



ASPENDEN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

ADOPTED MARCH 2018



Lest we forget. The tragic consequence of the heroism of 21 young men (WW1) and subsequent impact on their community and families at the time must have been immense. Four sharing the Edwards name are commemorated here. There is also a restored wooden plaque in the church porch identifying a further 46 men from the parish who enlisted at this time. Thus of the parish total, over 30% died never to return. There are many such memorials in the District and it is important they are well maintained, as indeed this one is.

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

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Pages
1. Introduction.	1.1- 1.12	2- 4
2. Legal and Policy framework.	2.1- 2.17	4- 8
3. Origins and historic development.	3.1- 3.13	8- 11
4. Environmental Designations and criteria used to identify other important environmental features.	4.1- 4.14	11- 14
5. Character Analysis.	5.1- 5.60	14- 39
6. Overall summary.	6.1	39
7. Management Proposals.	7.1-7.16	39-43
EHDC Contact details.	7. 3	40
Schedule of Enhancement proposals.	7.18	42-43
Plan 1 - map from 1874-1894 with adopted conservation area superimposed.		
Plan 2 – Adopted Management Plan.		

ASPENDEN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

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This document is the adopted Aspenden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan which replaces the draft document that was subject to a public consultation exercise during September/October 2017. There was a public meeting on 12 September 2017 followed by a consultation period until 24 October 2017. Members considered the responses to this consultation at their Executive Committee and Council meetings on 6 February 2018 and 1 March 2018 respectively. The document was adopted on 1 March 2018. The document now appears with any necessary boundary revisions and textual changes required as a result of consultation feedback and adoption.

The content of Appraisals written from 2016 which include this paragraph may differ 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. This process is ongoing.

It has not been possible to access some rear boundaries and in such cases interpretation of information provided has been taken as best from satellite information.

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, Stevenage, Royston and Cambridge. 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 environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of 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 conservation area.

1.6. This Appraisal recognises the importance of these factors and considers them carefully. This document will be regarded as a 'material consideration' when determining planning applications. Where appropriate the documents put forward simple practical management proposals to improve the character of the conservation area and which are capable of being implemented as and when resources permit.

1.7. The recommendations concerning non-listed buildings and structures are normally formed by the field workers observations made from the public realm and seldom involve internal inspection or discussions with owners. Thus such recommendations contained in this 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 and also to their legal status in relation to householder permitted development rights (i.e. either being

considered as single dwellings or alternatively as flats). Similarly with respect to assessing whether or not a building is curtilage listed.

1.8. This Conservation Area Appraisal:

- Identifies the special character of the conservation area.
- Identifies elements that should be retained or enhanced;
- Identifies detracting elements;
- Reviews the existing boundaries;
- Puts forward practical enhancement proposals;

1.9. The document has been prepared in partnership with the Parish Councils (a small section of the conservation area extends into Buntingford Town Council's administration) and the local community through the consultation process.

1.10. Aspenden forms part of the Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan. This latter document notes that Aspenden is an archetypal peaceful village ...and the birthplace of Seth Ward (1617-89) a mathematician, astronomer, bishop and one of the founding members of the Royal Society. The document also notes *Development proposals should accord with updated Conservation Area Appraisals as and when they are completed by EHDC.*

1.11. Acknowledgement and thanks are recorded to Hertfordshire County Council whose Natural Historic and Built Environment Team 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.

PART A - LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

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 designate Conservation Areas, which are defined as being *'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve 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 *'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement'* of Conservation Areas and hold a public meeting to consider them.

2.3. Within conservation areas there are additional planning controls and if these are to be 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.

2.4. 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 legislation but is relevant to other non listed buildings in the conservation area above a threshold size set out in legislation*. Looking for and assessing such buildings is therefore a priority of this Appraisal.

* 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.

2.5. 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.

2.6. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England), Order 2015 (amended) defines the range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required and 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 highway and a reduced size of extensions, all require planning permission in a conservation area.

2.7. However, even within conservation areas there are other minor developments associated with many non-listed buildings that do not require planning permission. So as to provide further protection 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 important architectural features that are important to

the character or appearance of a conservation area such as chimneys, traditional detailing or materials, distinctive porches, windows and doors or walls or railings can be subject to a more detailed assessment and if appropriate 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 Appraisal, consideration has been given as to whether or not such additional controls are appropriate.

2.8. 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 Appraisal diagrammatically identifies only the most significant trees or groups of trees that make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area, particularly when viewed from the public realm. Other trees not specifically identified may still be suitable for statutory protection. Several trees in the conservation area are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

2.9. Some hedges may be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. This legislation is extremely 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. The Regulations do not apply to domestic garden hedges.

2.10. National Planning Policy Framework. The principle emphasis of the framework is to promote sustainable development. Economic, social and environmental roles should not be considered in isolation because they are mutually dependent and 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 it is considered proper to reinforce local distinctiveness.

2.11. 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 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 (sic) includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listings)'*.
- **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.

2.12. East Hertfordshire's environmental initiatives and Local Plan Policies. East Hertfordshire 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 an 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. The maximum grant will not normally exceed £2,000.

2.13. 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.

2.14. The Council also has a 'Heritage at Risk Register', originally produced in 2006, updated in 2012/13 and again updated in 2016/17. This

document is available on the Council's website. Grant assistance not exceeding £10,000 may be available for necessary works that lead to such buildings' long term security. There are no such buildings in the conservation area or within Aspenden Parish.

2.15. 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 Councils website or a copy can be obtained from the Council (contact details are set out in section 7).

2.16. 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 development in conservation areas should, inter alia, conform with the content of the Appraisals.

2.17. Aspenden conservation area was designated in 1981.

3. ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1. There are about ten Historic Environmental records held by Hertfordshire County Council within the conservation area.

3.2. Prehistoric - unknown.

3.3. Roman settlement. A Roman coin dating from the period of Constantine I (AD 337) was found at Aspenden Park in 1901. Other Roman finds (pyre deposits indicating cremation, building materials and field system) indicating occupation have been found nearby in the Buntingford area where the High Street in that town is the route of Ermine Street, a major Roman road between London and York.

