



WALKERN CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL



Adopted 14 December 2016

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

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WALKERN CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Adopted 14 December 2016

This Character Appraisal has been produced by officers of East Hertfordshire District Council to identify the special architectural or historic interest, character and appearance of the Walkern Conservation Area, assess its current condition, identify threats and opportunities related to that identified special interest and any appropriate boundary changes.

The Management Proposals section puts forward initiatives for the Conservation Area designed to address the above identified threats and opportunities that will preserve and enhance its character and appearance. A public meeting was held in Walkern on the 9 June 2016 to consider the draft Character Appraisal and the Management Proposals – for the latter, as required under s.71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The draft document was then put to public consultation between 9 June and 22 July 2016. The comments received by the Council have been included in this document where appropriate. The document was formally adopted by full Council on 14 December 2016 upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

The content of Character Appraisals written from 2015 which include this paragraph differs slightly from predecessor documents. Selected revisions have been incorporated to reflect changes to legislation, the emerging District Plan, nomenclature, consolidation and other improvements resulting from experience gained to date.

1. Introduction.

1.1. The historic environment cannot be replaced and is a resource that is both fragile and finite. Particularly in an age when society and its needs change with rapidity, the various historic and architectural elements of conservation areas can be perceived to interact in a complex manner and create a 'unique sense of place' that is appreciated by those lucky enough to reside in such special places and the many interested persons who appreciate and visit them.

1.2. East Hertfordshire District has a particularly rich and vibrant built heritage, featuring 42 conservation areas and approximately 4,000 fine listed buildings displaying a variety of styles representative of the best of architectural and historic designs from many centuries. Generally and very importantly the clear distinction between built form and open countryside has been maintained.

1.3. The District is situated in an economically buoyant region where an attractive environment, employment opportunities and excellent transport links, road rail and air, make it a popular destination to live and work. In addition to London a short commuting distance away, the District is influenced by other factors beyond its administrative area, such as Stansted Airport and the towns of Harlow and

Stevenage. With such dynamics it is inevitable that the historic environment will be subject to pressures which emphasize the need to protect it.

1.4. The East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review, adopted in April 2007, recognises these facts and commits the Council to review its conservation areas and their boundaries. The production of this document is part of this process.

1.5. Conservation areas are places which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of the environment, spatial characteristics, the design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. In addition to the individual qualities of the buildings themselves, there are other factors such as the relationships of the buildings with each other, the quality of the spaces between them and the vistas and views that unite or disrupt them. The relationship with adjoining areas and landscape, the quality of trees, boundary treatments, advertisements, road signage, street furniture and hard surfaces, are also important features which can add to or detract from the special interest, character and appearance of a conservation area.

1.6. This Character Appraisal recognises the importance of these factors and considers them carefully. Once approved, this document will be regarded as a 'material consideration' when determining (deciding) planning applications. The Management Proposals section puts forward simple practical initiatives that would preserve the Conservation Area from identified harm and also any appropriate projects and proposals that would, as and when resources permit, enhance its character and appearance.

1.7. The recommendations concerning non-listed buildings and structures are normally formed by the field worker's observations made from the public realm and seldom involve internal inspection or discussions with owners. Thus such recommendations contained in this Character Appraisal might be subject to reconsideration through the planning application process, where that is necessary, and which would involve the submission of additional information. Similar considerations apply to estimating dates of buildings.

1.8. This Conservation Appraisal:

- Identifies the special architectural or historic interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- Identifies elements that make a positive contribution to the above special interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area that should be retained, preserved or enhanced;
- Identifies those other elements that might be beneficially enhanced or, alternatively, replaced by something that makes the above positive contribution;
- Identifies detracting elements it would be positively desirable to remove or replace;
- Reviews the existing boundaries to ensure that they clearly define the Conservation Area and align with distinct changes of character with outside areas such that the Conservation Area is both cohesive and defensible;

- Identifies threats to the Conservation Area's special interest, character and appearance and any opportunities to enhance it.

1.9. The Management Proposals section:

- Puts forward any required boundary changes to omit or add areas to the Conservation Area that would make it both cohesive and defensible;
- Proposes measures and initiatives that address the threats to the Conservation Area's special interest, character and appearance identified in the Character Appraisal;
- Proposes initiatives and projects that exploit the opportunities identified in the Character Appraisal that both preserve and enhance the Conservation Area's special interest, character and appearance;
- Puts forward appropriate enhancement proposals mindful of any funding constraints.

1.10. The document was prepared with the assistance of members of the local community and includes additional input from the Parish Council and the public through the public meeting and the consultation exercise.

This is the first Character Appraisal and Management Proposals to be produced for the Walkern Conservation Area. Similarly, no previous Village Study has been conducted. However, a 'Rural Settlement Study' for Walkern was commissioned by English Heritage in 1978 and is held by the Historic Environment Unit and Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, both at County Hall.

1.11. Acknowledgement and thanks are recorded to Hertfordshire County Council who's Historic Environment Unit has been particularly helpful.

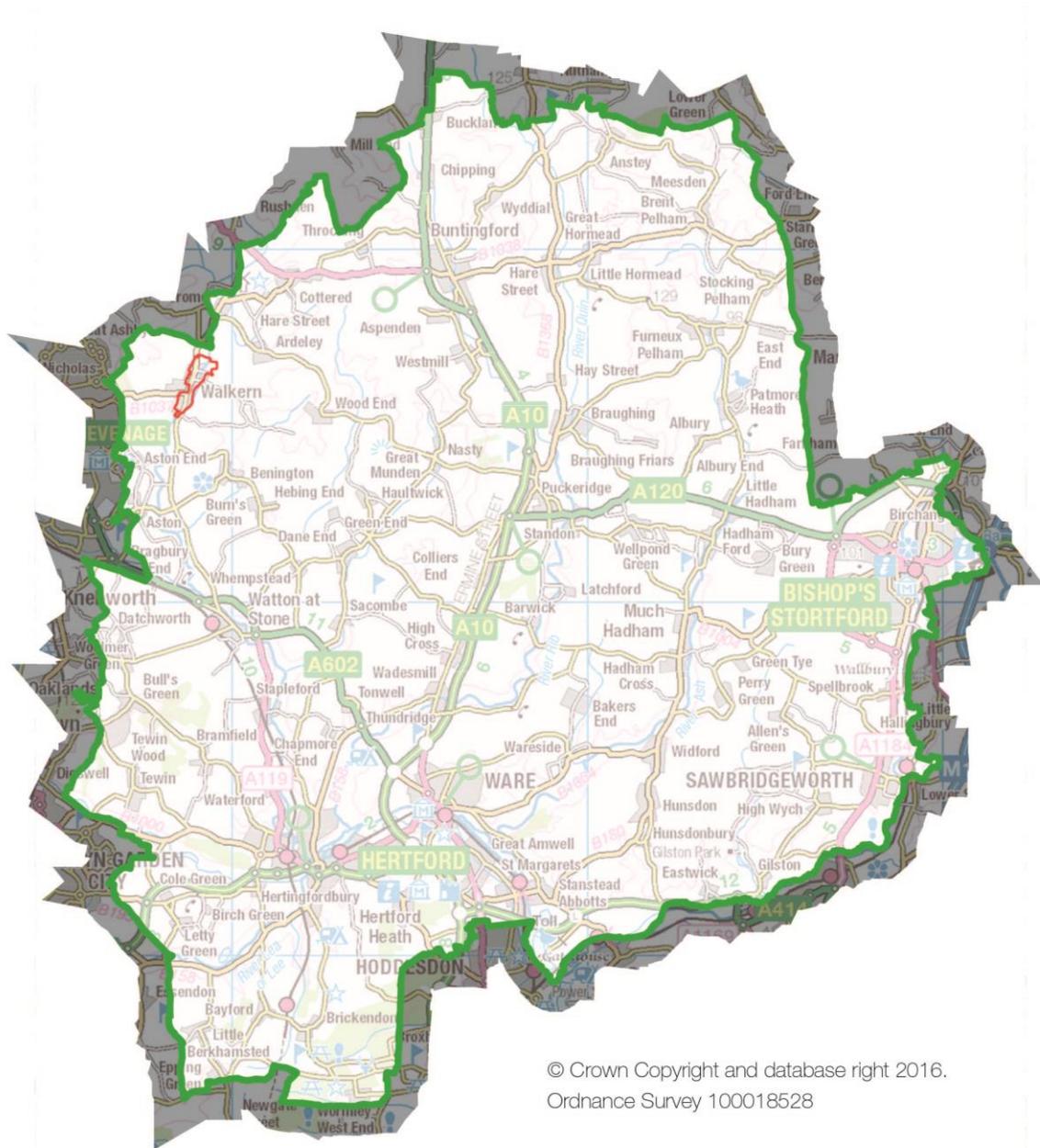
1.12. This document is written in three parts:

Part A - Legal and Policy Framework.

Part B - Appraisal;

Part C - Management Proposals.

1.13 Location of the Conservation Area within the East Herts District



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Ordnance Survey 100018528

Map 1. Location Map



Aerial photograph 2010

PART A - CONTEXT

2. Legal and Policy framework.

2.1. The legal background for designating a conservation area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This states that the Council shall from time to time (now defined as 5 years) review its area and designate as conservation areas any parts that are of '*special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*'. The same section of the Act also requires that councils undertake periodic reviews.

2.2. Section 71 of the Act requires Councils to, from time to time (5 years), '*formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement*' of conservation areas, hold a public meeting to consider them and have regard to any views expressed at the meeting concerning the proposals.

2.3. The production of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal, which identifies the special interest and the threats and opportunities within a conservation area, is an essential prerequisite of the production of s.71 Management Proposals (although, interestingly, it is the production of the latter that is the statutory duty).

