church north of the Old Town, the likely location of the original village settlement of Stevenage. The first historical record of the manor of Stevenage is found in the Domesday Book dating to 1086. Known as 'Sticenaece' or 'Stithenaece', the estate had been given to the newly founded Abbey of Westminster by King Edward in 1062, to whom the manor previously belonged. Most settlements are likely to have existed as a series of scattered small manors throughout the Borough, such as Chells, Shephalbury and Symonds Green.

### 1066 - 1500

- 5.3 Symonds Green was recorded as *Wluueneuuiche* in the Domesday Book of 1086, a hamlet where Robert Gernon held a small manor. Its name changed slightly through the centuries, recorded as *Wolnewyk* in 1381, and later *Wolwyck Green*. During the Middle Ages, Symonds Green became part of the Manor of Wymondley

and by the 15<sup>th</sup> century was known as Hickman's Green, after a local landowner. In 1581, Edward Symonde bought the land south of the Green and it became known as *Symes Green*, which is probably the source of its name today. The Great North Road ran through the Borough, east of Symonds Green, bringing trade and economic prosperity to Stevenage.

#### 1500 - 1800

- 5.4 Symonds Green remained as a small hamlet throughout and beyond the medieval period. Meadowland surrounded the village to the south and east and was suitable for grazing animals. There was also probably a spring north of the village that ran into the centre via small streams and emptied into a series of ponds on the common. Further ponds are also found to the south of the village.
- 5.5 After the dissolution of the monasteries, land in Stevenage belonging to Westminster Abbey was given to the Bishop of London. The church leased the land until the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the Lyttons of Knebworth purchased the manor and much of the land in the Borough. The settlement (Symonds Green) is clearly labelled on the 1766 Dury and Andrews map of Hertfordshire (Fig. 3). During the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century a few residential houses were scattered along the west side of the road which ran north from Old Stevenage up to Titmore Green through the common. There are two 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings located at each end of the common to the west, Willow Cottage and Thatched Cottage (Figs. 4 and 5).

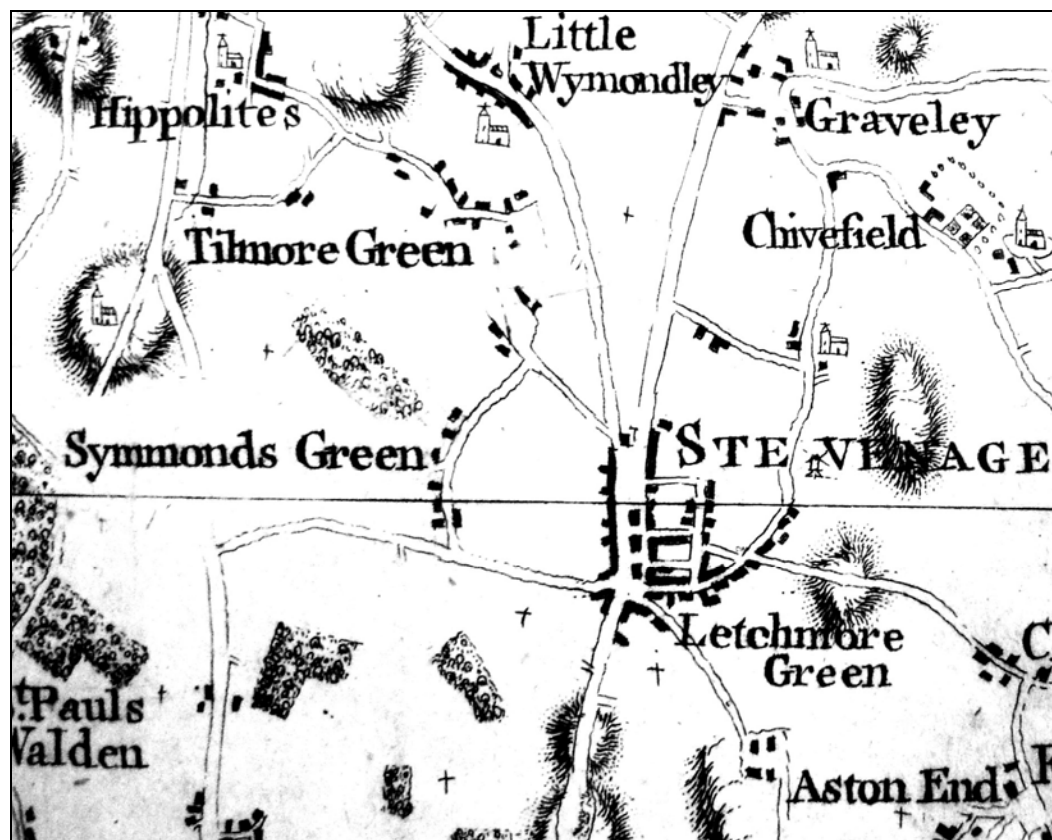


Figure 3. 1766 Map of Stevenage Borough (Dury and Andrews)