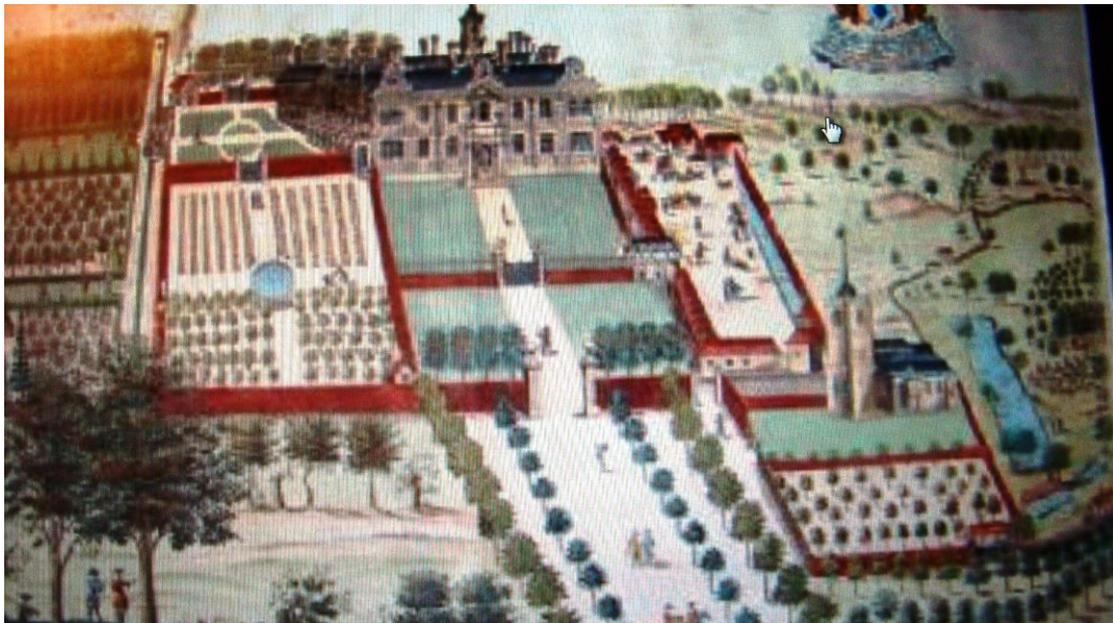
3.4. Anglo Saxon - unknown.

3.5. The Domesday Book was a census commissioned by William I in 1086. In relation to Aspenden it notes that *Richard Sackville holds Aspenden of Eudo. It is assessed at 1 1/2 hide. There is land for 3 ploughs. In demesne there are 2 ploughs. A priest with six bordars has 1 plough. There*

are 3 slaves, meadow for 1 plough (and) woodland for 20 pigs. Altogether it is worth £4. When received 30s. TRE 60s. Ealraed, a Thegn of King Edward held the manor.

3.6. Interpretation: A 'Hide' was a standard unit of land measurement interpreted to be about 120 acres. A 'villan' was a peasant legally tied to land he worked on and of higher economic status than a 'bordar'. 'Demesne' essentially means land belonging to the lord of the manor. TRE is an abbreviation essentially meaning 'In King Edward's time'. A Thegn was an aristocratic retainer.

3.7. Medieval settlement. An abbreviated description from the County Historic Environment Records for Aspenden advises that *The village lies at the gate of Aspenden Hall (which is certainly of medieval origin) and still consists of just one quite short street which is not densely built up. Unusually for Hertfordshire villages, this one had at least one farmstead in the village itself and that Earthworks within the park at Aspenden Hall may (or may not) include medieval house platforms. The church dates from the eleventh century.*



Picture 1. Aspenden Hall - illustration by Sir Henry Chauncy, *The Historical Antiquities of Hertfordshire*, 1700. Home of Sir Ralph Freman in the 17th century. Note different configuration to current building, its formality and gardens and its relationship with the church. The ponds can be seen to the right of the above illustration and are broadly accurate with their present day locations. The hall is believed to date perhaps from the 13th century. Reproduced courtesy of Albion Prints.

3.8. The 19th century. A picture of the settlement as it can be recognised in part today is set out in Kelly's Directory of 1874 which refers as

follows: *Aspenden (or Aspeden) is a parish and village. ..The church which is pleasantly situated within the grounds of Aspenden Park, has a square tower, with a peal of 8 bells, a good organ and a fine altar tomb...to Sir Robert Clifford and his wife...The church was restored in 1873...The parish has been enclosed, and two acres set apart for recreation ground. Aspenden Hall...is a modern mansion. The soil is mixed; subsoil chiefly clay. The chief crops are wheat, barley and beans...and the population in 1871 was 667.*

3.9. Commercial activities in addition to farmers listed in Kelly's at this time were shopkeeper, thatcher, beer retailer, blacksmith, fan maker, Red Lion PH (on site frontage now of Foxglade).



Picture 2. Near The Fox PH probably first quarter of 20th century. Reproduced courtesy Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS).

3.10. Mapping from 1874 -1894 (Plan 1) identifies the community was heavily wooded in many locations. It identifies the location of the Recreation Ground, the Red Lion PH, the School (Boys and Girls), gravel pits, Aspenden Hall and Rectory. This map also shows a grouping of cottages on the site of Nos. 1-8 Jubilee Cottages that the publication *Aspenden at the Millennium* advises were thatched cottages. Once Nos. 1-8 had been completed the thatched cottages were demolished and their occupants rehoused. What a tragedy.



Picture 3. Cottages that were demolished to accommodate Nos. 1-8 Jubilee Cottages. What a tragedy. Source of information and reproduced courtesy of Aspenden Parish Council and their publication *Aspenden at the Millennium*.

3.11. Mapping from the 1920's shows an extensive nursery on open land south of what is now the A10 road and also allotment gardens to the north of Bourne Cottage.

3.12. The publication, *Place Names of Hertfordshire*, Cambridge University Press 1970 advises several names, a selection of which is included thus: Absedene 1086, Aspynden 1506, Apsten 1572. Possible derivation of the name may be from *aespe denu*, 'aspen tree valley'.

3.13. Plan 1 shows the adopted conservation area boundary plotted on historic map dating from 1874-1894.

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

4.1. Scheduled Ancient Monuments. A National designation.

4.2. Areas of Archaeological Significance. Designated locally by EHDC on advice from HCC. The areas identified by this Appraisal are areas as shown on the Council's most up to date mapping system and may sometimes differ from that shown on the adopted Local Plan. The identification and refinement of such areas is an ongoing process.