2.4. Planning Controls. Within conservation areas there are additional planning controls and if these are to be justified and supported it is important that the designated areas accord with the statutory definition and are not devalued by including land or buildings that lack special interest.

2.5. Planning permission is required for the demolition of a building in a conservation area but is subject to certain exceptions. For example, it does not apply to listed buildings (which are protected by their own legal provisions within the 1990 Act) but is relevant to other non-listed buildings in a conservation area above a threshold size set out in legislation*. Looking for and assessing such buildings is therefore a priority of this Character Appraisal.

2.6. Certain ecclesiastical buildings (which are for the time being used for ecclesiastical purposes) are not subject to local authority administration provided an equivalent approved system of control is operated by the church authority. This is known as the 'ecclesiastical exemption'. Importantly in such circumstances, church authorities still need to obtain any other necessary planning permissions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2.7. Permitted Development. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England), Order 2015 defines the range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required. This range is more restricted in conservation areas. For example, the Order currently requires that the addition of dormer windows to roof slopes, various types of cladding, satellite dishes fronting a

* The demolition of a building not exceeding 50 cubic metres is not development and can be demolished without planning permission. Demolition of other buildings below 115 cubic metres are regarded as 'Permitted Development' granted by the General Permitted Development Order, subject to conditions that may require the Council's 'prior approval' regarding methods of proposed demolition and restoration.

highway and a reduced size of extensions, all require planning permission in a conservation area.

2.8. However, even within conservation areas there are other minor developments associated with many non-listed buildings that do not require planning permission. Where further protection is considered necessary to preserve a conservation area from harmful alterations carried out under such 'Permitted Development Rights', the law allows Councils to introduce additional controls if appropriate. Examples of such controls can commonly include some developments fronting a highway or open space, such as an external porch or the demolition of some gates, fences or walls or their alteration. The removal of existing architectural features that are identified as being important to the character or appearance of a conservation area (such as chimneys, traditional detailing or materials, porches, windows and doors or walls or railings) can be made subject to protection by a legal process known as an 'Article 4 Direction' which withdraws 'Permitted Development Rights'. The use of such Directions needs to be made in justified circumstances where a clear assessment of each conservation area has been made. In conducting this Character Appraisal, consideration has been given as to whether or not such additional controls are appropriate.

2.9. Works to Trees. Another additional planning control relates to trees located within conservation areas. Setting aside various exceptions principally relating to size, any proposal to fell or carry out works to trees has to be 'notified' to the Council. The Council may then decide whether to make the tree/s subject to a Tree Preservation Order. This Character Appraisal diagrammatically identifies only the most significant trees or groups of trees that make an important contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, particularly when viewed from the public realm. Other trees not specifically identified may still be suitable for statutory protection through a TPO. At the current time there are no TPOs within the Conservation Area.

2.10. Some hedges may be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. This legislation is particularly complicated and only applies in certain situations that are determined by the location and extent of the hedge, its age and or its historical importance, the wildlife it supports and its number of woody species. Whilst the Regulations do not apply to domestic garden hedges, such garden hedges which are considered to be visually important have been identified. It is hoped their qualities are recognised by owners and the community and will be retained.

2.11. National Planning Policy Framework. The principle emphasis of the framework is to promote 'sustainable development'. Economic, social and environmental factors should not be considered in isolation because they are mutually inter-dependent and collectively define what sustainable development is. Positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment should be sought, including replacing poor design with better design. Whilst architectural styles should not be imposed (unless, of course the conservation area is of a homogenous architectural style – which is not the case with Walkern) it is considered proper to reinforce local distinctiveness.

2.12. Of particular relevance to this document, the National Planning Policy Framework advises as follows:

- There should be a positive strategy in the Local Plan for the conservation of the historic environment and up-to-date evidence used to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make.
- Conservation areas. Such areas must justify such a status by virtue of being of *‘special architectural or historic interest’*.
- Heritage assets. A heritage asset is defined as *‘a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listings)’ and non-designated assets – for example archaeological assets.*
- Considerable weight should be given to conserving such heritage assets and the more important they are the greater the weight. For example the effect of an application affecting a non- designated heritage asset should be taken into account and a balanced judgment reached. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional whilst harm to heritage assets of higher status, e.g. a grade I or II* listed building should be wholly exceptional.
- Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that preserve such elements should be approved.
- The use of Article 4 Directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations *‘where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area...’*
- Green areas. Such areas of particular importance can properly be identified for special protection as Local Green Spaces in selected situations.

2.13. East Herts’ Environmental Initiatives and Local Plan Policies. East Herts Council is committed to protecting conservation areas and implementing policies which preserve and enhance them; to support their preservation through the publication of design and technical advice and to be pro-active by offering grants and administering a Historic Buildings Grant Service. With regard to the latter, grants are awarded on a first-come-first-served basis in relation to works which result in the maintenance of listed buildings and other unlisted buildings of architectural or historic interest. Details are available on the Council’s website.

2.14. In respect of the above the Council has produced a number of leaflets and guidance notes that are available on line and on request. These ‘guidance notes on the preservation and repair of historic materials and buildings’ provide useful information relevant to the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. They will be updated as resources permit.

2.15. The Council also has a 'Heritage at Risk Register', originally produced in 2006 and updated in 2012/13 and again in 2016.

This document is available on the Council's website. There is one such building identified as being 'At Risk' within the Walkern Conservation Area. Grant assistance may be available for necessary works that lead to such buildings' long term security. Details are available on the Council's website.

2.16. The East Herts Local Plan was adopted by the Council in 2007. The 'saved' policies set out in the plan remain in force and are relevant in relation to conservation area and historic building considerations. The Local Plan and its policies can be viewed on the Council's website or a copy can be obtained from the Council (contact details are set out at the end of this document).

2.17. In accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is in the process of preparing a planning policy document which will replace the 2007 Local Plan. This will be known as the East Herts District Plan (DP). Once adopted the DP will contain the relevant Council planning policies. As currently drafted this emerging District Plan advises that new development in a conservation area should, *inter alia*, conform with the content of the relevant Character Appraisal.

2.18. Walkern Conservation Area was first designated on 26 February 1981. This document is the first review of the designation.

Part B – CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

3. Origins and Historical Development

3.1. Within the existing conservation area boundary there are 34 records held on the Historic Environment Record by the County Archaeologist. Many of these relate to listed buildings, which are detailed later in this document, other notable historic buildings and a number of archaeological sites and associated finds. Together they demonstrate the diversity of Walkern's heritage and its considerable time depth. They include:- pudding stone quern found at the White Lion; Roman cremation burial found at Walkern Primary School; Church of St Mary; Farmhouse, barns and dovecote at Manor Farm; road bridge over the River Beane; The Walkern Brewery maltings; Walkern Brewery & Mineral Water And Cider Factory; Pearman's Watermill; Bridgefoot Farmhouse, barns and stables; old village school at 43 Church End; site of College Farm on High Street (lost); site of village pound on Winters Lane; site of Baptist Chapel (lost – now a graveyard) on Froghall Lane at Finche's End; Independent Chapel, High Street; site of Methodist Chapel on Totts Lane; site of Finches Farm at Finches End; Rooks Nest Farmhouse at Finches End; site of Cambridge Cottages on Bockings at Church End (lost); Medieval ditch at 43 Church End; site of allotments off High Street; The Laurels, 80 High Street; early Roman pit near the Yew Tree on High Street; post-Medieval cess pit on High Street; Fairview Cottage, 102 High Street; Robin Hood PH, 63 High Street; 82-86 High Street; The Old Rectory, High Street; site of Second World War searchlight emplacement on Totts Lane; Beecroft Lane.

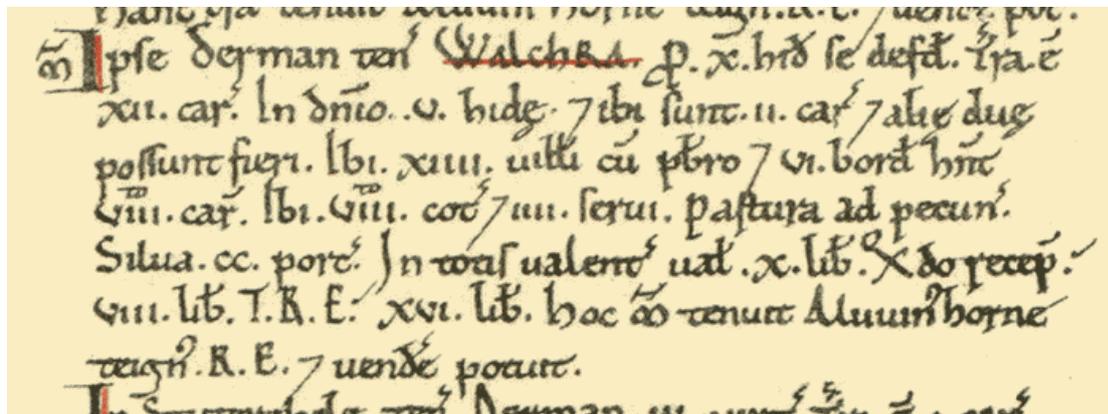
3.2 Prehistoric. Britain has been intermittently inhabited by members of the Homo genus for hundreds of thousands of years, and by Homo sapiens for tens of thousands of years. The evidence suggests that the various genus lived side-by-side for many thousands of years before Homo sapiens, more intelligent, adaptable and, probably, aggressive, became predominant. DNA analysis has shown that modern humans have periodically occupied Britain for at least 41,500 years, since before the end of the last glacial period. It is known that Celtic tribes were in Hertfordshire from 700 BC. Archaeological finds confirms human habitation in the Walkern area from the 1st century AD and that they were capable of basic iron smelting.