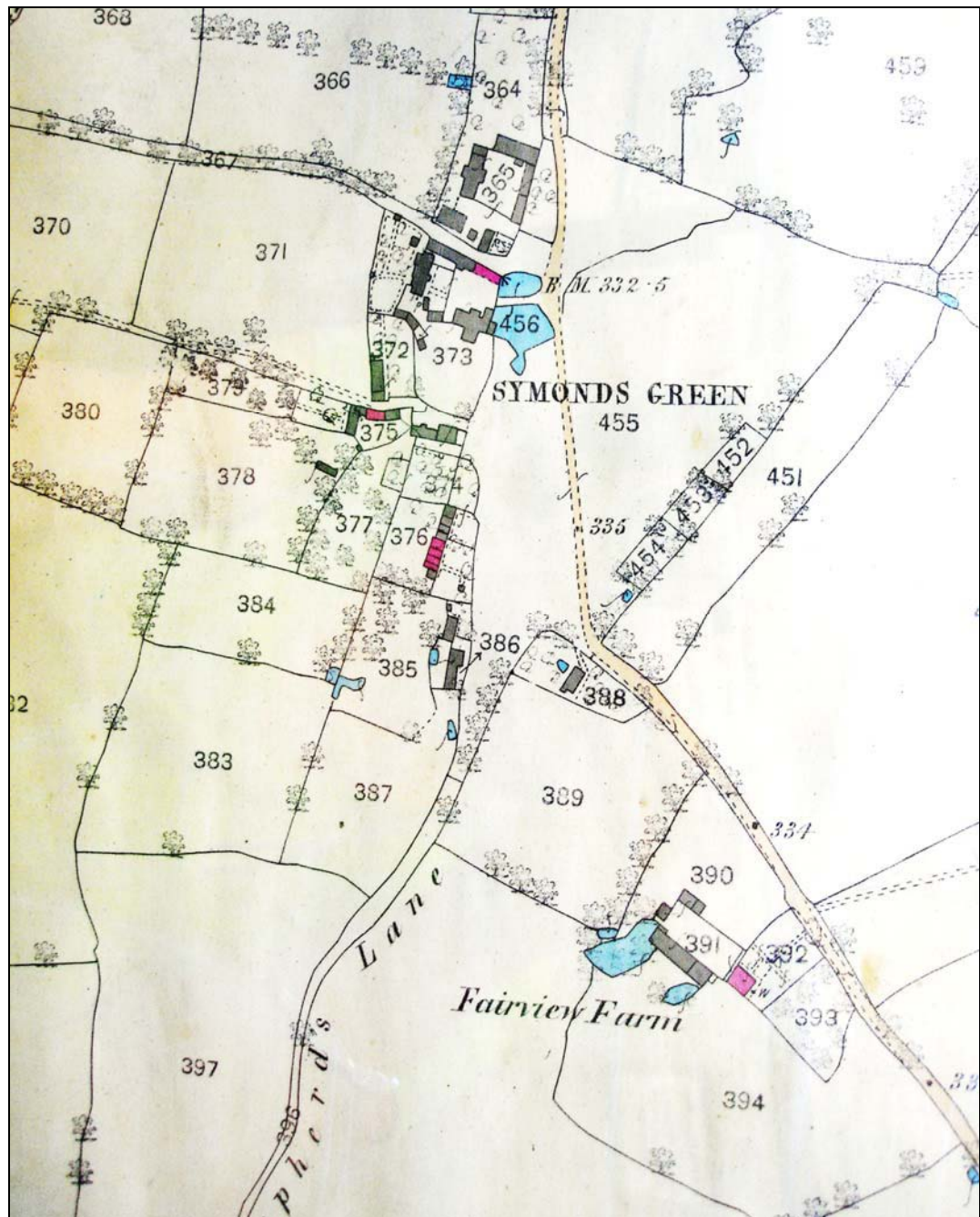


**Figure 4.** The Thatched Cottage c. 1938 (Hertfordshire County Council)



**Figure 5.** Willow Cottage c. 1938 (Hertfordshire County Council)

- 5.6 By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at least two farms had been constructed, one just outside the main settlement to the north and the other to the south, Fairview Farm – later renamed Oakfield Farm (Fig. 6). Its barn is probably the oldest structure remaining in Symonds Green, dating to the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century. It could be related to an older property that stood on the site such as a manor or farmhouse which pre-dated the current 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse. Figure 6 illustrates the number of small dwellings and structures on the west side of the Green in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