4.3. Listed buildings. A National designation. Individually listed buildings have been identified, plotted and a selection is 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 Listed buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilage of listed buildings, if they are pre-1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings.

4.4. The issue of deciding whether or not a building is 'curtilage listed' can sometimes be problematic and there is no exact legal definition of a building's curtilage. The main tests relate to the physical layout of the land surrounding the main building/s at the date of listing, the physical layout and functional relationship of structures to each other; ownership, past and present and use or function, past and present. Structures need to be ancillary or subordinate to the main Listed Building and form part of the land and not be historically independent. Protection is granted to such objects or structures within the curtilage

of a Listed Building if they were built prior to July 1, 1948. In determining the extent of a Listed Building and its curtilage, a key assessment will be to examine the situation at the time of listing.

4.5. Non listed buildings of quality and worthy of protection. Non-listed buildings and structures that make an important architectural or historic contribution are identified by this 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?**
- (e) Determining which properties to include or which to exclude is occasionally a matter of difficult judgement.**

4.6. Important trees and hedgerows are identified by this Appraisal. Their positions are shown very diagrammatically. Access to some rear areas has not been possible. 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.**

4.7. Open spaces or gaps of quality that contribute to the visual importance of the conservation area where development would be inappropriate are identified by this Appraisal. 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.

4.8. Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution are identified by this Appraisal. In relation to walls and railings those at and above prescribed heights in a conservation area 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.

4.9. Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions in justified circumstances. The Appraisals undertaken to date have identified elsewhere in the District that many historic architectural features of quality remain unaltered on some non listed buildings but, on the other hand, the exercise of Permitted Development rights has eroded other parts of some conservation areas. Should Members decide to proceed with such an initiative in Aspenden, such important historic detailing including features as identified below could justifiably be retained and inappropriate alterations to them controlled. (Update: Members agreed the general principle of introducing and testing the impact of an Article 4 Direction in 2016 elsewhere in the District).

- **Chimneys, in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property, prominent in the street scene and generally complete with chimney pots.**
- **Selected windows, on front or side elevations, fronting and visible from the street/s, generally contemporary with the age of the property or of a sympathetic historic design and where the majority of windows of respective elevations retain their original characteristics and have not been replaced by disruptive modern glazing units.**
- **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 visual appearance of the conservation area.**
- **It may also be appropriate to introduce Article 4 Directions to retain quality buildings below the prescribed Permitted Development threshold.**

4.10. Features that are out of character with the conservation area and detract or are in poor repair are identified.

4.11. Important views are identified.

4.12. Conservation area boundaries. In relation to any revisions to the conservation area boundaries, principal consideration has been given as to whether or not the land or buildings in question form part of an

area of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be conserved. The conservation area can include open land that has historical associations with the built form. This may particularly be the case if such open land is environmentally important and visually forms part of the conservation area's setting and is distinct from open farmland.

4.13. Wildlife sites. Those shown are identified on the emerging District Plan (which may differ from those on the Adopted Plan due to updates).

4.14. Historic Park and Gardens. These are identified as Registered Historic Parks and Gardens at a national level by Historic England. Others that are Locally Important have been identified by East Herts District Council.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

5.1. General Landscape setting. The Council's Landscape Character Assessment produced in 2007 (which is Supplementary Planning Guidance) identifies the distinct landscapes of the District in terms of their wider settings. The conservation area is located within Area 142 being part of the High Rib Valley. Aspenden is described as nestling *in a tributary valley to the Rib and is largely contained by mature trees and hedges. Aspenden Brook runs through the village and a number of properties are accessed by bridges across the stream.*

5.2. General overview. Positive attributes. A number of good quality historic buildings spread intermittently on both sides of The Street whose architectural variety and qualities are enhanced by extensive tree cover and two small streams (named on the mapping as The Bourne and Thistley Vale Brook) the latter flowing from the north joins the former near the Bell House. The church is a prominent focal point.

5.3. Negative attributes. The quality of modern infill is mixed. The A10 intrudes into the conservation area in the east and farm buildings complex and activities to the north of Aspenden Hall in the west both detract. In addition another consideration is the fact that the conservation area boundaries have been drawn very widely in some locations to include areas which are visually more appropriately related with the open countryside.

5.4. Individually Listed Buildings. There are 14 listed buildings/groups within the existing conservation area. Of this total, three date from the 15th century, three from the 16th century, two from the 17th century and three from the 18th century. The church dates from the 11th century and

the 19th and 20th centuries are also represented, the latter by the K6 telephone box.

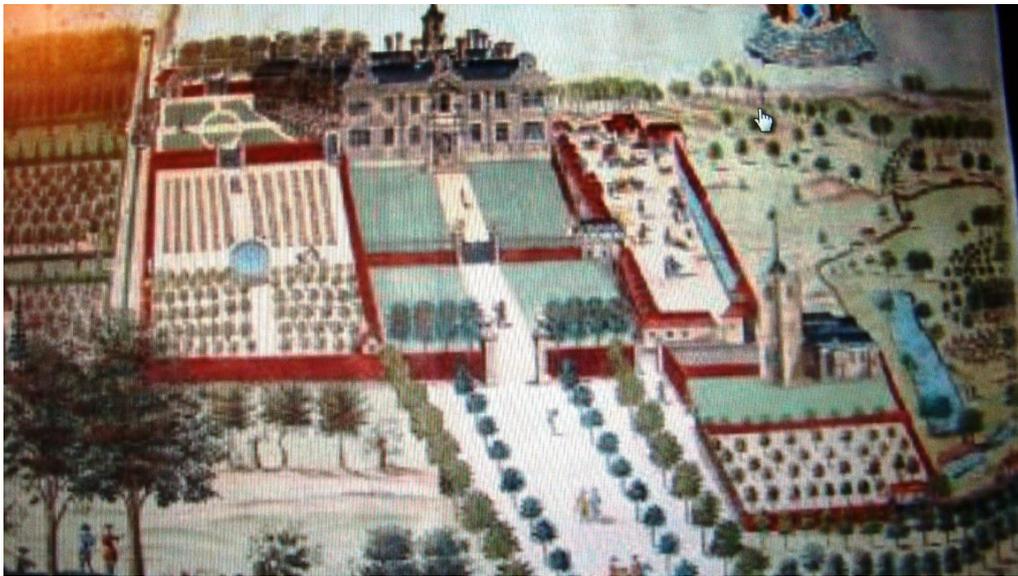
5.5. The above buildings are grade 2 except the church which is grade I.