3.3. Roman settlement. The small number of archaeological finds within and without the Conservation Area point to a sparse farming community at this time; Walkern in not straddling any kind of major route or river was, therefore, something of a backwater. The farmers were probably Romanised Celts who, in exchange for retention or receipt of land and holdings, had made their peace with the invaders.

3.4. In the post-Roman, Saxon era, Walkern appears to have continued as a simple rural community (albeit relatively large for the time). It was known as '*Walchra*', the name, according to some sources, was derived from certain springs, which increased the waters of the river Beane, and drove a mill at the south end of the Town; '*Wal*', signifying in the Saxon language a moist and watery place.

3.5 The Domesday Book, the census commissioned by William I in 1086 states, in relation to Walkern '*Dearman himself owns Walchra. It is assessed at 10 hides. This*

is land for 12 ploughs. In the demesne are 5 hides and there 2 ploughs in it and there could be two others. There are 14 villeins and 1 priest and 6 bordars have 8 ploughs. There are 8 cottars and 4 serfs. Pasture is there sufficient for the livestock, woodland to feed 200 swine. Its total value is ten pounds; when received it was worth 8 pounds. T.R.E. 16 pounds. Alwin Home, a theyn of King Edward's held this manor and could sell".



Extract from the Domesday Book for 'Walchra'

3.6. Interpretation: A 'hide' was a standard unit of land measurement interpreted to be about 120 acres. A 'villein' was a peasant legally tied to land he worked on and of higher economic status than a 'bordar' or 'cottar'. The latter occupied a cottage in return for services provided. 'Demesne' essentially means land belonging to the lord of the manor. A 'theyn' in this context probably means a religious 'follower'.

3.7. The Purbeck effigy of a knight with lowered visor to be seen in St Mary's Church introduces a significant historical note for Walkern for it is thought to represent William (III) de Lanvalei (c.1182-c.1217) Lord of Walkern and one of the twenty-five Magna Carta sureties appointed by the rebel barons at Runnymede in 1215 to ensure that King John adhered to the Law of the Land set down in the charter.

3.8 The Manor continued to pass down from Alwin Home's descendants through succeeding Lords of the Manor until 1506 when it was sold to Sir William Cappell. It was his scion, Arthur Lord Capell of Hadham, who was created Earl of Essex after the Restoration in 1660. Walkern has subsequently descended in this family, and is now held by the seventh Earl.

3.9 At the beginning of the 18th century the area was swept up in the now notorious witchcraft hysteria that culminated in the trial in 1712 of Jane Wenham of Walkern, commonly but erroneously claimed to be the last woman in England to be so tried. Mercifully, the Judge, mindful of the jury's apparent prejudices, reprieved her; and she afterwards received a free pardon.

3.10 Walkern, it should be noted has, until recent times, been a relatively isolated rural settlement (which may have been a factor in the above notorious events). On a more positive note, this isolation has meant that, before the last 50 or so years, it has had to be quite self-sufficient. Prior to then, Walkern, as well as farming, had many small industries such as brickmaking, brewing, various farms, bee keeping, glass

houses, coal merchants, wood yard, keeping of pigs, hens, rabbits, poultry business, slaughter house, undertakers, local stores, as well as allotments and pubs. Villagers, to a degree quite startling to people today, worked, played and, lived out their lives within the village.

3.11 Key recorded events: Brick makers were first recorded in 1695, local farmer Thomas Wright started malting barley in 1790, the Walkern National School was built by Rev. and Mrs. James Camper Wright in 1820, the present watermill was built by Thomas Garrett in 1828 and the Wesleyan Chapel was erected in 1857. Samuel Wright founded his Victoria brewery in 1870, an Infant school built was added to the Nation school 1877 and the churchyard was enlarged in 1888. In the last century the Walkern British Legion was formed in 1921, the High Street was tarmacked in 1930 (it was not a major route, so a relatively low priority) with street lights only added in 1938.

3.12 A picture of the 19th c. settlement can be gained from Kelly's Directory of 1874 which lists the following commercial entries:- a saddler and shopkeeper, 8 farmers, a brewer and carpenter, a brewer and maltster, a poulterer and carrier, 3 beer retailers, 2 blacksmiths, public houses at The Red Lion, the White Lion and the Yew Tree, 2 shoemakers, a bootmaker, 3 shopkeepers, a wheelwright, a carpenter, a miller and farmer, a plumber, a tailor, a bricklayer, 2 bakers one of whom was also a corn dealer, a surgeon, and a painter. It is interesting that so many had second trades, for example the owner of the White Lion PH was a builder by day. Kelly's identifies the population in 1871 as 799. From the varied numbers of local trades it can be seen that Walkern was largely self-sufficient, a characteristic that is entirely consistent with other rural communities of similar size at the time. The various farmers worked a 'gravel, flint and clay' soil producing wheat, barley, beans and turnips. The Directory also lists the 'Post and Money Order Office and Savings Bank', the National School set up in 1834, an Infants' school, notes the Rector of St Mary's as Rev. William James Boys and the 3 chapels for Baptists, Independents and Wesleyans.

3.13 The publication, Place Names of Hertfordshire, Cambridge University Press 1970 advises several names, which includes: 'Walcra' circa 1198. 'Walkerne' circa 1222.

3.14 Historic and contemporary maps. These show the development of the village since the late 19th century. There has been a gradual acceleration of development taking the form of a palimpsest of development and infills, typical of many such popular and convenient villages. By far the most striking change is the council housing estate north of the Stevenage Road built after the war. Much recent development is opportunistic infill of fields immediately behind or abutting the High Street. These tend to be self-contained and in a cul-de-sac form lacking appropriate secondary linkages to adjacent sites. This is leading to a fragmentation of the village. Better urban design planning is needed to attenuate this trend.