**Figure 6.** Symonds Green in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1883 Ordnance Survey map)

- 5.7 The only building to stand upon the common today is the Crooked Billet Public House. There has been a public house or beer shop on the green since at least 1841 when the census recorded that the shop was kept by Elizabeth Moules whose family farmed much of the land in the area. However the current building probably dates to c.1920.
- 5.8 In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, Henry Fox, a Baptist preacher, farmed 10 acres at Symonds Green and lived in a cottage that once stood behind the Crooked Billet. His identical twin boys, Albert and Ebenezer, were well known poachers, often providing each with an alibi if caught (Fig. 7). They assisted Sir Edward Henry who was able to show that fingerprints were unique to each individual, earning the twins a place in history. They were the inspiration for the naming of the Twin Foxes public house on Rockingham Way, one of the first public houses built as part of the new town neighbourhood development in Bedwell (Fig. 8).



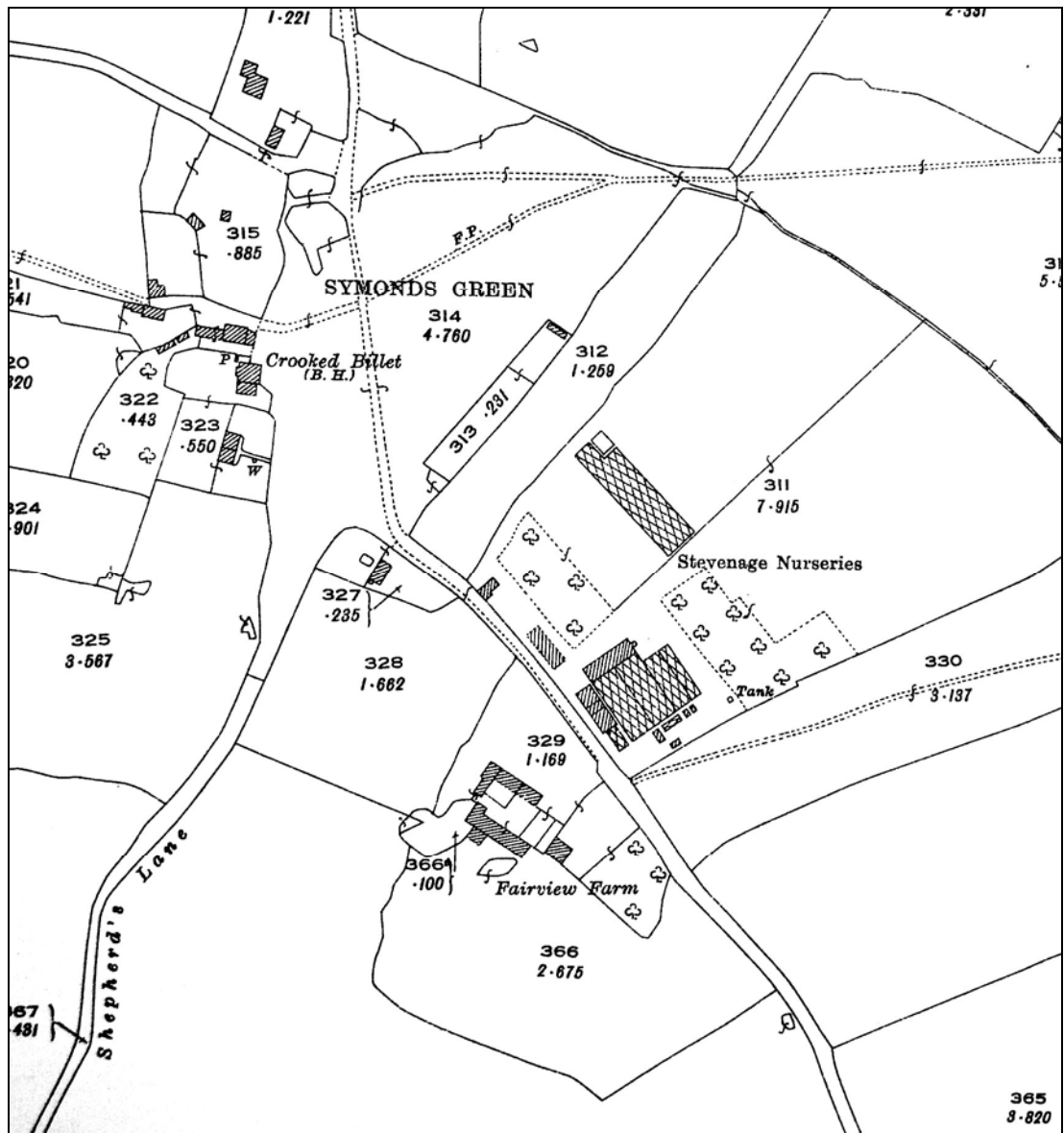
**Figure 7.** Albert and Ebenezer Fox (Ashby 2004)



