



21/03/23

## Report on the Public Consultation Process for the Pirton Conservation Area.

### Introduction

After the completion of the first draft of the Pirton Conservation Area, a public event was held at Pirton Village Hall on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022. Prior to the event, Place Services produced illustrated posters and large-scale maps, which were displayed at the Village Hall. These showed the proposed boundary alterations and described the area's special historic and architectural interest.

Copies of the draft document were also available for the attendees to read or take away with them for closer review. The event was well attended and there was much interest from the local community in the Conservation Area and the appraisal process.

Prior to the event, a questionnaire had been prepared which was available to fill out by attendees during the event, or they could take them home for completion and submission later. Alternatively, attendees were encouraged to email the local authority with their comments.

### Public Questionnaire Results

In total, two copies of the questionnaire were completed and submitted on the day of the consultation event. A further questionnaire was completed and emailed to the council, meaning there were three responses in total. A summary of the responses is below. The questions asked are in bold type.

#### **1. How do you relate to the Conservation Area? E.g., long term resident, landowner, business owner, work or live within or near the area.**

Option	Number of respondents
Long term resident	2
Live in Conservation Area	
Live outside Conservation Area	
Other	1

**2. Were you previously aware that there is already a Conservation Area covering Pirton?**

Option	Number of respondents
Yes	3
No	
Don't Know	

**3. Overall, how do you feel about the Conservation Area designation?**

Option	Number of respondents, Comments
Positive	2
Neutral	
Negative	1, You plan to include my land
Don't Know	

**4. Do you feel that you understand what a Conservation Area is and what it does? (1 = No not at all, and 5 = yes very well)**

Option	Number of respondents
1	
2	
3	2
4	1
5	

**5. Is there a building or place that you are specifically interested in and why?**

Summary of responses:

Respondent	Response
1	
2	Tithe Barn, Rectory Farm
3	HD276081 / HD552988

**6. What makes Pirton's buildings and spaces special to you?**

Summary of responses:

Respondent	Response
1	Variety, space!
2	Variety, interest, history architecture
3	N/A

**7. Have you noticed any changes in the area, particularly since the year 2019 (the year that the last Character Statement was completed)?**

Summary of responses:

Respondent	Response
1	Many (too many) new houses
2	More housing, 150 large houses

3	No
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**8. What potential threats (if any) do you think the Conservation Area faces? Typical threats to Conservation Areas include poor maintenance of buildings and spaces, inappropriate new development, unsympathetic alterations to historic buildings, impact of modern shopfronts and advertisement, vacant buildings, and vehicular traffic.**

Respondent	Response
1	Inappropriate new development, unsympathetic alterations to historic buildings
2	Threat of building over Wright's Farm
3	N/A

**9. Do you feel the four different character areas within the Conservation Area have been correctly identified?**

**Yes/No/Don't Know**

**If you have answered no, which character areas should be changed and why?**

Option	Number of respondents
Yes	1
No	
Don't Know	1

**10. It is proposed to amend the Conservation Area to include elements that are considered to have special architectural or historic interest and remove those that do not. Do you agree with the revisions?**

**Yes/No/Don't Know**

**If you have answered no, why do you think these areas either should, or should not be included within the Conservation Area?**

Option	Number of respondents
Yes	1
No	
Don't Know	1

**11. Do you feel there are any other areas which should be removed from the Conservation Area?**

**Please state below, using specific street names:**

Option	Number of respondents	Additional Comments
Yes	1	HD276081 / HD552988
No	2	

**12. Do you feel there are any areas which should be included within the Conservation Area?**

Respondent	Response
1	
2	Water Tower

**13. Do you think all the opportunities for enhancement have been identified?  
Yes/No/Don't Know**

**If no, please provide details of aspects of the Conservation Area you think would benefit from improvement:**

Option	Number of respondents
Yes	1
No	
Don't Know	1

**14. The Management Plan provides guidance on how to improve and/or preserve the significance of the Conservation Area. Do you agree with the proposals?  
Yes/No/Don't Know**

Option	Number of respondents
Yes	
No	
Don't Know	2

**If you have answered no, or have further comments, please provide them here:  
Comments:**

One further comment was received, in relation to the proposed inclusion of fields HD276081 / HD552988. The respondent states that the land is not part of Wrights Farm and has not changed from purely fields in many years, and requests the land not be included within the Conservation Area unless there is good reason to include it.