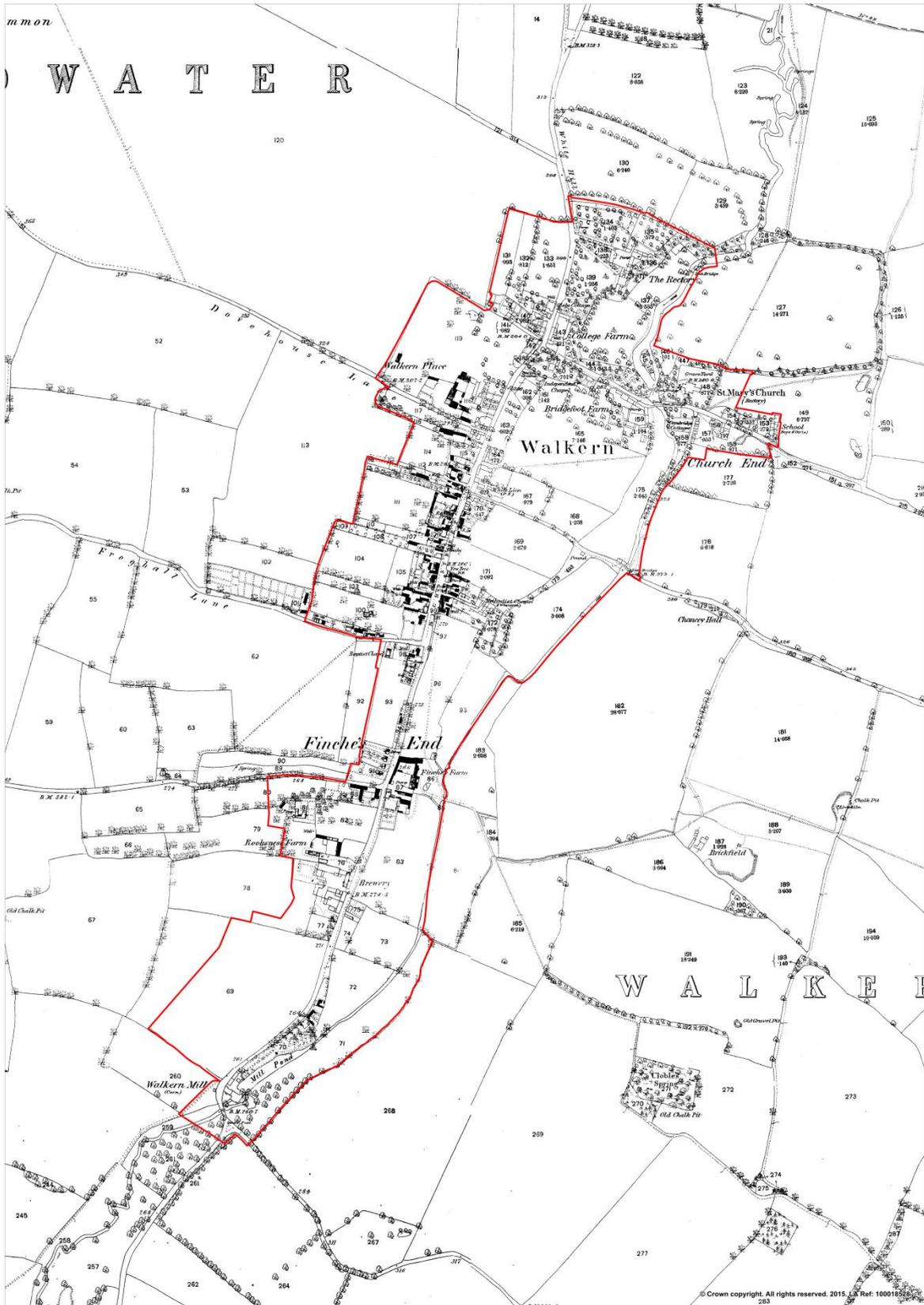


Fig. 1. OS map of 1878-1881

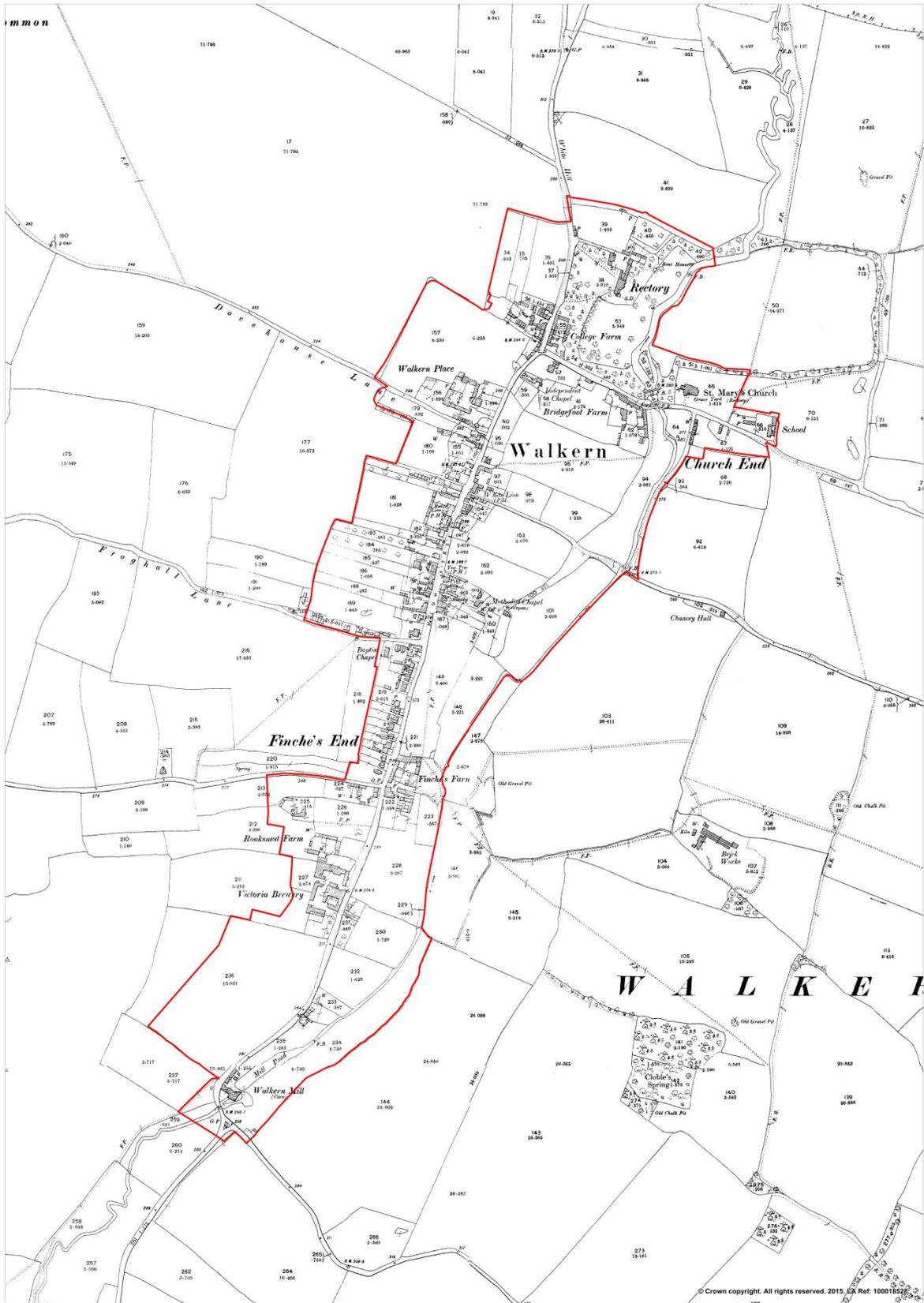


Fig. 2. OS map of 1897-1898

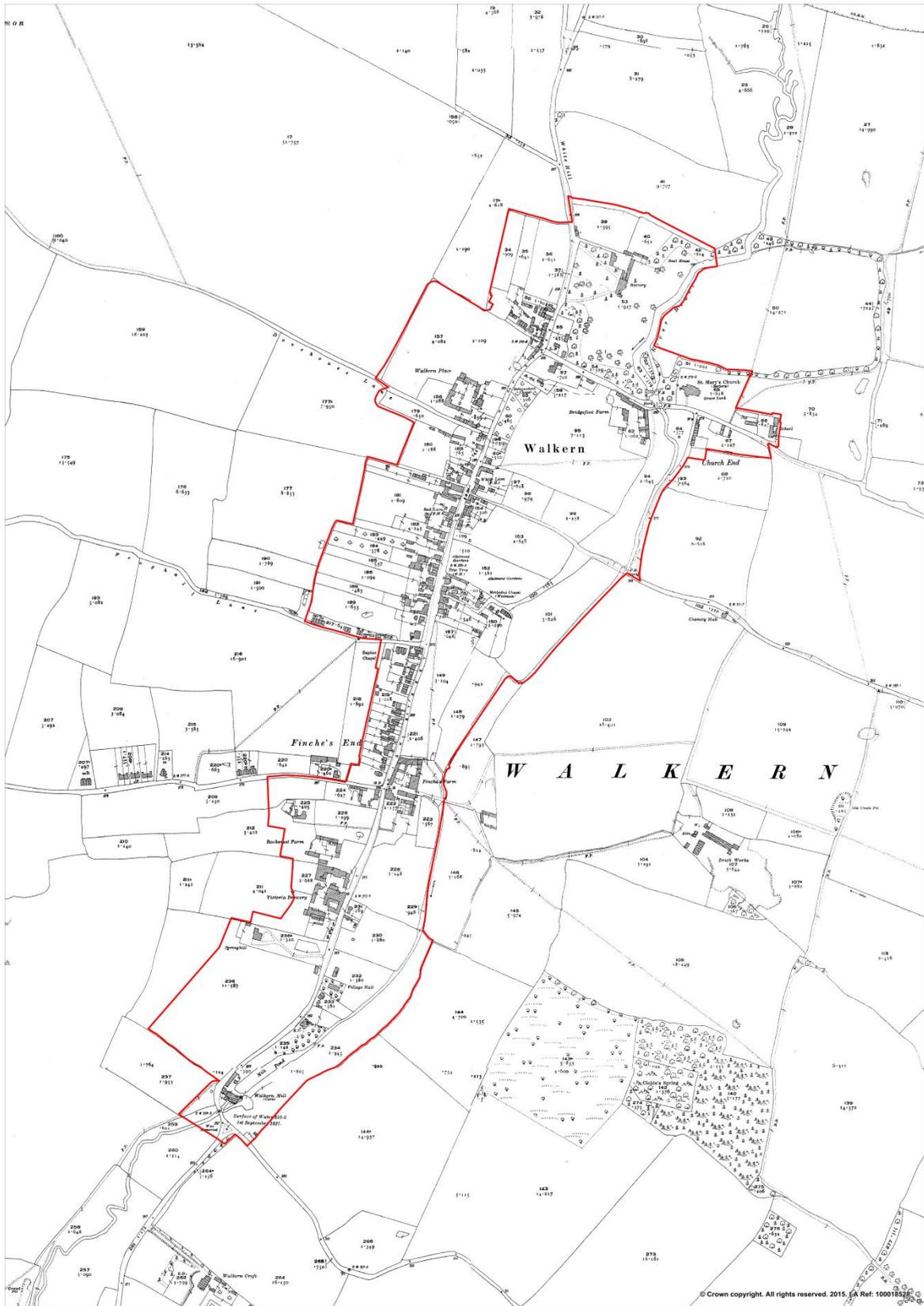
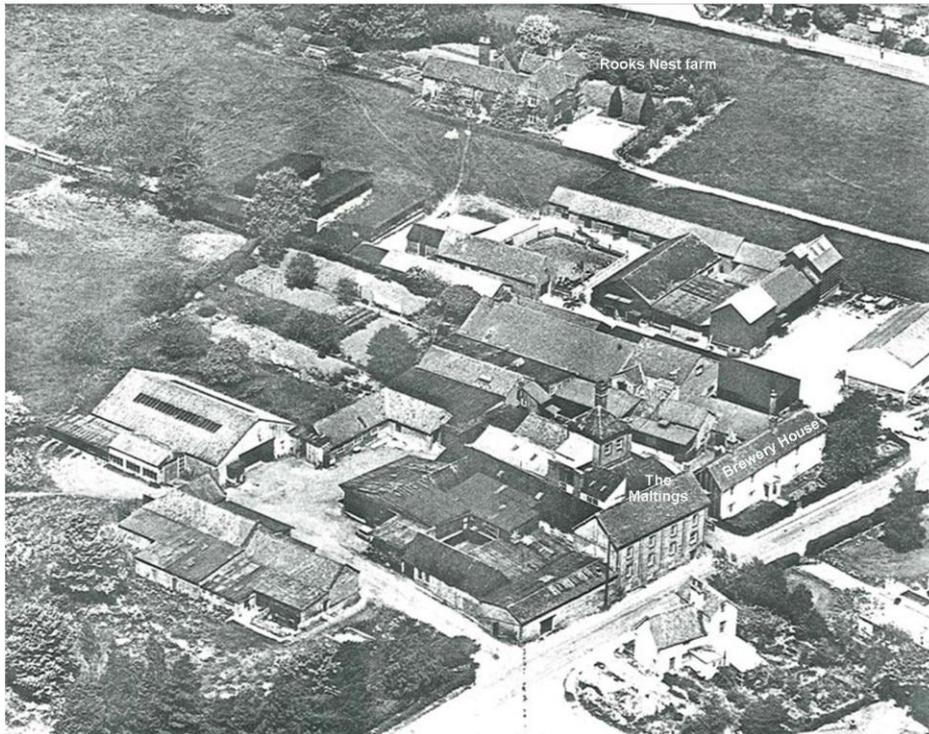


Fig. 3. OS map of 1923-1924



Fig. 5. OS map of 2016



Aerial photo of Wright's Brewery circa 1964. From Cecil Beadle's Walkern collection.