**Figure 8.** The Twin Foxes Public House, Bedwell opened in 1953 (Appleton 1993)

- 5.9 In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and up to the 1970s Symonds Green retained its rural identity. Stevenage Nurseries operated opposite Fairview / Oakfield Farm on Symonds Green Lane during this period, and the area was initially reserved by the Stevenage Development Corporation for use as nursery gardens (Fig. 9). However in the 1966 Master Plan the nursery was to be demolished to make way for housing and by 1974 the first houses had been completed. The housing directly to the north of the Green – Blakeney House and Blakeney Road had been constructed by 1973 when the conservation area was designated.
- 5.10 Although the expansion of Stevenage affected many settlements within the area covered, Symonds Green itself survived relatively unscathed. Its plan form is still recognizable from early OS maps, but it has lost its landscape setting, bounded as it now is by the A1 (M) to the west, and Stevenage immediately to the east.





**Figure 9.** Symonds Green in the early twentieth century  
(1923 Ordnance Survey map)

### **The archaeological significance and potential of the area**

- 5.11 Human activity has been recorded in and around Stevenage since prehistory. Of the 200 entries that currently appear on the Historic Environment Record for Stevenage, three are sited within the Symonds Green conservation area and include some of the listed and locally important buildings, and Symonds Green itself (HHER 12551). There are no scheduled monuments in the conservation area.
- 5.12 Symonds Green is an 'Area of Archaeological Significance' (Stevenage District Plan, 2004). HHER 1026 relates to the supposed deserted settlement of Wivenwic or Wollenwick, Symonds Green. Traces of medieval ridge and furrow are visible on aerial photographs of the Symonds Green area (HHER 6647). The potential for archaeological remains is likely to centre round Symonds Green, the former site of Oakfield Farm and in the fields to the west.

## 6.0 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

### The character and interrelationship of spaces within the area

- 6.1 Symonds Green Conservation Area has retained its important piece of open common land with its drains and ponds. The two listed buildings, Thatched Cottage and Willow Cottage are sited at either end but the focal point is the early twentieth century Crooked Billet public house in its prominent position on the Green. The area of housing forming the southern part of the conservation area is divided from the Green by hedges and trees and it has a very different character although the rural nature of Symonds Green Lane has just about been retained.

### Open spaces

- 6.2 Symonds Green itself is very much an open space. The green is framed predominantly by hedges and trees around its edges; the eastern part of the green has a rougher sward than that on the other side of the roadway. The ponds are key natural features and the wooded area around them is also a prominent feature when viewed from across the green. A further evident feature is the channel of streams. Whilst the stream approaching the ponds from the east seems to be functional, other streams appear choked and poorly managed. The area of grass and recent tree planting west of the ponds is screened and has an enclosed character thus different from the main open space of the green. There is a small bramble and scrub dominated area reached via the footpath past 'Thatched Cottage' on what was once a route into the Green known as Shepherds Lane (Fig. 9).



**Figure 10.** Symonds Green; the ponds (a), east side of the Green (b)

### Landmark buildings

- 6.3 Within the conservation area are a couple of landmark buildings dating to different periods. These are visually important structures that make a statement, hold an important position or can be seen at a distance. These landmark buildings are:

- The Crooked Billet Public House
- Thatched Cottage





(a)



(b)

**Figure 11.** Landmark Buildings within Symonds Green Conservation Area;  
The Crooked Billet Public House (a), Thatched Cottage (b)

### Focal point

6.4

The focal point of the conservation area is the Green and the Crooked Billet Public House which sits in a prominent position on the west side of the Green. Its visual appearance is therefore of major importance to the character and appearance of the conservation area.