5.6. **Individually Listed Buildings.** A selection of Listed Buildings with abbreviated descriptions based on the National list is provided below. Any comments by the fieldworker are in *italics*.

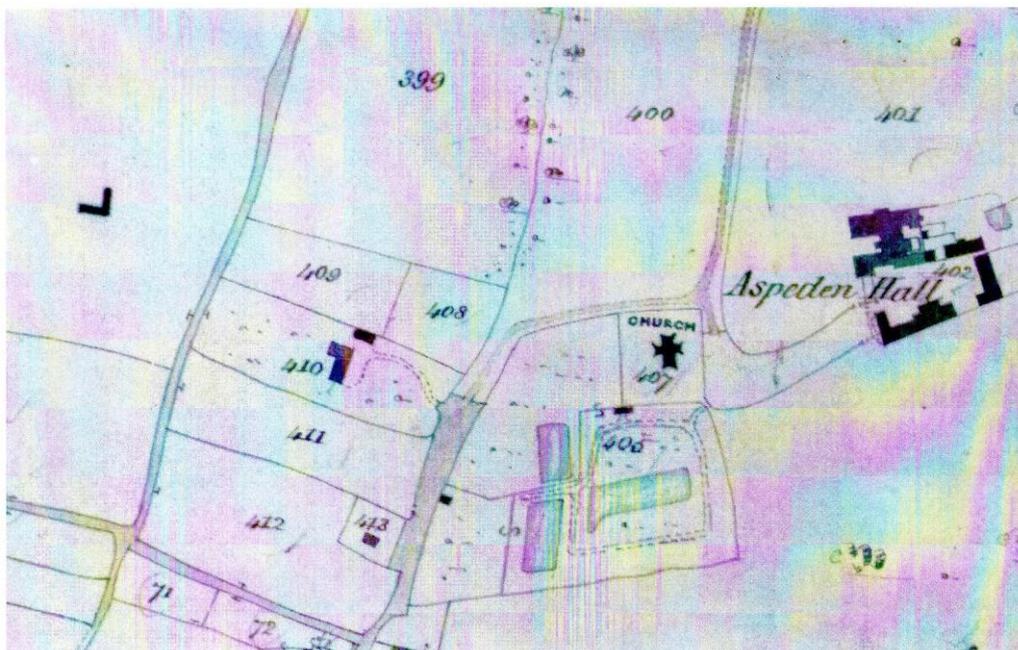
5.7. **Aspenden Hall - Grade II.** Country house, now housing grain dryers (*assumed to be the case at the date of listing in 1967?*). 1856 replacing Jacobean house, for the 2nd Sir Henry Lushington. Gutted circa 1963 for farm use. Stuccoed brick, low pitched roof concealed by parapets. A large rectangular 2 storeys, 7 windows classical house facing east in Doric style with channelled pilasters and pedimented central feature to east front, where there is a pedimented porch supported by twinned Doric columns. Plate glass sash windows generally.

5.8. **HCC abbreviated records also advise thus:** *The Aspenden manor was held by the Tany family by the beginning of the 13th century... Many 'carved stones' were found when Aspenden Hall was demolished in the 19th century. Little more is known about the building, though it is mentioned in a survey of 1556, as is the park adjoining the house, and it survived, incorporated within the later Aspenden Hall. In 1607 the manor was sold to the brothers William and Ralph Freeman (or Freman). Ralph Freeman, son of William, improved the house and gardens, and his son Ralph 'cased and adorned this Mannor House with Brick' and further improved the gardens. This is the complex building illustrated by Drapentier, not long before 1700, which had several ranges around two courtyards, and a classical west facing loggia. In the earlier 18th century another Ralph Freeman carried out further works, and probably gave the house the appearance it had when it was drawn by Buckler in 1832. The house, which had had several tenants and at the beginning of the 19th century was a school for 11 years, was demolished and replaced by a much smaller building in 1856. The 1856 house was built for the 2nd Sir Henry Lushington, and when Listed in 1951 was a large two-storey house in stuccoed brick, seven bays long. It was in classical style with Doric detail, a pedimented centre to the east front with pedimented porch on Doric columns. The house was gutted c.1963 and used to house grain dryers, but remains an 'important landscape feature and part of setting of parish church'. In the later 20th century it was restored and reoccupied. The pre-1856 house is shown on the 1845 tithe map, a large H-plan building with attached stable block and other outbuildings around a rectangular yard to the east and north east.*

The 1856 house was built on the footprint of the main west wing of the older house, but it has been assumed that none of the older building survived.



Picture 4. Print of Aspenden Hall 1700.



Picture 5. Tithe map of 1845 showing large H plan building - see below. Reproduced courtesy Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS).



Picture 6. An illustration of Aspenden Hall - provided and reproduced courtesy of St Mary's church. Believed to be a Buckler illustration of 1832. Compare this drawing with 1845 tithe map above -clearly same/similar footprint. How this building related to the earlier one as shown on the 1700 map is unknown - perhaps it a modification of the earlier building.



Picture 7. Aspenden Hall as it currently exists.

5.9. Clearly the history of this site is very complex and it is not the purpose of this Appraisal to seek to further unravel its mysteries. Nevertheless a fascinating prospect for dedicated future research.

5.10. Park and garden associated with Aspenden Hall - see below.

5.11. Parish Church of St Mary - Grade I. Eleventh century chancel on different alignment from late eleventh century nave; chancel part- rebuilt and lengthened to east in 13th century. Tower circa 1390; in late 15th century chapel added, south aisle altered, nave heightened, new roofs to nave and aisle, and east wall of nave removed for a rood-screen; South porch built circa 1525 for widow of Sir Robert Clifford; South east chapel altered 1622 for Ralph Freman of Aspenden Hall. Restored 1873 by Sir Arthur Blomfield who added a steep red tiled pitched roof. A small picturesque

medieval church. Stained glass in porch circa 1913 by Morris and Co. of 4 evangelists (*company formed following William Morris, 1834-1896, prominent in the Arts and Crafts movement*). A small medieval church, little altered, of outstanding interest for the south east chapel, roofs, Easter Sepulchre and fine monuments.



