Shenley Conservation Area changes
Frequently Asked Questions

What is a conservation area?

A conservation area is described in law as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The form and layout of the buildings, streets, trees and open spaces all contribute to a local distinctiveness and individuality that defines an area like the new Darkes Lane (West) Conservation Area. The designation of a conservation area would help to ensure that these features are retained and enhanced for future generations to enjoy

What is a conservation area appraisal and why has the Council carried it out for Shenley?

A conservation area appraisal should define the special historic and architectural interest of a conservation area. The form and content of an appraisal can vary depending on the conservation area being assessed, however the Shenley Conservation Area Appraisal looked at 'character zones' within the area and analysed each in detail, taking in what was considered to be a good, bad or neutral features. Recommendations were made based on this analysis.

The Council has an obligation to review conservation areas from time to time and to determine whether any additional adjoining sites should be included or sections removed. This is under Section 69 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The appraisal was commissioned by Hertsmere Borough Council and undertaken by the Built Environment Advisory and Management Service (BEAMS), part of the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust. BEAMS is independent of the Council and advises on urban design and conservation.

The Council invited comments during a consultation period on the draft version of the Shenley Conservation Area Appraisal. All comments received were taken into account in deciding on the recommendations below. A summary of the responses from the consultation can be seen on the Council's website at: www.hertsmere.gov.uk/planning/conservation

What are the results of the public consultation?

The appraisal set out various options for the future boundary of the conservation area. The review of the comments received helped form the final boundary:

- the Cricket ground remains in the conservation area;

- the boundary is extended along London Road towards Silver Hill;

- the boundary has been redefined to reflect current plot lines;

- the new development at Mulberry Gardens and Juniper Gardens is removed; and

- The Dell is also removed from the conservation area.

What were the other recommendations from the appraisal?

The appraisal sets out a number of potential management improvements for the future such as:

- The use of Article 4 directions on particular properties that restrict the permitted development rights to continue to preserve or enhance the their character; and

- The development of design principles and guidance for the future of Shenley village.

What would be the benefit of extending the conservation area?

Good practice guidance issued by English Heritage recommends that, as part of any appraisal, conservation areas are re-assessed to establish whether their boundaries are still appropriate. If the Council didn't consider including other relevant areas and buildings to a conservation area, we would be at risk of losing control over future development in that area and this could lead to the character and appearance of the wider area being permanently harmed. It should be noted that house prices and Council tax rates are not a consideration for any changes made to a conservation area boundary.

Generally, the council has a duty to conserve and enhance conservation areas within Hertsmere under the Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and will pay regard to this duty when exercising its planning duties.

What types of restrictions are there to properties that are now in the conservation area?

For householders, it means a reduction in the amount of permitted development rights that may normally have applied to those houses not listed. Planning permission would be required for some minor developments including:

- The council must be notified in writing of proposed works to trees in a conservation area, and may subsequently make a Tree Preservation Order to protect those trees concerned and prevent unsuitable works;

- An application for Conservation Area Consent is needed before a building of more than 115 cubic metres in size within a conservation area can be demolished; and

- Planning consent is needed for a number of minor developments that would normally be permitted development, these are:

  o A loft conversion or the raising of any roof slope (though, roof light windows that protrude no more than 15cm outwards from the roof slope do not require permission);

  o Any extension projecting beyond the side of the original house;

  o Any rear extension of more than one storey;

  o Any outbuilding to the side of a house;

  o The cladding of any part of a dwelling house with stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles;

  o A satellite dish on a chimney, wall or roof slope which fronts – and is visible from – the road;

  o The instillation of domestic microgeneration equipment, such as solar panels, which fronts – and is visible from – the road; and

  o Any chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe on the front or side of a house.

What is the status of the properties removed from the conservation area?

Properties which are excluded may benefit from the additional permitted development rights as listed above. However, householders should check that there are no conditions on the property that may affect permitted development rights, or the status of any trees that may have a preservation order.

All householders are advised to contact the Council's Planning Unit before undertaking works that may need permission on telephone 020 8207 2277 or email planning@hertsmere.gov.uk.