**Figure 12.** The Crooked Billet Public House, the focal point of the Green

### Key views and vistas

6.5

The key vista within the conservation area is gained from 'Thatched Cottage' and 'Longmeadows' looking north where Symonds Green Lane opens up and the expanse of the Green and the Crooked Billet Public House is suddenly visible. Similar views into the Green from the footpath at its northern edge are also of key importance.



(a)



(b)

**Figure 13.** Key views and vistas within Symonds Green Conservation Area; from the south end looking towards the Crooked Billet Public House (a), from the northern edge (b)

## 7.0 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

- 7.1 Symonds Green is to be analysed as one distinct area even though it does divide into two different areas, the southern half of the conservation area is predominantly residential and the northern part is predominantly an open space / Green. Originally the small hamlet of Symonds Green included the farm to the southern end (Fairview Farm) and the Green itself with Symonds Green Farm and various other small dwellings and structures situated upon it. Symonds Green Lane ran through the centre of the Green. Lamp posts are low and of a decorative conservation type which suits the character of the area.

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

- 7.2 The few buildings around the Green itself are not recent ie 'Thatched Cottage', The Crooked Billet Public House, 'Willow Cottage' and 'Greenside' next to it (though these all have been considerably altered and extended).
- 7.3 Along Symonds Green Lane on the southern approach to the Green, the houses are 20<sup>th</sup> century ('Nursery Cottages' – the two pairs of cottages on the east side are possibly late 19<sup>th</sup> century and were originally part of the Stevenage Nurseries site). The houses are of modest size and appearance (though 'Longmeadows' is uncharacteristically larger), two storeys, but of various designs. They are set on reasonably large plots with both front and rear gardens. In terms of orientation 'Thatched Cottage' is atypical in being oriented end-on to the road however this is of historic significance as the footpath it faces was once Shepherds Lane, one of the routes into Symonds Green from the south-west.
- 7.4 The Newlyn Close, Southwold Close and 'Dunwich Farm' developments dominate this part of the conservation area to the west of Symonds Green Lane and fail to relate well in layout or character to it.