Picture 8. Stained glass detailing in porch dating from the early 20th century by Morris and Co (after William Morris, 1834-1896).

5.12. The Bell House - Grade II. Former School house. Circa 1714 for Ralf Freman the 4th, the squire, with money left by Mary Cater, died.1704, for teaching young children in this parish of the most indigent (*needy; poor; impoverished*) parents to read and write. Red brick in Flemish-bond with thick joints and fine red brick front with moulded brick corbels. Small wooden bell-cote at middle of ridge.



Picture 9. The Bell House, former school for Boys and Girls, a distinctive and finely proportioned building of quality.

5.13. Bourne Cottage, The Street - Grade II. 16th century, divided in 19th century. Timber frame with steep thatched roof.

5.14. Telephone Kiosk , 7 metres west of Dove Cottage, The Street - Grade II. Telephone kiosk. Type K6. Designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made by various contractors. Cast iron. Square kiosk with domed roof. Unperforated replacement Elizabeth II crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and door.



Picture 10. Mid 20th century telephone kiosk, an iconic representative of British culture and identity.

5.15. Dove Cottage, The Street - Grade II. Early 18th century, extended at ends and divided as 2 houses in early 19th century. Timber frame on stucco plinth, roughcast with basketwork and fan pargetting and black weatherboarded apron. Steep thatched roof.



Picture 11. Dove Cottage, A most attractive 18th century property with steeply sloping thatched roof.

5.16. The Fox P. H. The Street, south side - Grade II. Later 17th century date, renovated in early 19th century (auctioned as The Fox Beershop, of long standing, in 1871- poster in bar). Timber frame roughcast with weatherboarded apron at front and steep pitched roof now slated. Accommodation described in 1871 as 'Parlour, taproom, kitchen, storeroom, cellar, and 4 bedrooms'.

5.17. Aspenden Cottage, The Street, south side - Grade II. Late 15th century open hall house with east crosswing. 17th century west wing, floor inserted in hall, and lower service range at east. Renovated circa 1800 and 1968. Timber frame on flint and brick sill, roughcast with steep old red tile roofs. Central chimney inserted in hall reduced in size circa 1800 and stair built beside it. Chimney removed in 1968. Interior has exposed timbers with soot-blackened, A 15th century hall house of exceptional interest with many original features.

5.18. The Old Rectory, The Street, south side. Now a private house. Late 15th or early 16th century Wealden house, late 16th century inserted floor with jetty linking wings, West end chimney and former central chimney in hall. Steep old red tile roofs. Red brick chimneys. A fine 2-storeys 3-cells former open-hall house.

Subsequent alterations in 16th century involved the addition of a heavily moulded beamed floor in the hall extending to support a jettied front on the north side linking the older jetties of the wings into a continuous front jetty on curved knee-braces. Of exceptional interest as a purpose built rectory in the form of a late medieval Wealden house with additions.

5.19. Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are none in the conservation area or indeed elsewhere in the parish.

5.20. Areas of Archaeological Significance. Most of the conservation area is so designated.

5.21. Important buildings within the curtilages of Listed Building. The issue of deciding whether or not a building is 'curtilage listed' can sometimes be problematic and there is no exact legal definition of a building's curtilage (see previous).

5.22. Building to north east of Aspenden Hall. Appears on late 19th century mapping. Of brick construction with tiled roof and chimney stack. Some alterations.

5.23. Other non listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. This Appraisal identifies other buildings of high quality that are not listed but that should be retained. These generally date from the late 19th/early 20th century and are an important element in the high environmental quality of the conservation area and make a very positive contribution to its built form and historical evolution. Any Important architectural features they possess and worthy of retention are identified.

5.24. Home Farm. Located to the north of the recreation ground this late 19th century house is prominent in the street scene. Of yellow brick construction with red brick banding; slate roof with decorative ridge tiles; central chimney stack and decorative porch and bay window to east elevation. Early/sympathetic windows. Plaque reads CP 1899. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 12. Home Farm - a late 19th century property worthy of retention and additional protection.

5.25. York House. Probably dates from late 19th century. Two storey red brick, 3 range early/sympathetic windows; red brick lintels, central entrance. Pyramid slate roof with 2 No. chimneys with pots. Decorative brackets detailing to eaves. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 13. York House - a simply but effectively designed front elevation to this 19th century property.

5.26. Aspenden Lodge. Appears on mapping dating from 1874. Local information advises (Aspenden at the Millennium) the property was built in the 1700's and added to later and was originally of red brick with cladding added at a later date. Two storey residential property with slate roof and 2 No. chimneys. Early/sympathetic window ranges and good quality window surround and barge board detailing to east elevation. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 14. Good quality window surround, quoin and barge board detailing worthy of retention and protection.

5.27. Aspenden House, main building interpreted as now being subdivided into 4 units being Nos 1- 5. Dates from early 20th century. Large two storey building of brick to ground floor, pebble dash above. Tiled roof with dormers, decorative ridge tiles and prominent chimneys. Central entrance feature with tiled spire feature. Rubbed brick lintels and other rubbed brick detailing. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.28. The Lodge. Interesting early 20th century two storey house of brick construction to the ground floor and render with decorative wooden detailing to first floor. Tiled roof, pyramidal in part with dormers and large central chimney. Balcony. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 15. The Lodge an early 20th century building worthy of retention.

5.29. Malting Cottages, Nos. 1-6. Appear for first time on mapping from the 1920's although older in appearance. *Aspenden at the Millenium* advises they were built of material from the old Malting yard nearby. Two storey render with tiled roof, dormers and 3 No. large chimneys. Sympathetic windows and doors. Plaque reads MALTING COTTAGES. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 16. Malting Cottages. Of earlier 20th century date advisedly built from older material. Unspoilt and most worthy of additional protection.

5.30. Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution. Walls and railings so identified are protected to varying degrees virtue of exceeding specified height relevant to the conservation area legislation or by being within the curtilage of a Listed Building unless otherwise noted.