**15. Please provide any further comments you may have:**

No further comments were received.

**Assessment of Questionnaire results**

Overall, the questionnaire respondents presented a positive attitude toward the Conservation Area, with criticism levelled at the proposed expansion of the Conservation Area.

The condition of the Tithe Barn at Rectory Farm was also raised as a cause for concern, as was the expansion of the village through the creation of new homes. These concerns were reiterated in multiple answers, with new development across the village and Wright's Farm also raised as potential threats to the significance of the Conservation Area.

Regarding the boundary, The Water Tower on Prior's Hill was proposed for inclusion within the Pirton Conservation Area by a respondent, and a small field north of Shillington Road requested for removal from the proposed Conservation Area extension.

In response to the comments provided, the Tithe Barn has been highlighted as a Building at Risk within the Conservation Area Appraisal (page and the section on new development has been expanded to better reinforce how unsympathetic alterations and additional housing could have a negative effect upon Pirton Conservation Area's significance.

The proposal to include The Water Tower was also submitted via email and full comments regarding this are included in the table below. The field referred to by one respondent is north of Shillington Road, to the rear of houses yet not part of Wright's Farm in terms of ownership. As a field, it adds to the rural quality and appearance of this section of the Conservation Area and forms part of the wider setting of Wrights Farm. Omission of this field from the Conservation Area would result in a small parcel of land being excluded from the Conservation Area, bordered by the Conservation Area and sections of land which share a similar land use and visual quality. This would result in a conflicted boundary, and it is not proposed therefore to remove fields HD276081 / HD552988 as requested.

### Further consultation results

In addition to the feedback from the questionnaire, detailed comments were received via email from members of the public, representatives of the Parish Council, the Local Authority and Historic England. These are summarised in the table below, along with responses to the comments and the actions taken.

Name/Organisation	Summary of comments	Place Services' Response	Action
Xavier Preston Senior Planning Officer. Growth and Infrastructure Unit. Sustainable Growth Hertfordshire County Council	We would always advise that authorities engage with the HCC Historic Environment team during the preparation of consultation documents of this nature.	N/A	N/A
	Not clear if the Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted. If not, then this should be done as a requirement of the NPPF	The HER was consulted, although this has not been explicitly mentioned in the form of HER numbers.	A reference to the HHER has been added to section 2.1, page 13.
	At least one of the Scheduled Monuments shown in the document for Pirton are incorrect and therefore Historic England should be contacted to confirm	The master mapping information for the Prior's Hill SM was incorrect, this has been updated.	The map on page 23 has been amended.

	the correct extent of Scheduled Monuments.		
	Both the documents should be prepared using a comprehensive walk over survey of the settlements to inform their respective recommendations.	Multiple site visits were undertaken to inform the character analysis and assess architectural and historic special interest. A comprehensive archaeological walk-over survey would be beyond the remit of the appraisal of the CA.	No action required.
	Archaeological and heritage terminology requires clarification	A glossary is included at the end of the document.	The glossary has been reviewed.
Ollie Lloyd, on behalf of Gladman Developments Limited	Requested more justification for the proposed expansion of the Conservation Area in Character Area Three and the inclusion of the additional areas, including why sections of Royal Oak Lane have been included. No objection to the expansions in Character Areas One and Two.	The areas posed for addition to the Conservation Area have been assessed in relation to relevant policy and having viewed the village as a whole. From a walkover of the whole village, it became clear that elements of the Conservation Area's previously identified significance and character were present in other section of the village not included within the Conservation Area boundary. For this reason, buildings on Holwell Road are proposed to be added to the CA. Further explanation of the additions will be added re. changes to the	The boundary has been re-assessed, with Character Area Three reduced in size. Sections of Royal Oak Lane proposed for addition to the Conservation Area have been removed from the revised boundary.  The views sections for all three character areas has been amended, with views now numbered (to match the Ashwell document) and photographs of some of the views included, as well as additional description.