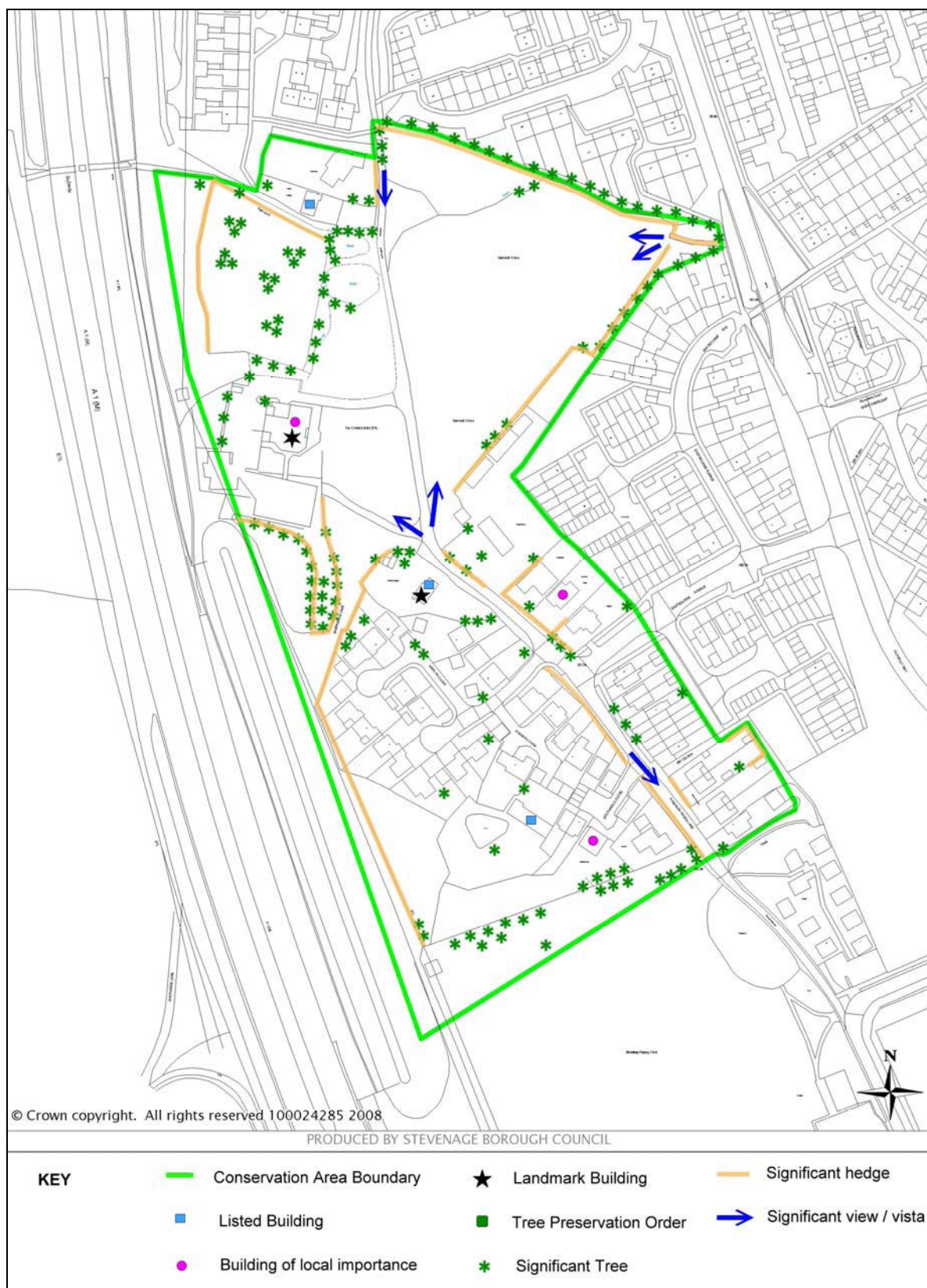


(a)



(b)

**Figure 14.** Housing along the east side of Symonds Green Lane (a), Nursery Cottages (b)



**Figure 15.** Symonds Green Conservation Area, character analysis map



7.5 Statutory Listed Buildings are listed below, but are not described here so as to avoid duplication of the list descriptions.

- 'Willow Cottage'. Grade II. 2/147. Listed 1976. 17<sup>th</sup> century, timber framed
- 'Thatched Cottage'. Grade II. 3/148. Listed 1976. 17<sup>th</sup> century, timber framed
- Oakfield Barn. Grade II. 733/6/10013. Listed 1999. 16<sup>th</sup> / 17<sup>th</sup> century timber frame barn



(a)



(b)

**Figure 16.** Listed buildings within Symonds Green conservation area; Willow Cottage (a), Thatched Cottage (b)

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

- Crooked Billet Public House, Symonds Green Lane  
Partly two storey red brick building with tiled hipped roof and ridge decoration and finials. Flemish bond. Front gable tile hung. Gabled dormer and box dormer. Timber windows. Closed porch. Weather boarded single storey extension. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 'Symonds Lodge', Symonds Green Lane  
Partly two storey red brick building with tiled gabled roof. Flemish bond. Front gable decorative timber work. Gabled dormer also with decorative timber work. UPVC diamond lattice windows. Closed porch. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Oakfield Farmhouse, Symonds Green Lane  
Two storey red brick farmhouse. Flemish bond, some blue headers. Tiled hipped roof. Front two storey bays with tiled hipped roofs. Central door with open porch. Timber 2-over-2 sash windows.

7.7 Some of the buildings referred to above have appeared on a list of locally important buildings produced on a map by Hertfordshire County Council, in the Urban Characterisation Study and in the Stevenage Extensive Urban Survey Report (Hertfordshire County Council 1979; Thompson 2005; 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)

**Figure 17.** Buildings of local importance to the conservation area;  
Symonds Lodge (a), Oakfield Farmhouse (b)

### **Prevalent and traditional building materials**

- 7.8 The majority of the houses within Symonds Green Conservation Area are two storey, with both hipped and gabled roofs.

*Walls:* red / brown brick is the prevalent building material, with some areas of render / pebbledash / applied timber. The three listed buildings are all of timber frame construction with plaster / brick infill and / or weatherboarding.

*Roofs:* red/brown clay tile, the one exception is the listed building 'Thatched Cottage', which is thatched.