5.31. Wall to front of York House and extending to frontage of neighbouring property to the west. Flint wall with rounded brick capping. Height varies. Recent sympathetic rebuilding undertaken. Some additional repair works required.



Pictures 17 and 18. Sympathetic wall rebuild and lower picture repair works required.

5.32. Important Open Spaces. The spaces identified below are most important and should be preserved.

5.33. The Recreation Ground. This is identified on early mapping from 1874 and is an open space of historic, visual and communal importance used for sports activities, walking and community events. It is open in character and enclosed by peripheral mature hedge and tree boundaries. There is a pavilion, a cricket pitch and miscellaneous play equipment and seating.



Picture 19. The Recreation Ground is of historic, visual and communal importance. Properly located in the conservation area it has served the community for this use for about 150 years.

5.34. The historic churchyard and its extension to the south. The historic churchyard contains the War Memorial (see front cover) and a variety of tombstones many of which are of 19th century date. Some chest tombs exist which are damaged and or covered in ivy. Several tombstones need re-erecting (laid on ground it has been advised for Health and Safety reasons). Ideally a comprehensive repair programme needs developing and implementing on an incremental basis. However the difficulty of achieving this is recognised when resources are probably limited.



Pictures 20-22. Upper - General view of historic churchyard; lower two historic chest tombs in urgent need of renovation/repair/removal of ivy. The potential of seeking grant assistance is worthy of consideration.

5.35. Eastern setting to Aspenden Hall. The long sweep across an open grassed area down to and including the large pond provides an important setting to the principal elevation of present day Aspenden Hall. This view is prominent and visible from the nearby public footpath crossing the south east corner of the site.



Picture 23. The sweeping grassed area including large pond in the valley bottom is an important open landscape feature that should be retained as such.

5.36 *Strategic Countryside Gap.* During the consultation of this Appraisal the Parish Council and others expressed particular concern regarding the possibility of Aspenden being ‘consumed’ by Buntingford. Although there are policies in the emerging DP that guard against large scale development in small category 3 villages, this fear is appreciated bearing in mind the level of development recently experienced by nearby Buntingford.

5.37. An area of particular local concern in this respect is a gap of countryside between the edge of Buntingford and the bypass and Aspenden in the general vicinity of Home Farm where it is at its narrowest. It is an area of open agricultural countryside and part of the wider landscape. Coalescence of the two communities would not be appropriate in planning terms and the gap and its open nature should be preserved.

5.38. To further reinforce the above and following a process of consultation it is intended to include reference in the emerging District Plan at para 6.1.17 thus: *6.1.17 Character: Buntingford ...town. ‘To the south-west the open character of the countryside between Aspenden and Buntingford will be preserved, thereby avoiding coalescence between the two communities’.*

5.39. Historic Park and Garden. The garden to Aspenden House on the south side of The Street is so identified as being *Locally Important* in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document of 2007 entitled Historic Parks and Gardens. However this entry is believed to be incorrect and should in fact refer to Aspenden Hall. The fieldworker has discussed the matter with Hertfordshire Gardens Trust who advised they had no knowledge of an historic garden associated with Aspenden House. An amendment to the Council's document of 2007 needs to be considered.

5.40. Extract from HCC records relating to Parkland and Ornamental Gardens at Aspenden Hall. *The date and extent of the park are uncertain, but it probably came into being while the Tany family held the manor (by the beginning of the 13th century), and it is mentioned in a survey of the manor of 1556 ... 'The park doth adjoin the house ... it is very park-like ground to be kept as a park for the stateliness of the house ...'. The Freeman family improved the gardens; Ralph, d. 1665, made 'his Gardens pleasant' and his eldest son Ralph carried out further work upon them. The ornate gardens illustrated by Drapentier, not long before 1700, were partly walled and partly fenced, with formal gardens and walks, summer houses, and woodland. An avenue of trees led to the entrance to the Hall, just beyond the church. The engraving hints at the informal parkland beyond, but provides little information other than the clear depiction of the three ponds on the east side of the church which still survive. Inspection in 1983 found much damage, with neglected trees and derelict buildings. The woods contained the remains of ornamental ponds, including the very large Westminster Pond which is visible in the Drapentier view. Probable remains of walled gardens in the paddock west of the farm are visible as marks in air photographs.*

5. 41. The Parish Council's publication *Aspenden at the Millennium* advises that during the 1930's Aspenden Hall had at least six gardeners and that the hall's gardens were open to the public yearly, the gravel paths of the bottom wood around Westminster Pond, were thoroughly swept and weeded and the wide lawns through the top wood were expertly trimmed. There is also reference to huge lawns around the house and flower beds planted with Kaiser Kroon bulbs being tulips in the colours of the then owner's regiment.



Picture 24. Drifts of snowdrops in woodland near Westminster Pond. Are these the descendant remains of landscaping associated with Aspenden Hall? Snowdrops are native to damp European woodlands. Generally believed not to be native to the British Isles they may have been introduced here during the 16th century. Is there any local knowledge concerning this planting?

5.42. Wildlife sites. There are two identified by the Wildlife Sites Inventory for East Herts 2013 and shown on the emerging District Plan.

5.43. Firstly one is called the Foxglade and Perryden (reference 24/024). This is described as *Buildings and Environs important to protected species.* It is shown diagrammatically on the District Plan as a large circle in the centre of the village approximately extending from Bourne Cottage to Aspenden Lodge.

5.44. Secondly there is Wakeley Spring Green Lane which is described as *Ancient hedge and tree lined green lanes supporting a good range of native woody species... Wooded green lane with features and structures indicative of ancient origins...*



Pictures 25-26. The high environment quality of Wakeley Spring Green Lane, a Wildlife Site with features indicative of ancient origins warrants its retention in the conservation area.

5.45. Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Those trees that are most important are shown very diagrammatically on the accompanying mapping. Some trees on inaccessible boundaries and in land around Aspenden Hall have been plotted from satellite images. Trees are important at many locations in the conservation area.



Picture 27. Trees are visually important in a number of locations. This view taken from public footpath, north of Foxglade.

5.46. Reference has previously been made to Aspenden Hall and its landscaping as shown on the print by Sir Henry Chauncy. Looking at this illustration prompted the Councils Arboricultural officer to support the high quality planting of Lime trees in the approximate location of ones appearing in the print of 1700.