		<p>boundary which addresses the architectural/historic interest of the sections provided. The description of character area three also to be updated. Images of views to be added.</p>	
	<p>Requests that further reference to planning policy is included, particularly sections 192, 193 and 206 of the NPPF, Historic England guidance notes and sections of the NPPG. Suggests that the evidence base for the proposed expansion of the CA is not adequately demonstrated.</p>	<p>The references to policy are included at the end of the document in the Appendix.</p>	<p>No action required re. guidance/policy. The section on changes to the boundary (pages 19-21) have been expanded.</p>
	<p>Would like more justification of views and the boundary, particularly in Character Area Three which Gladman feel is not typical and undermines the special interest of the Conservation Area. Raises questions as to why houses on the High Street and Holwell Road are within the boundary, particularly as they often feature atypical elements (eg. uPVC windows) as well as the land north of Holwell Road. The inclusion of the green triangle/verge at the</p>	<p>The houses on the High Street are often neutral in appearance, however the route itself is historic and the topography and characteristics of the street are indicative of the wider Conservation Area. This includes the green verges, triangles at junctions and the building materials used in these areas.</p>	<p>The special interest of the houses on Holwell Road is explained within the document, particularly in regard to how they display characteristics present throughout the Conservation Area. The text relating to Character Area Three has been expanded to provide clearer reference to the features these areas display.</p>



	<p>junction of Drover's Way and Holwell Road is also questioned, as well as the verges on Royal Oak Lane.</p>		<p>Views in all Character Area's have been reassessed, with photographs and further explanations added.</p>
<p>Helen Hofton on behalf of the Pirton History Group</p>	<p>Following review of the document, Pirton History Group wish to highlight the history of the village's water town on Priors Hill, and the history of the structure.</p> <p>A brief history of the water tower has been provided by the history group, stating when the water tower was built (1936) and the role it had in supplying water to houses within Pirton in the mid twentieth century. A description is also provided of the tower's role in World War Two, when it doubled as a lookout tower.</p> <p>The history group suggest that the water tower should be added to the Conservation Area, particularly as the neighbouring building, Hill Farm, is proposed for inclusion as part of the reviewed boundary.</p>	<p>The water tower, although a feature of the village's twentieth century history, does not have the architectural or historic significance which warrants its inclusion within the Conservation Area. PS do however acknowledge the contribution it makes to the setting of the Conservation Area, as well as its impact upon views out of and within the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>A description of the water tower has been added to page 53.</p> <p>The CAAMP now acknowledges the water tower's contribution to key views within Character Area One and its prominence on Prior's Hill.</p>



Mr England (resident)	<p>Concerned about the inclusion of the section of land north of Holwell Lane added to the boundary, notes that these are agricultural areas of land, not gardens/part of the houses on Holwell Road.</p> <p>General comments re. typos.</p>	<p>PS will reassess boundary change to north east.</p>	<p>Section on Holwell Lane condensed to only include the two brick detached houses, not the northern section of land which abuts Holwell Road.</p> <p>Typos corrected.</p>
	<p>Concerns re climate change and the addition of cladding/external insulation, as well as EV charging points.</p>	<p>PS will consider how a section on sustainability can be included within the management proposals.</p>	<p>Additional section on sustainability added to the management plan.</p>
	<p>Concerns re. parking, stressing that parking in front of dwellings is necessary, particularly on Holwell Road.</p>	<p>PS will look at the phrasing of section on parking as to ensure it is fair/ understands the desire of people to park directly outside their homes.</p>	<p>The section on parking has been reviewed and retained; the document stresses that the removal of gardens for parking is harmful to the CA but does not comment on on-street parking.</p>
<p>Anna Mayers, on behalf of the Property Planning Team at Hertfordshire County Council (landowner)</p>	<p>Provides comments in relation to Wrights Farm, which is proposed for addition to the Conservation Area. Understanding of the reasons behind adding Wrights Barn to the CA but concerned that the CAAMP does not adequately describe the remainder of the site.</p> <p>Wishes to highlight</p>	<p>Additional information will be added to the section describing the boundary changes which clarifies/describes the architectural value (or lack thereof) of the other buildings. Text also to be added to the management plan which identifies Wrights Farm as an area requiring</p>	<p>See page 65, which has added a small paragraph about Wrights Farm.</p>