*Windows:* Timber sashes / timber casements. Oakfield Farmhouse has retained its 19<sup>th</sup> century 2-over-2 timber sashes. The Crooked Billet Public House has retained its timber casements. The modern properties have uPVC windows, some modern timber sash windows have been used for the houses on Dunwich Farm.

*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**

- 7.9 The open area of common land is central to the character of Symonds Green conservation area. The green is open but the grass is kept rough and high giving it a different appearance to most public open spaces; there are a couple of footpaths trodden across the green. Symonds Green is protected as a wildlife site.

### **Trees**

- 7.10 There are no Tree Preservation Orders on trees within the conservation area. There are a significant number of mature trees which are part of the character of the conservation area, these are:

- Around the north and west boundary of the green
- Ground to the east of the green, including a small planted coppice
- Trees around the two ponds on the Green
- Either side of Symonds Green Lane, at the south end including the footpath



(a)



(b)

**Figure 18.** Symonds Green Lane; looking south (a), looking north (b)

The long line of hedge and the trees along the west side of Symonds Green Lane acts as an important division between the lane and the modern housing along its west side and enhances the semi-rural nature of the conservation area.

## Negative factors

### *Impact of New Development*

- 7.11 At the time of designation of the conservation area, Oakfield Farm was significant within the settlement although the site was in poor condition. Since then, it has been the focus of recent housing 'cul-de-sac / close' development. Whilst the farmhouse is still a visible presence from the Lane, the 'Dunwich Farm' and Southwold Close developments together with Newlyn Close now dominate this part of the conservation area and Oakfield Farm barn (a listed building) is no longer easily visible. The relationship between Oakfield Farmhouse and Oakfield Barn has been lost. The housing on the Dunwich Farm development has been well designed and uses traditional detailing and some timber sash windows, however the houses are tall with large roofs and are set closely together with a large amount of tarmac hard-standing and a lack of green space / trees.



(a)



(b)

**Figure 19.** Negative factors; housing development at Dunwich Farm (a), redundant signage on the Green (b)



*Building at Risk*

- 7.12 Oakfield Barn, a grade II listed structure, has been a long-standing 'building at risk'. However repairs are underway and it is to be converted to residential accommodation (Fig. 20).
- 7.13 Grass on the Green opposite 'Greenside' is being worn away by vehicle parking.
- 7.14 Municipal signage on the Green is intrusive and in some cases redundant (Fig. 19b).
- 7.15 The smoking shelter adjacent to The Crooked Billet Public House is adding to the clutter in this area.



**Figure 20.** Oakfield Barn, timber frame undergoing repair



## **8.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- 8.1 As part of the 'Review of Stevenage Conservation Areas' (BEAMS Ltd, 2005) public consultation was conducted through press releases, access to the Council's website and targeted invitation to local interest groups. No comments were received regarding Symonds Green Conservation Area.
- 8.2 Conservation area consultation was undertaken by Stevenage Borough Council between 9<sup>th</sup> July and 17<sup>th</sup> August 2007 regarding the alteration to the conservation area boundary as proposed in the Review of Stevenage Conservation Areas (BEAMS Ltd, 2005).
- 8.3 Consultation in this instance was undertaken in accordance with the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement and comprised:
- Letter and A4 booklets sent to each household (approx. 1,100) within existing or proposed conservation areas
  - Letters and A4 booklets sent to neighbouring councils, regional and national agencies and other key stakeholders
  - An advert in the Comet newspaper for the start of the consultation period
  - A similar advert in the Comet towards the end of the consultation period
  - Posters in the reception area at Daneshill House
  - Publicity on the council's website with the ability to view proposals and provide feedback
- 8.4 The Conservation Area Review proposed that the housing development at Blakeney Road be removed from conservation area designation as this development does not relate to the character of the conservation area. 49% of respondents agreed and only 2% disagreed with the proposal. The only affected area is Blakeney Road's removal from conservation area status. No residents provided comment on this proposal.

## 9.0 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

### *Unlisted buildings / buildings of local importance:*

- 9.1 The Council may wish to consider the introduction of Article 4(2) Directions to restrict permitted development, such as the insertion of uPVC windows. Article 4(2) Directions would be a useful tool in strengthening controls over the unsympathetic alteration of unlisted buildings which cumulatively have an adverse affect on the character of the conservation area. This could be developed further in future detailed Management Plans.

### *New development:*

- 9.2 There is little or no opportunity for further development within the Conservation Area as apart from the Green itself the land has been largely developed. Further development on or affecting the remaining open space in the conservation area should be avoided.