Aerial photo of Stevenage Road, Walkern. Circa 1964, from Cecil Beadle's Walkern collection. (Numbers relate to commentary on the Walkern History Society's website).

Readers seeking a more in-depth history of Walkern will be well-served by the society's web site at www.walkernhistorysociety.co.uk.

4. HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS AND THE CRITERIA USED TO IDENTIFY OTHER IMPORTANT FEATURES

These can be seen plotted and/or annotated on the Character Analysis Map on p.23

4.1. Scheduled Ancient Monuments (a National designation).

There are no SAMs within the Conservation Area.

4.2. Areas of Archaeological Significance

These are designated locally by EHDC on advice from HCC. The areas identified by this Character Appraisal include areas as shown in both the adopted Local Plan and the emerging District Plan because the identification and refinement of such areas is an ongoing process. The northern half of the Conservation Area is so designated.



*Dovecote at
Manor Farm.
circa 1700
Grade II**

4.3. Listed buildings (a National designation).

There are three grades of listed buildings; in descending order of special interest, Grade I (approximately 2.5% of the national total), Grade II* (approx. 5.5%) and Grade II making up the rest. Listed buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension. They are protected both internally and externally. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilage of listed buildings, if they are pre-1948, are also subject to the same controls as listed buildings. Individually listed buildings within the Conservation Area have been identified, plotted and a selected few are briefly described, such abbreviated descriptions being based on the national list, occasionally with additional comments *in italics* by the fieldworker. Full descriptions can be obtained on line at Historic England's website List.HistoricEngland.org.uk

4.4. Non-listed buildings of quality worthy of protection.

A number of non-listed buildings and structures make an important positive contribution to the architectural or historic special interest of the Conservation Area and are identified in this Character Appraisal. The basic questions asked in assessing such buildings/structures are:

- (a) Is the non-listed building/structure of sufficient architectural or historic interest whose general external form and appearance remains largely unaltered?
- (b) Does the building contain a sufficient level of external original features and materials?
- (c) Has the building retained its original scale without large inappropriate modern extensions that destroy the visual appearance particularly in respect of the front elevation?
- (d) Is the building visually important in the street scene?

Historic England, in its Advice Note 1 'Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' (2016) provides a useful checklist to identify elements in a conservation area which may contribute to the special interest. The checklist is reproduced in Appendix 1.

4.5. Important trees and hedgerows.

These are identified by this Appraisal and shown on the Character Analysis Map on p. 23. The basic criteria for identifying important trees and hedgerows are:-

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

4.6. Open spaces or important gaps.

Those that contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and where development would be inappropriate are identified in this Character Appraisal and on the Character Analysis Map on p. 23. The basic question asked in identifying such areas is does the open space or gap form an important landscape feature contributing to the general spatial quality and visual importance of the Conservation Area? Private open spaces forming an important setting for an historic asset and unkempt spaces that have the potential to be enhanced are candidates for selection subject to complying with the principle question.

4.7. Other distinctive features.

Those that make an important architectural or historic contribution are identified in this Character Appraisal and on the Character Analysis Map on p. 23. In relation to walls and railings, those at and above prescribed heights in a conservation area, being 1m abutting a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway, waterway or open space) or 2m elsewhere, are protected and require permission for their demolition.

4.8. Enhanced controls.

Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions to control minor development in conservation areas in justified circumstances. The character appraisals undertaken to date for other conservation areas have identified that while many important historic architectural features remain unaltered on some non-listed buildings, the exercise of Permitted Development Rights on other buildings has eroded their quality and harmed the special interest of the conservation areas. Should Members decide to proceed with such an initiative,

such important historic detailing including features as identified below could justifiably be retained and inappropriate alterations to them controlled. In time some of the lost architectural detailing could then be restored.

- Chimneys, in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property and prominent in the street scene.
- Windows and doors visible from the street/s, where they make a positive contribution to the special interest and character and appearance of the Conservation Area. An Article 4 Direction made through a s.71 Conservation Area Management Proposal can be a useful tool in controlling the loss of such features and, where already lost and replaced with inauthentic modern replacements, their restoration.
- Other features might include good quality architectural materials and detailing constructed of wood, metal or other materials.
- Walls or railings which make a positive architectural or historic contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Hardstandings and measures to prevent the loss of front gardens for off-street parking.
- Measures to prevent the installation of photovoltaic (PV) and solar panels on prominent roofslopes.
- It may also be appropriate to introduce Article 4 Directions to retain quality buildings below the prescribed Permitted Development threshold.

4.9. Negative features.

Buildings and features that are out of character with the Conservation Area and detract from or harm its special interest or are in poor repair are identified in the Character Appraisal and on the Character Analysis Map on p. 23.

4.10. Important views

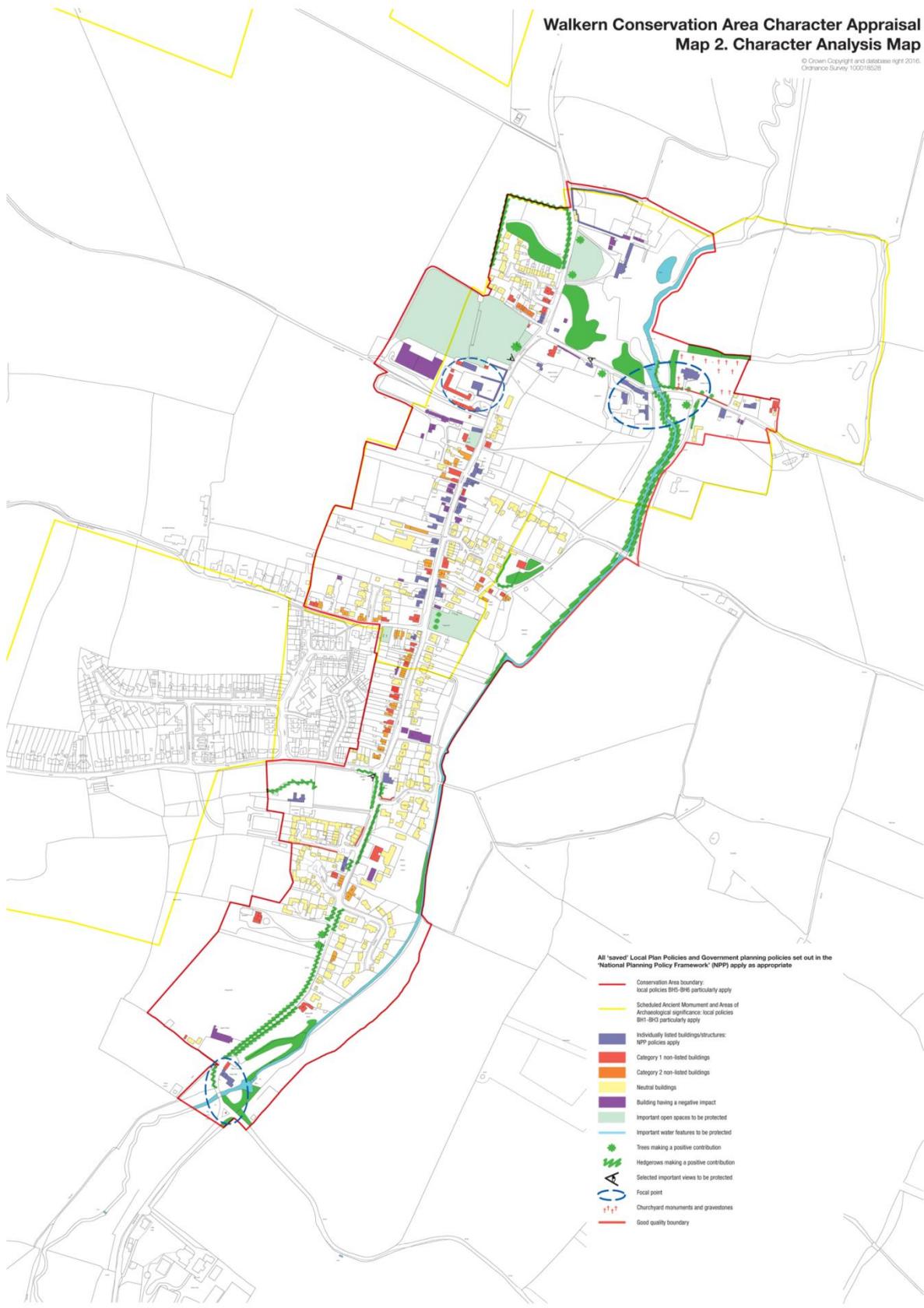
These are identified on the Character Analysis Map on p. 23.

4.11. Conservation Area boundaries.

In suggesting the revisions to the Conservation Area boundaries (see Part C - Conservation Area Management Proposals from p. 41), principal consideration has been given as to whether or not the land or buildings in question form part of the area of 'special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Too often modern development lacks the necessary architectural interest to merit retention. Similarly, large tracts of open space or farmland around a village should not now be included. The boundary should describe a clear change in character or appearance if it is to be both logical and defensible in law.

Boundaries normally, but not always, follow existing features on the ground and property boundaries. Where appropriate, they also follow the crown of the road. In addition, where conservation area legislation protects features such as wall/railings or trees that would otherwise form part of a conservation area boundary the latter is extended a small but obvious distance beyond the protected feature in question to avoid any ambiguity in interpretation as to whether or not it lies within the conservation area.