Picture 28. Good quality landscaping consisting of metal fencing and Lime trees. The trees have been interpreted to replicate earlier historic planting associated with Aspenden Hall.

5.47. Hedgerows too play an important role in a number of locations.

5.48. **Water features.** To the east of the church are three ponds called 'Westminster Pond'. Over the years leaves from surrounding trees have built up. They can clearly be seen in the previous picture of Aspenden Hall dating from the 17th century and are likely to have been a design feature of its landscape setting at that time.



Picture 29. One of the three ponds which constitute Westminster Pond east of the church.

5.49. Stream adjacent to south side of the road. Running parallel to the main road for much of its length the stream which together with its tree lined banks is an important visual feature adding to the quality of the conservation area.



Picture 30. The stream running the length of the village together with its tree lined banks is an important landscape feature.

5.50. Pond in valley bottom to the east of Aspenden Hall is a prominent and important landscape feature. It is understood from the family that this is a creation by the owner in the relatively recent past.

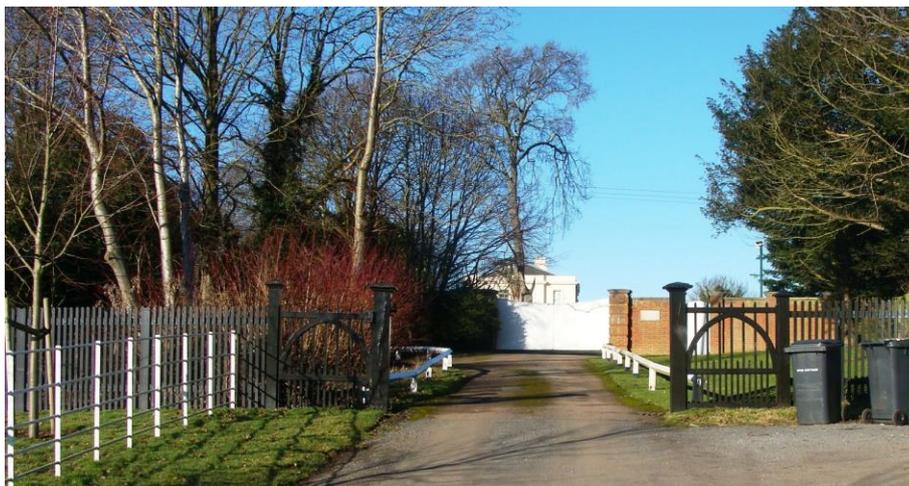


Picture 31. Expansive pond in the valley bottom provides an important landscape feature for the setting of Aspenden Hall.

551. Important views. A selection as shown on accompanying mapping.

5.52. The visual inter relationship between the church and Aspenden Hall is important, notwithstanding the current building is differently

oriented to earlier mansions on the site. Whilst the hall can be seen from some public vantage points it is obscured by the prominent gates as shown in the picture below. Should the present gates need replacement perhaps the owner would consider an alternative and a visually more appropriate solution that allowed for a view towards the building whilst retaining the necessary security.



Picture 32. Replacement of the existing gates to Aspenden Hall could provide a more sympathetic visual solution.

5.53. Opportunities to secure improvements. The potential of providing an enhanced view of Aspenden Hall from its approach road and the approach road to the grade I church is worthy of discussion.

5.54. The frontage treatment to Nos. 1-8 Jubilee Cottages detracts from the linear quality of the road. It is understood most properties are privately owned and the difficulty of achieving a co-ordinated improvement is not underestimated. However if such an improvement could be achieved it would be most beneficial to the conservation area.

5.55. Repairs to flint wall to York House would be beneficial.

5.56. In an ideal world there are a number of utility poles that could be the subject of discussion with the utility companies but in the main these are not prominent in the street scene, generally being disguised by trees.

5.57. Boundary changes. The conservation area boundary at Aspenden is currently drawn in an inappropriate manner when considered against the criteria set out earlier in this document. The reader is referred to accompanying mapping. The conservation area boundary is amended as follows:

(a) Extend boundary east of Aspenden Hall and east of large pond as a minor adjustment to better reflect existing boundary and geography of the pond (existing boundary bisects the pond along alignment of original brook).



Picture 33. Pond of relatively modern construction nevertheless forms an important landscape setting in this valley bottom to Aspenden Hall.

(b) Exclude land and buildings complex to north and west of Aspenden Hall. Whilst this area, in part at least, would originally have formed part of the formal gardens to Aspenden Hall, no obvious original elements of the latter remain (there is a small walled garden but this is modern). The buildings in this location are interpreted as having been stabling. These do not appear on mapping dating from 1938-1951 and are believed to be mid 20th century. Others of a later date are believed to be associated with farming operations and for storage.



Pictures 34-35. Mid and later 20th century utilitarian buildings associated with Aspenden Hall proposed to be removed from the conservation area.

(c) Exclude modern property, Tudor House and its curtilage, to west of church.



Picture 36. Tudor House a large relatively modern property.

(d) Exclude open countryside land to west of church including part of The Bourne stream south of the track. Boundary adjacent to track leading to church drawn to include replacement planting, see picture below.



Picture 37. Land to the west of the church excluded from the conservation area which visually appears as part of the open countryside. As previously noted modern replacement planting as shown in the picture replicates an interpretation of the Aspenden Hall's original approach planting.

(e) Exclude the elevated section of the A10 and land to its north including the modern building of Jack Poulton and Sons Ltd.



Picture 38. The site of Jack Poulton and Sons Ltd. Self evidently a site of this nature, located as it is on the edge of the existing conservation area should be excluded.

(f) Exclude an expansive area of open land, for the most part countryside and farmland between the A10 and the edge of the settlement. The reason for including this land originally in 1981 is unknown. However its exclusion is consistent with similar situations in other communities in the current review process. (The revised boundary has been redrawn to retain historic Home Farm and the tree lined approach road within the conservation area). As set out previously the concerns relating to coalescence between Aspenden and Buntingford are understood and protection against this is provided at paragraphs 5.36 -5.38.



Picture 39. This expansive area of farmland clearly forms part of the open countryside to which it is more relevantly associated. Its importance as a Strategic Gap is recognised as explained in paragraphs 5.36-5.38.