General principles should be applied regarding any re-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.
- 9.3 Careful assessment of any proposed development / extension or advertising at The Crooked Billet Public House would be advisable due to its prominence within the conservation area.
- ### *Public realm:*
- 9.4 With regard to any street management schemes affecting the character and appearance of the conservation area; the Council should consult a conservation specialist and liaise with relevant departments i.e. Highways Authority.
- 9.5 Regular management of the Green including cutting / grazing of grass and control of car parking should be maintained. It is understood there is an arrangement for the cutting of part of the common on a twice per year basis to protect its ecological value.
- 9.6 Hedge side ditches should be maintained to prevent their gradual loss. Hedges should be managed and reinforced (eg along the east side of Symonds Green Lane adjacent to Southfield Close / Newlyn Close; either side of lane adjacent to Meadway Park and 'Cartref').
- 9.7 The retention of trees forming the backdrop to the Green and obscuring views of the surrounding housing is important.
- 9.8 Avoid placing road and other signage on the Green between 'Thatched Cottage' and 'Greenside'.
- 9.9 Improved management and cleaning out of ponds and drains upon Symonds Green.

## 10.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## Acknowledgements

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**APPENDIX 1: Extracts from 'The London Gazette' regarding Symonds Green Conservation Area designation / boundary alteration**

**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL  
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971  
*Symonds Green Conservation Area***

Notice is hereby given that the Stevenage Borough Council has determined, for the purpose of section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, as amended by the Town and Country Amenities Act 1974, that the area described in the Schedule hereto is an area of special architectural and historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance and has designated it as a Conservation Area for that purpose.

A plan showing the exact boundaries of the area concerned is available for inspection during normal office hours at:

(i) Department of Technical Services, 4th Floor, Manulife House, St. George's Way, Stevenage ;

(ii) County Planning Department, County Hall, Hertford.

The effect of the designation is that:

(a) all planning applications for development that would affect the character of the area must be advertised and site notices posted so that the maximum opportunity for comment is given to the public before any decision is reached ;

(b) the prior approval of the Borough Council may be required for the demolition of buildings within the Conservation Area (applications for approval may be made separately or as part of a planning application for the redevelopment of a site within the Conservation Area) ;

(c) before certain trees within the Conservation Area may be felled, topped, lopped or uprooted it is necessary to give 6 weeks notice to the Borough Council (if trees are subject to wilful damage or destruction an offence may be committed).

**SCHEDULE**

The boundary of the Symonds Green Conservation Area commences at the intersection of Clovelly Way and Symonds Green Road and the eastern boundary runs south along Clovelly Way to a point level with the rear boundary of 61 Eastbourne Avenue, and continues along the eastern edge of Symonds Green as far as the front boundary of 47 Eastbourne Avenue. Longmeadow and Symonds Lodge dwellinghouse are contained within the Conservation Area, as well as 20-29 Eastbourne Avenue and 1-4 Nursery Cottages. The southern boundary is a line drawn along the south boundary of 4 Nursery Cottages to the base of the A.1(M) embankment. The western boundary runs north along the base of the A.1(M) embankment as far as the footpath under the motorway and then turns eastward along the footpath as far as the rear boundary of Willow Cottage. Willow Cottage and Greenside dwellingshouse is included and the boundary then continues northward along Symonds Green Road to its intersection with Clovelly Way.

*R. A. Wetherilt*, Director of Administration and Legal Services.

Council Offices,  
Southgate House,  
Southgate, Stevenage.

2nd June 1977.

(765)

Extract from The London Gazette, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1977

***Stevenage Borough Council***

**PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS)  
ACT 1990**

**AMENDMENTS TO 3 CONSERVATION AREAS AND  
DESIGNATION OF 2 NEW CONSERVATION AREAS**

Notice is hereby given that at its meeting on 19 December 2007  
Stevenage Borough Council resolved to:

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Amend conservation area boundaries at:	Rectory Lane & St Nicholas
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Shephall Green
Symonds Green

Designate new conservation areas at:	Broadwater (Marymead) Orchard Road
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Copies of the appraisals and plans defining the conservation areas can  
be obtained from the Stevenage Borough Council website at:  
[www.stevenage.gov.uk/planningandregeneration](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planningandregeneration) or, the Planning Policy  
Team at Stevenage Borough Council, Daneshill House, Danestrete,  
Stevenage, SG1 1HN. (438075)

Extract from The London Gazette, 25 January 2008