5. CHARACTER ANALYSIS



Map 2 Character Analysis Map (See fold out A3 map at end for detail)

5.1. General Landscape setting.

In terms of its wider setting, the Landscape Character Assessment produced in 2007 as a Supplementary Planning Document, describes the wider area ('Area 39, the Middle Beane Valley') as *'Open arable farmland with small grouped woodlands linked by hedges. Medium to large-scale field pattern over strongly undulating slopes, with a remote character despite proximity to Stevenage. ...Walkern Road runs north/south below the plateau edge on the eastern valley slope'*. (NB the bridge at the southern end of the Conservation Area is where the Road crosses the Beane to the western valley slope where it becomes The High Street, then White Hill as it climbs north towards Cromer and points beyond).

5.2 General overview.

Walkern is a typical rural village approximately 4 miles to the east of the modern New Town conurbation of Stevenage. It straddles a once quiet road connecting Hertford with its northern hinterland of villages between the Great North Road (now the B197 and, north of Baldock, the A1) to the west and Ermine Street (the old A10) to the east. Walkern High Street lies some 150m or so up on the drier land on the western slope of the River Beane. At its north end the historic lane of Church End leads eastward to the ford crossing and St Mary's church. Various narrow lanes follow the river bottom with Church End, Winters Lane and Totts Lane rising west up to connect with the High Street. Towards its southern end the new Stevenage Road runs off to the west and forms a busy junction. In being a useful cross-link to Buntingford and the A10, the Stevenage Road is the cause of much of the traffic that constantly drives through the village; the section of the High Street to the south of the junction being noticeably quieter. At the southern end of the Conservation Area the road crosses the River Beane via a narrow bridge, with the war memorial forming a triangular junction with the Bennington Road heading south to Hertford and the minor rural road rising to serve Walkern Hall and farms to the east.

Walkern is evidence of the typical decline of rural villages and village life across Hertfordshire since the War. The village once served a largely self-sufficient rural area with shops, pubs, building-related construction firms, churches, schools, mills and breweries to support the village, its outlying farms and the rural community. Today, it is increasingly a dormitory for commuters into the nearby towns, this characteristic only dampened by the lack of a railway line and station. Today most of the once diverse range of shops, pubs, businesses and civic institutions has gone, out-priced by house values, their memory only retained in the often rather fey names now adopted by the displacing householders. A village store survives, as does a garage and one or two other hardy enterprises. Denied many of the retail and work-settings for village life, civic life, as in so many villages, is now increasingly centred on the church and school and the few surviving pubs.

An interesting characteristic of Walkern is the patchiness of historic development, with a number of farms and fields mixed into the heart of the village; particularly on the west side. In recent years these, not unnaturally, have drawn the attention of developers, keen to exploit high local house values. Insofar as these developments have made the village more compact, completing the streetscene, with a larger population able to support the church, school and surviving commercial enterprises, that is a good thing. However, too often the urban design layouts are piecemeal, lending themselves to individual culs-de-sac lacking proper through linkages leaving

them in disjointed isolation. In addition the use of standard designs lacking in local characteristics has left many with a distinctly ‘anywhereland’ suburban quality at odds with the rural character of the village. Walkern is increasingly in danger of looking like a suburb of Stevenage (or any other commuter town). Outside the Conservation Area, the public-housing estate was an early offender, lacking integration into the wider village, a common fault with many such post-war adjuncts to Hertfordshire villages.

5.3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. None.

5.4 Areas of Archaeological Significance.

Much of the area to the north of 124 and 93 High Street up to the Walled Garden to the Old Rectory and including the lands associated with the said buildings lining the High Street and lands along Church End are included within an Area of Archaeological Significance.

5.5 Individually Listed Buildings.

There are 38 listed buildings within the existing Conservation Area. Of this total, 4 date from the 15th century or earlier (11%); 5 from the 16th century (13%); 15 from the 17th century (40%); 12 from the 18th century (32%) and 2 from the 19th century (5%). All buildings are Grade II except the 1 No. Grade I and the 6 No. at Grade II*.

As previously indicated some listed buildings have been identified as being in poor condition. Grade I and Grade II* examples are included in Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register; Grade II examples are include in the Council’s Heritage at Risk Register.

A selection of listed buildings within the Conservation Area c/w abbreviated descriptions based on the National list is provided below.

GRADE I

Parish Church Of St Mary The Virgin.



A-S CII nave, early C12 S aisle, early C13 chancel and N aisle, early C14 W tower, early C15 2-storeys S porch, late C15 aisle windows and a clerestorey. Rainwater heads dated 1789. Chancel restored 1878, NE chapel 1882 by Hugh Roumieu Gough. C19 SE vestry, restoration and re-seating 1882. Flint rubble with dressings of Barnack stone and clunch. Chancel and flanking chapel and vestry steep roofs in old red tile. A church of outstanding interest on account of its early origins, varied dates of development, the Saxon Road sculpture and the early C13 knight's effigy in the S aisle.

GRADE II*

Farmhouse at Rooks Nest Farm.

House. Mid C17 front range; rear wing later, possibly 1701; brewhouse wing at NE C19. Red brick, in English-bond in front range. Originally a 2 storeys and attic, cruciform, lobby-entry, central chimney plan house.

Dovecote at Manor Farm.

Circa 1700. Red brick in Flemish-bond with dark headers and fine gauged red brick dressings. Steep octagonal roof with cupola and ovoid finial.

Farmhouse at Manor Farm.

Circa 1700. Red brick in Flemish-bond with diaper of dark headers on front. Rear service wing timber framed and plastered. Steep old red tile roofs. A 2 storeys and attics, L-plan house facing E. Symmetrical single-pile front range with 3 panes.

Oakbeam, 36 High Street.

Wealden house. C15 or earlier, chimney inserted c1700, S wing c1800, divided in C19. Timber frame on tarred brick sill, roughcast with steep old red tile roof carried down as catslide over rear outshot. Painted brick S wing. A 2-storeys house facing E. Former open-hall and storeyed end bays, separately jettied to front, covered by a single pitched roof.

The Old Rectory (at north end of village).



Rectory, now a private house. Circa 1632 for Rector Dr John Gorsuch (1600-48), E front early C18, library wing c1781 for Benjamin Heath, roof early C19, altered c1933 (rwp), sold c1937. Red brick, colourwashed roughcast at front with stucco quoins, and steep slated hipped roof. A square, 3-storeys and cellars, early brick rectory, facing W.

Farmhouse at Bridgefoot Farm, 10 Church End.

Mid C15 open hall house with 2 crosswings, hall floored over and chimney built in late C16, rear wing late C17 or early C18, N crosswing demolished before lean-to wash house built against N side of rear wing. Timber frame on stucco sill, roughcast with weatherboarding on ground floor of N end and remains of pargetting on E front. Steep old red tile roofs.

GRADE II

High Street: West side (S - N).

Brewery House, 198 High Street

108 High Street

Fairview Cottage, 102 High Street

98 & 100 High Street

96 High Street

82 & 86 High Street

The Laurels, 80 High Street

78 High Street

Lyndhurst, 76 High Street

Redlyn, 70 High Street (was the Red Lion PH)

56 High Street

Forecourt walls, Frontage walls and North Walled Garden at Manor Farm

North barn at Manor Farm.



High Street: East side (S – N).

Walkern Mill and No 161 High Street (Millers Cottage)
Farmhouse at Finches Farm, High Street (opp jnct with Stevenage Road)
WH Shepherd, Butcher (now a shop), 69 High Street
65 & 67 High Street
Robin Hood PH (now dwelling), 63 High Street
Vale House, 45 & 47 High Street
33 High Street
The White Lion PH, 31 High Street
Walkern Free Church (United Reformed Methodists), High Street
Granary at The Old Rectory, High Street (corner of Church End)
Walled Garden at The Old Rectory, High Street.

Church End: North side (W – E).

Monument in St Mary's Churchyard to Philip Adams
Monument in St Mary's Churchyard to Susannah Lewis
The Old School House, 39 Church End

Church End: South side (W – E).

Wych Elm Cottage, 6 Church End
North barn, North-east barn and Stable between at No. 10 Church End
(Bridgefoot Farm).
South-east stable at No. 10 Church End (Bridgefoot Farm)
Bockings, Church End, (opposite churchyard)



5.6 Important buildings within the curtilages of Listed Building.

It should be noted that S.2 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 extends the protection of the listing given to the main building to include curtilage structures, buildings and boundaries. These have, therefore, enhanced protection above that provided by being within a conservation area.

5.7 Non-listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution.

This Character Appraisal identifies other buildings of high quality that are not listed but that should be retained. These principally date from the 19th century and are an important element in the built form and historical evolution of the Conservation Area and make a positive contribution to its special interest, character and appearance.

Category 1 buildings are shown in green on the Character Analysis Map and are well-preserved and retain most important architectural features, for example good quality windows, chimneys and other architectural features that are considered worthy of additional protection through an Article 4 direction.

Category 2 buildings are shown in orange on the Character Appraisal Map and are good buildings, clearly worthy of retention but which have lost some key architectural features or have suffered modern replacements out-of-keeping with the building. These buildings are considered worthy of restoration which additional planning controls through an Article 4 direction would help deliver (and then, subsequently, retain).

High Street: West side (S - N).

Category 1.

Springhall and 204 High Street
15-18 (consec.) The Maltings
The Towerhouse, The Maltings
Boundary wall to south side of Rookery Close
Boundary wall facing High Street to Nos. 1-4 (consec.) Rookery Close
152 High Street
148 High Street
144 High Street
138 and 136 High Street
134 High Street
122 High Street
120 High Street
112 High Street

Category 2.

164 and 166 High Street
162 and 160 High Street
158 and 156 High Street
154 High Street
150 High Street
146 High Street
142 and 140 High Street
130-124 (consec.) High Street
118 High Street
116 High Street
114 High Street
114a High Street

Froghall Lane: South side (E – W).