(g) Exclude extensive areas of land, much of it being open and underused, located south of The Street.



Picture 40. Typical underused and open characteristics of extensive area of paddock land south of The Street.

5.58. General explanation of boundary amendments. The conservation area as designated in 1981 is characterised by the inclusion of several large areas of open land and countryside. Some, such as land between

the A10 and Aspenden north west of the recreation ground and other land to the west of the church are principally open countryside. Other areas south of the Fox PH and principally extending in a western direction are mainly open and little used and have more in common with the characteristics of open countryside. It is accepted some trees will lose the limited protection afforded by conservation area legislation but, in common with other countryside areas, Tree Preservation Orders can be served if such trees come under threat and such a course of action is deemed appropriate. The exclusion of these areas is consistent with reviews carried out in other communities and with advice relating to the wider landscape as set out at paragraph 12 of Historic England's publication Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management Advice note No. 1 2016.

5.59. Following representation made during the consultation it is considered appropriate to reinstate Jubilee Cottages within the conservation area. Whilst they are of limited architectural and historic value they are centrally located and part of the general conservation area's linear street scene and not peripheral to it.

5.60. **Other Actions.** Note inaccuracy of reference to an Historic Park and Garden in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document *Historic Parks & Gardens*: the reference should be to Aspenden Hall not Aspenden House.

6. OVERALL SUMMARY.

6.1. Aspenden is a linear community defined by a recreation ground in the east and an important complex of a grade I listed church and Aspenden Hall in the west. There are a number of high quality listed buildings and other non listed buildings of merit which warrant additional protection. The visual importance of the conservation area is enhanced by the principal stream to the south of the road and by a large number of trees throughout. Despite some modern development which by necessity remains within the conservation area, the latter is of sufficient high quality to be worthy of its designated status subject to modifying the boundary as explained previously.

PART C - MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS.

7. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS.

7.1. ***Revised Conservation Area Boundary.*** The adopted boundary is shown on accompanying Management Plan to which the reader is referred and includes the following amendment/s.

- (a) Extend boundary east of Aspenden Hall and east of large pond as a minor adjustment to better reflect existing boundary and geography.
- (b) Exclude land and buildings complex to north and west of Aspenden Hall.
- (c) Exclude modern property, Tudor House and its curtilage, to west of church.
- (d) Exclude open countryside land to west of church including part of The Bourne stream south of the track.
- (e) Exclude the elevated section of the A10 and land to its north including the modern building of Jack Poulton and Sons Ltd.
- (f) Exclude an expansive area of open land, for the most part countryside and farmland between the A10 and the edge of the settlement.
- (g) Exclude extensive areas of open and underused land south of The Street.

7.2. *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 (NPP) that the District Council will process 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 be relevant.

7.3. Applicants considering submitting any 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. For general conservation advice ask for a Conservation Officer).

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

7.4. Applicants may also wish to refer to one of the several Guidance Notes previously referred to which will be updated as resources permit.

7.5. *Planning Control - Potential need to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation.* Within Areas 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.

7.6. *Listed Building Control and Good Practice.* Those buildings that are individually listed are identified. Other pre-1948 buildings, structures or walls within the curtilage of a Listed Building are similarly protected in law.

7.7. Listed Buildings are a significant asset in contributing to the quality of the conservation area. It is essential that their architectural detailing is not eroded nor their other qualities and settings compromised.

7.8. *Planning Control – Other Unlisted Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.* This Appraisal has identified six unlisted buildings/ groups of buildings that are considered to have sufficient qualities to be described thus. Any proposal involving the demolition of these buildings is unlikely to be approved.

7.9. These buildings are: Home Farm, York House, Aspenden Lodge, Aspenden House, The Lodge and Maltings Cottages.

7.10. There are other distinctive features that are integral to the important unlisted buildings identified above that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including selected chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing where protection could be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via an Article 4 Direction. The associated legislation is complex. Should the Council consider such a course of action appropriate there would be a process of notification separately at a later date. This would be associated with further detailed consideration and possible refinement.

7.11. *Planning Control – Other distinctive features that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution.* This Appraisal has identified a wall and other features, the War Memorial and tombstones in the churchyard, that make a particular contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. These will be protected from demolition within the parameters of legislation.

7.12. *Planning control - Wildlife Sites.* There are two such sites so identified namely Foxglade/Perryden and secondly Wakeley Spring Green Lane. Proposals will be considered against Policies ENV 14 and ENV 16.

7.13. Planning Control – Remains of an Important Historic Park and garden. One such area identified in the Council’s Supplementary Planning document Historic Parks & Gardens wrongly (it is believed) identified Aspenden House as such which it is believed should have referred to Aspenden Hall as described earlier. Proposals that significantly harm the garden's special character will not be permitted and will be considered against Policy BH16.

7.14. Planning Control – Important open land, open spaces and gaps. This Appraisal has identified the following particularly important open spaces: The Recreation Ground, the historic churchyard and its extension to the south and the eastern setting to Aspenden Hall. These open spaces will be protected.

7.15. Planning Control – Strategic Countryside Gap. Open countryside part of the wider landscape between Aspenden and Buntingford represents an important open gap of countryside between the two communities where coalescence would be inappropriate. This area will be protected.

7.16. Planning Control – Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Only the most significant trees are shown very diagrammatically. 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.

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

7.18. Enhancement Proposals. The Appraisal has identified several 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. Readers are reminded of potential sources of financial assistance in respect of repairs to historic buildings.

Detracting element.	Location.	Proposed Action.
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Discordant parking spaces.	To front of Nos.1-8 Jubilee Cottages.	The difficulty of achieving co ordinated improvements is not underestimated but owners may be attracted to the idea of achieving a better visual solution. Discuss with owners the prospect of undertaking comprehensive improvements.
Historic flint wall.	To front of York House.	Discuss with owner the prospect of undertaking repairs.
Historic Tombstones.	Churchyard.	Discuss with church authorities the prospect of undertaking repairs.
Wooden entrance gates.	Entrance to Aspenden Hall.	Discuss potential with owner of securing visual improvements in eventuality of gates replacement.
Other actions.		
Consider amending EHDC document Historic Parks and Gardens to refer to Aspenden Hall not Aspenden House.		