	<p>how buildings within the setting of the listed barn are unsympathetic in appearance and low in architectural quality and historic value. Of the opinion that loss of these elements would be beneficial to the setting of the listed barn.</p>	<p>enhancement.</p>	
<p>Mr Aspinall (land owner/resident)</p>	<p>Concerned re. the reasoning behind the document, questions the public engagement and cost.</p> <p>General comments about the state of planning/designations etc; misunderstanding of the planning process re. listing. Feels that the report is obstructive to building and that it does not make adequate reference to the local plan.</p>	<p>Many of the questions in the response are for NHDC, and perhaps not even relevant – re. cost of living etc.</p> <p>Section on policy to be updated to reflect the adoption of the new local plan by the council and provide clarification of the listing process.</p>	<p>Section 1.4 has been updated to reference the new local plan and provide additional commentary on the neighbourhood plan.</p>
	<p>Very concerned about the local plan and feels this document does not reflect the 21<sup>st</sup> century environment. Feels that the local authority should not comment on housing/design within Conservation Areas without that strategy also being included within the local plan.</p>	<p>Section on cost of living/environmental pressure to be added to the management proposals.</p>	<p>A new section on sustainability and green infrastructure has been added on pages 65-67.</p>

Pirton Parish Council	<p>Welcomes the creation of a CAAMP for Pirton and the addition of areas to the Conservation Area boundary.</p> <p>Requests maps be at a better scale or the colours altered. Feel the removal of sections of land on Walnut Tree Road are uncontroversial, due to the new houses which have been constructed in this area.</p>	<p>General update to policy section.</p> <p>Maps to be altered and enhanced where possible.</p>	<p>Policies section and appendixes updated to reference the neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>Maps have been enlarged and will be provided separately to NHDC for addition to their website/GIS files.</p>
	<p>Suggests Danefield Road and the Water Tower are assessed for inclusion. Requests the section on Wrights Farm is enhanced, as more now known about the archaeology in this area, since the barn was listed. Highlights typos and errors in the text.</p>	<p>Aspects to be reconsidered re. the boundary and typos etc amended.</p>	<p>The water tower has not been included within the Conservation Area boundary, nor has Danefield Road, the architectural and historic interest of which is not found to reflect the special interest of the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The water tower is considered part of the setting of the Conservation Area, however, and this has been acknowledged on page 18 and 53.</p>

	<p>Welcomes the use of character areas, which they feel are clearly defined. Concerned re. West Barn on Rectory Farm being at risk. Errors highlighted within the archaeology section; Largely supportive of the document and the management plans.</p>	<p>PS are pleased with the largely positive feedback from the parish council, all typos and inaccuracies highlighted by the PC will be corrected for the final draft.</p>	<p>History section updated to reflect comments re. the archaeology, correcting mistakes and making aspects clearer as suggested.</p>
	<p>Concerned that the role of the neighbourhood plan is underplayed, stresses the work the PC currently undertakes within the village.</p>	<p>The neighbourhood plan is recognised where appropriate, this document is not intended to be criticism of the PC's work and we appreciate that many of the suggestions are out of the PC's control; it is hoped that the management plan will bolster the work already undertaken by the Parish Council.</p>	<p>No action to take.</p>
	<p>Comments on the opportunities for enhancement: largely supportive of the proposals, but not inclined to add signage etc which differentiates the CA from the rest of the village.</p>	<p>The suggestions in the management plan will not work for every Conservation Area; these are discretionary recommendations to be implemented as appropriate.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>Alan and Susan Hack</p>	<p>Concern re. the signage and general public realm within the CA.</p> <p>Provides commentary on the parking within</p>	<p>Section on public realm to be updated, re-read/reassess the section on signage to be more prescriptive and</p>	<p>The management plan has been enhanced in regards to parking, with the</p>

	Pirton, on Chipping/Little Green. Feel that additional signage is required to deter people from parking in these areas.	easier to understand.	opportunities for enhancement stressing how parking on Chipping Green is harmful to the significance of the Pirton Conservation Area.
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Hopefully the above table and description provides full commentary on the changes which have been made to the document post-public consultation.

Should you have any further questions or require further amendments to the document, please contact me.

Best wishes,

Laura Johnson  
 Senior Built Heritage Consultant  
 Place Services.