Category 2.

1-7 odd Froghall Lane

Froghall Lane: North side (E – W).

Category 1.

4 Froghall Lane

20 and 22 Froghall Lane

Category 2.

6 Froghall Lane

10 Froghall Lane

14 Froghall Lane

18 Froghall Lane

High Street: West side (S - N) /cont.

Category 1.

104 High Street

94 High Street

66 High Street

64 High Street

58 High Street

The Studio, High Street

The converted outbuildings at Manor Farm

Category 2.



*An example
of a good
historic
building
spoilt by
inappropriate
modern
alterations.*

90 and 88 High Street

Outbuildings at rear of 80 High Street

Building at rear of 66 High Street

Capel House and outbuildings 62 High Street

60 High Street

Beecroft Lane: North side (E – W).

Category 1.

12 Beecroft Lane

Category 2.

2 Beecroft Lane

6 Beecroft Lane

10 Beecroft Lane

High Street: West side (S - N) /cont.

Category 1.

32 High Street

Sworders Garage, now 23 and 24 Glebe View

Category 2.

21 and 22 Glebe View

High Street: East side (S - N).

Category 1.

Walkern War Memorial

Unlisted building attached to Millers Cottage (attached to Walkern Mill)

Walkern Mill House, 151 High Street

133 and 135 High Road

Historic building at Walkern School

South boundary wall to Finches Farm forming entrance at north side to
Finches End

Rear extension to 63 High Street

Category 2.

119a and 119b High Street

Totts Lane: South side (W - E).

Category 1.

10 Totts Lane

14 Totts Lane

Category 2.

Robin Cottage

18 Totts Lane

20 Totts Lane

Totts Lane: North side (W - E).

Category 1.



11 Totts Lane

Category 2.

Wesleyan Chapel, now 5 and 7 Totts Lane

High Street: East side (S - N) /cont.

Category 1.

The Yew Tree PH
39-43 (odd) High Street
27 High Street
9 High Street

Category 2.

61 High Street
59 High Street

Church End: North side (W – E).

Category 1.

43 Church End

High Street: East side (S - N) /cont.

Category 2.

1 High Street (cottage attached to the walled garden to the Old Rectory)

5.8 Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution.

Walls and railings so identified are protected to varying degrees by virtue of exceeding specified height relevant to the Conservation Area or by being listed or

within the curtilage of a listed building. Notable and attractive features include the ford at Church End and the bridge across the River Beane at the southern end.



The ford at Church End

5.9 Important Open Spaces.

As described above, an interesting characteristic of Walkern is the number of open spaces that come up to the High Street and feature, therefore, in the diverse quality of the streetscene. Some make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, notably the Playground, the Graveyard on Froghall Lane, the garden in front of The Studio, The large sward to the north side of Manor Farm, the open garden in front of the Old Rectory, the treed field at the junction of the High Street and Church End and the allotments and open space on the east side of Totts Lane. The Local Plan also designates five areas as 'Existing Playing Fields/Open Space/Recreation Areas, of which The Playground and land to the east of Totts Lane are included above.



Sward to the north of Manor Farm

5.10 Particularly important trees and hedgerows.

Those trees that are most important are shown diagrammatically on the accompanying Character Analysis Map on p. 23.

Of particular importance are the hedges and trees that align much of the southern section of the High Street up to the Stevenage Road. Similarly the hedging and trees at the north towards White Hill and those within the treed field at the junction of the High Street and eastward along Church End, down Bockings and up and along Totts Lane provide a fine rural setting to the village. The large trees within the playground relieve an otherwise urban streetscene. The large trees within the playground relieve an otherwise urban streetscene. The fine specimen trees at 11 Totts Lane provide a colourful sylvan setting to the post-war house.



*Fine trees
in the High
Street
playground.*



*The 'tunnel'
of trees and
hedges at
the southern
end of the
High Street.*

5.11 Important views.

A selection is shown on the accompanying Character Analysis Map on p. 23. Long if meandering views are evident along the High Street, those at the north showing the built forms, while at the south they are more overtly rural. Views are guided along Church End by the striking large barns.

5.12 Elements out of character with the Conservation Area.

Concern has to be expressed at the neutral quality of much modern development, which although it does not cause harm, is perceptibly diluting the special interest of the Conservation Area. These are shown in yellow on the attached Character Analysis Map on p. 23.



*Neutral
modern
development
and poor
quality
boundaries*

Further, there are a number of buildings and sites of such poor design or condition that they harm the special interest of the Conservation Area. These are shown in pink on the above map and include:-

High Street: West side (S - N).

Jubilee pavilion
110 High Street
74 High Street
68 High Street
68a High Street
Utilitarian farming buildings at the end of Kitcheners Lane
Two very large utilitarian barns at Manor Farm

High Street: East side (S - N).

Modern teaching block at Walkern Primary School
The canopy and garage at 105 High Street

Totts Lane

9 Totts Lane

High Street: East side (S - N). /cont.

BT exchange at north side of The Playground

49 High Street

45a High Street

Decayed non-listed farm building at junction of High Street and Church End

Utilitarian barns at The Old Rectory

5.13 Opportunities to secure improvements.



A wasted heritage asset in need of a viable use.

A notable eyesore is the Granary at The Old Rectory, High Street (corner of Church End). This Grade II listed building is in a poor condition and has languished on the Council's Heritage at Risk Register for many years.



Poor quality boundary along Church End.

Note also the lack of highway maintenance

The quality of street lighting, other furniture and the public realm is often of disjointed and inappropriate poor quality. This is a product of budget-led *ad hoc* procurement rather than a holistic design-led ethos.

A further issue is the often thoughtless application in the past of standard MOT traffic management techniques, designs and materials leading to unnecessary and unsightly street clutter and signage. Their gradual erosion adds to a tired and uncared for air to the public realm.



What, no Beatles?

5.14 Suggested boundary changes.

Councils have a responsibility to ensure that conservation areas justify their continued designation and that their status is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special architectural or historic interest. Prior to the adoption of this document, the boundaries of the Walkern Conservation Area were unchanged since designation in 1981 and in a number of places did not define, as current Historic England guidance requires they should, where there was a clear change of character and a defensible boundary. For example, large tracts of farmland at the north and south of the village were still erroneously included.

The boundary changes adopted through Part C – Conservation Area Management Proposals on p. 41 relocate the boundary to locations that correctly define the relevant change of character from settlement to countryside.

6. SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The overall characteristics of Walkern Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

1/ A historic linear village along the High Street set on the higher ground on the west slopes of the River Beane with arrays of buildings, many listed and historic, along both sides. A ford at the north end and a bridge at the south allow the River to be crossed. Branching off to the east are paths and minor cartways leading down to the River. To the west, the junction with the Stevenage Road forms a busy junction. Traffic through the village is incessant. The surrounding landscape is largely farmland underlining the village's rural past,

2/ The public realm is largely urban in character with few trees, thus made more important by their rarity. Materials are the typical Highways Authority plain palette but have been compromised by invasive traffic management measures, now in a poor and declining condition. The lack of a cohesive design and investment in the public realm is apparent and gives the area a run-down appearance at odds with the very high values of private property,

3/ Buildings along the High Street follow a traditional and disciplined building line, are mainly two storeys high and of traditional construction. While the previous shops are hard-to to the pavement, dwellings tend to be set back from the street behind gardens with traditional front boundaries such as low brick walls, greenery and fences allowing visually permeable public and private space,

4/ Most retail and commercial uses have been lost in the post-war era, the buildings converted to housing. Some pubs survive on the High Street. The Church is located away from the High Street at the ford, while the school and the historic mill and brewery (now housing) are at the southern end near the bridge,

5/ The necklace of fine historic buildings, many of which are listed, along the High Street are of particular importance,

6/ The High Street is punctuated by fields and holdings that abut it or are visible immediately behind the array of houses – testimony to its rural origins and the *ad hoc* nature of development in the past,

7/ The 'tunnel' of hedging and trees along the south end of the High Street and lining the River Beane are of particular importance,

8/ The High Street sports a number of ugly post-war developments that pre-date its designation as a conservation area. These aggressively modern designs have a negative impact,

9/ This is a popular and convenient village for commuting to Stevenage and other sources of employment and has become the increasing focus of development

pressure for housing. The above back-land fields are a clear temptation. Opportunistic sites have been built on for housing, generally in a self-contained cul-de-sac form. As such, they lack the secondary links to adjacent sites and want for good urban design. As modern buildings they lack historic interest and, too often, they lack architectural merit and have not reinforced local character. The net effect is of significant areas with a growing number of neutral buildings that are diluting the character and appearance of the Conservation Area,

10/ The village is quite visually enclosed with most long views being along the undulating High Street. Views of the surrounding countryside mainly unfold beyond the line of houses although peeks between houses of trees are important. There are a number of good transverse views giving a sense of space and the rural setting.

7. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

Issues facing the Conservation Area at present can be summarised as follows:

1/ The impact of high traffic volumes through the Conservation Area, together with the accumulation of past measures to control them (signs, road markings, build-outs, bollards etc.). These and their current deterioration are a particular blight on the Conservation Area, harming its rural character,

2/ The lack of a cohesive design and investment in the public realm and the poor quality of many of the materials, have left with area with a run-down air,

3/ The Granary at the corner of the High Street and Church End is a listed building on the Heritage at Risk Register. Efforts should be made to find a viable new use for this building and its restoration.

4/ The boundary structure along the south side of the west end of Church End is of particularly poor quality. Many other boundaries around the Conservation Area need repair and improvements.

5/ Many good quality historic houses have been harmed by poor quality alterations and the use of modern materials. Increasing public interest in photovoltaic (PV) and solar panels has much potential to cause harm. Such matters contribute to the declining quality and run-down appearance of parts of the Conservation Area. Consideration should be given to introducing an Article 4 direction to control minor development, arrest the decline of the area and, in time, restore those buildings presently harmed by poor quality alterations.

6/ The loss of timber windows and doors and other architectural joinery and their replacement with PVCu, aluminium or other inappropriate modern materials is a particular blight. The use of double-glazed units in non-listed buildings is generally acceptable with, in many instances, the casements and sashes capable of adjustment to accommodate the units. If not, new double-glazed timber frames may be acceptable provided that the original window design and materials are replicated.

7/ A number of aggressively modern developments and houses along the High Street built before the area's designation are particular eyesores, having a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Care must be

taken in future to ensure that new development is of high quality design and materials that reinforce local character.

8/ It should be assumed that, as a popular and convenient village, that development pressure will continue that seeks to meet housing demand. Cul-de-sac development should avoid being overly self-contained and be designed to ensure good secondary links with adjacent sites. Much recent housing has been of only neutral quality that has diluted the character and appearance of the area. High quality design and materials that reinforces local character should be demanded of all future development within the Conservation Area.

9/ Where buildings are identified on the Character Analysis map as being 'neutral' it must be possible to redevelop to a high design standard such that the replacement property enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Similarly, there are a number of buildings within the Conservation Area which are identified as 'negative' and harmful to the area; here it would actually be desirable to see them demolished and the site redeveloped to a higher design standard. Development effort should focus on these sites.

10/ Reasonable steps should be taken to protect local facilities as a means of supporting village life and avoid Walkern becoming a dormitory suburb.

Issues 4/-10/ are under planning control, or can be brought under planning control with an up-to-date and rigorously applied Article 4 direction. Steps to seek the restoration of lost vernacular features may also be sought through local policy, grants, persuasion and the adopted Conservation Area Management Proposals which are designed to both preserve and enhance.

**PART C - MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS
ADOPTED ON 14 DECEMBER 2016.**

8. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS.

8.1. Revised Conservation Area Boundaries.

The revised boundaries adopted on the 14 December 2016 are shown on the accompanying Character Analysis Map on p. 23 and include the following amendments to the previous boundaries: -

- (a) Dedesignate. Field to the west and north of Glebe View. Field to the north of the Walled Garden and farm structures to the Old Rectory. Field to the east of the River Beane to the rear the Old Rectory. Field to the east of the churchyard.

To remove areas with no special interest.

- (b) Dedesignate. 19 and 20 Church End and land forming their approach.

To remove areas with no special interest.

- (c) Designate. Area of land part of Bockings.

To rationalise the boundary.

- (d) Designate. Small area to the east of the River Beane where river curves near No. 7 Finches End.

To rationalise the boundary.

- (e) Dedesignate. Area to the south west of the bridge and War Memorial containing the River Beane.

To remove areas with no special interest and rationalise the boundary.

- (f) Dedesignate. Field to the south west of the Playing Field. Field to the west of the Playing Field. Fields and structures to the west of The Maltings, Rookery Close and the Farmhouse to Rooks Nest Farm.

To remove areas with no special interest.

- (g) Designate. Small crescent shaped area of land to south of Dovehouse Lane.

To rationalise the boundary.

8.2. General Planning Control and Good Practice within the Conservation Area.

All 'saved' planning policies are contained in the East Herts. Local Plan Second Review adopted in April 2007. It is currently against this document and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that the District Council will determine applications. The NPP is supplemented by Planning Practice Guidance. One such guidance note of particular relevance is 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic

Environment'. In due course the 2007 Local Plan will be replaced by the District Plan whose policies will then have full weight.

8.3. *Contact and advice*

Applicants considering submitting an application should carefully consider the relevant policies and if necessary contact Officers to seek pre-application advice.

Telephone 01279 655261 (For development proposals ask for Development Management).

E-mail planning@eastherts.gov.uk

Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk

Or write to Development Management, East Herts District Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

8.4. *Guidance Notes*

Applicants should refer to the relevant Guidance Notes previously referred to and available on the Council's website at :-

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15387>

8.5. *Development Management - Potential need to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation.*

Within the sites designated as being a Scheduled Ancient Monument or within an Area of Archaeological Significance (as shown on either the adopted Local Plan or emerging District Plan), the contents of policies BH1, BH2 and BH3 are particularly relevant.

8.6. *Listed Building Control and Good Practice.*

Those buildings that are individually listed are identified on the Character Analysis Map on p. 23 and within the text of this document. Other pre-1948 buildings, structures or walls within the curtilage of a Listed Building may be similarly protected in law. Please seek pre-application advice on this point. Listed Buildings are a significant asset in contributing to the quality of the Conservation Area. It is essential that their special interest and architectural detailing is not eroded nor their other qualities and settings compromised.

8.7. *Development Management – Unlisted Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.* This Character Appraisal has identified in 5.7 a number of unlisted buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Any proposal involving the demolition of these buildings is unlikely to be approved.

8.8. *Planning Control – Other unlisted distinctive features that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.*

This Appraisal has identified a number of railings and walls that make a particular contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Some are protected from demolition by virtue of exceeding the specified heights relevant to Conservation Area

legislation or by Listed Building legislation. Any proposal involving the demolition of these walls is unlikely to be approved. Removal of other PD rights involving the alteration of non-listed walls will be considered.

8.9. There are other distinctive features that are integral to some of the important unlisted buildings identified above that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing. In some situations protection already exists through existing planning controls but in other cases protection could only be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via an Article 4 Direction. Should the Council consider such a course of action appropriate there would be a process of notifying the affected owners separately at a later date. The Council would then consider any comments made before deciding whether to confirm or amend the Direction.

8.10. Planning control - Wildlife Sites.

Any development that adversely affects wildlife species occupying such sites will not normally be permitted and would need clear justification. Proposals will be considered against Policies ENV 14 and ENV 16 of the Local Plan.

8.11. Planning Control – Important open land, open spaces and gaps.

This Appraisal has identified the following particularly important open spaces: the grassy sward to the north of manor farm, the front lawn to The Old Rectory, the playground on the High Street, the graveyard on Froghall Lane and the lawn in front of The Studio. Other open spaces within the village, e.g. the Playing Field, may have high amenity value but lack conservation special interest.

8.12. Planning Control – Particularly important trees and hedgerows.

Only the most significant trees and clumps or trees are shown diagrammatically on the Character Analysis map. It has not been possible to plot trees on inaccessible land. Subject to certain exceptions all trees in a conservation area are afforded protection and a person wanting to carry out works has to notify the Council. Trees that have not been identified may still be considered suitable for protection by Tree Preservation Orders. Owners are advised to make regular inspections to check the health of trees in the interests of amenity and Health and Safety. Lines of hedges along the southern approach of the High Street are particularly important as are those along the northern approach. Natural hedging and trees along the banks of the Beane are important to the rural character of the conservation area. All stakeholders have a role to play in protecting these hedges.

8.13. *Planning Control - Important views.* A selection of general views are diagrammatically shown. Policy BH6 is particularly relevant.

8.14 Enhancement Proposals.

Section 7 of the Character Appraisal, 'Summary of Issues', identifies a number of elements that detract which are summarised in the Table below together with a proposed course of action; other actions are also identified.

Within the staff and financial resources available, Council Officers will be pro-active and provide assistance. It must be recognized that such improvements will generally be achieved only by the owner's co-operation.

8.15 Schedule of Enhancement Proposals

Detracting element	Location	Proposed Action.
Accumulated traffic signage	Along the High Street	Seek to encourage HCC engineers to undertake de-cluttering exercise.
Lack of cohesive design and poor quality of public realm.	Along the High Street.	Seek to encourage HCC engineers to undertake design review.
The Granary.	High Street and Church End.	It is on EHDC's Heritage at Risk Register. Encourage conversion to viable use.
Poor quality boundaries.	Along south side of Church End (and elsewhere).	Encourage owners to improve. Development Management to seek improvements through planning applications.
Poor quality alterations and materials implemented under permitted development rights.	Extensive.	Seek to implement an Article 4 direction. Protect and preserve surviving features and seek to restore previously lost features through future planning applications.
PVCu replacement window and doors and thick double glazing.	Extensive.	Seek to implement an Article 4 direction. Retain historic originals and Improve quality through future planning applications.
Aggressively modern house designs.	Along High Street.	Seek to improve design quality so as not to harm the character and appearance of the CA through future planning applications.
Most modern cul-de-sac development has poor linkages with the village. Urban design and architecture quality often only neutral.	Extensive.	Seek better linkages, urban design and architecture quality so as not to harm the character and appearance of the CA through future planning applications.
Neutral and negative buildings diluting or harming the character and appearance of the CA	Extensive.	Seek better architecture quality for replacement buildings through future planning applications. Encourage developers to focus on redeveloping negative sites.
Loss of local facilities that is eroding village life changing the character of the area.	Along High Street.	Through Neighbourhood plan, planning system and associated protection measures.

Bibliography

The Buildings of England, Hertfordshire. Nikolaus Pevsner, second edition revised by Bridget Cherry. Penguin Books 1977.

Kelly's Post Office Directory of Hertfordshire 1874

The Place-Names of Hertfordshire, Gower, Mawer and Stenton, English Place-Name Society Vol. XV Cambridge UP 1938 and 1970.

Appendix 1

Historic England, in its Advice Note 1 'Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2016) provides a useful checklist to identify elements in a conservation area which may contribute to the special interest (Cf 4.4 above). The checklist is reproduced below:-

- Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Is it associated with a designed landscape e.g. a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic association with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?

A positive response to one or more of the following may indicate that a particular element within a conservation area makes a positive contribution provided that its historic form and values have not been eroded.