

Chesfield Conservation Area – Summary of Consultation Responses

Respondent Name/ Organisation	General Comments	Response	Action
Mr Roger Tester	It would be good if the conservation area had some improved public access. The PRow are currently all at the edge of the proposed area and it would be a pity if the public on non-mechanised transport are unable to see much of any conserved area. It seems to rather defeat the purpose of conservation.	Whilst noted by North Herts District Council (NHDC), this does not form part of the remit of a Conservation Area designation as stipulated by national guidance and policy.	
	I did spot an error; section 2.1 page 12 refers to FP Graveley 101. This should be 010.		Amend document accordingly.
Mr and Mrs Alderson	We don't think 1 and 2 Manor Cottages (1930s houses which are not listed or have historical importance) should be within the proposed consultation area.	Whilst 1 and 2 Manor Cottages are not of any special architectural or historic interest, their scale, design, and materiality responds to, and reinforces, the local character and distinctiveness.	Amend document accordingly.
	As regards other properties in Chesfield we don't think one listed property, one church ruin (with no plans to stop it deteriorating) and a garden wall warrants a conservation area.	The quantity of historic structures is low, however the significance of the proposed conservation area is not derived solely from the architectural interest of the buildings and structures but also from its historic interest,	

		archaeological interest, the landscape, and its rural character and appearance.	
	We don't understand how Chesfield can be considered a conservation area with the additional traffic (especially from new residents in Roundwood using Back Lane to get to the A1) and pollution that will arise due to the decisions to grant planning permission for many properties on the Forster Way and Roundwood.	Whilst noted the draft CAAMP can only assess the existing situation and baseline as per national guidance and policy.	
	If Chesfield does become a conservation area more visitors will be attracted and there is no car parking available or footpaths (by roads) for walkers. The additional cars discussed in 3) would be a danger to horse riders, walkers and cyclists in the area.	Whilst noted the draft CAAMP can only assess the existing situation and baseline as per national guidance and policy.	
	If both councils continue to build housing estates around Chesfield and we decide to sell up, we would prefer to sell our house and land under the green belt regulations.	Noted.	
	We don't want the inconvenience and cost of applying for planning permission to erect sheds, greenhouses, fences hedges and tree maintenance.		Include explanation on PD changes in Management Plan
	All Chesfield residents are opposed to your proposal.	Noted.	
	Instead of spending money on a report to justify Chesfield becoming a conservation area surely tax payers money would have been better spent on a report to understand how the area's infrastructure is		

	going to deal with significant increase in population. Even before the new houses are built around Chesfield we are dealing with speeding cars, rush hour traffic and fly tipping.		
	At the recent consultation meeting the Councilor said “the residents of Chesfield need to move on from the decisions to grant planning permission on Forster way and Roundwood – that ship has sailed”. Unfortunately that ship will never sail for the residents of Chesfield as we have to live with the Council’s decisions destroy the countryside around our small village. Given the sensitivities around recent planning permissions we think the residents of Chesfield should have been consulted much sooner and in a face to face meeting.		
Mr Hugh Napier	Firstly, the landowners of the whole area were not consulted before this exercise began and we collectively object to this infringement of our autonomy.		
	As private land this is not North Herts decision to make and we strongly object to the manner in which this process has been initiated.		
	This new Conservation Area was not requested by us.	Noted.	
	Chesfield Park is private property with no footpaths or public rights-of-way. There are no listed buildings within Chesfield Park and several outbuildings and garden walls are already in a state of disrepair.		Arrange access to Chesfield Park

	We have significant boundary issues with Great Ashby which require constant woodland and fencing management, therefore maintenance needs to happen daily without asking for permission from an intrusive management scheme.		Liaise with NHDC Arb. Team re: management of woodland.
	There are several major new housing developments set to engulf the whole area compounding the above issues as new developments will border the Parkland and woodland.		Liaise with NHDC Arb. Team re: management of woodland.
	St Etheldra's ruined church is already protected as a Grade 2 Heritage Asset.	Noted.	
	Increased traffic caused by the expansion of Great Ashby in recent years has already changed the area beyond recognition and this proposal is simply too little too late, especially considering North Herts council has approved NS1 for the building of 900 new homes on our doorstep.	Noted.	
Ms Elaine Southern	The report is misleading, views that are used to create the ambience of the area will not exist after NS1 and Roundwood are built.	Whilst noted the draft CAAMP can only assess the existing situation and baseline as per national guidance and policy.	
	Manor Cottages are < 100 year old farm worker cottages the 1 HER marker is in the wood undated unpecific, why they are included.	Whilst 1 and 2 Manor Cottages are not of any special architectural or historic interest, their scale, design, and materiality responds to, and reinforces,	Amend document accordingly.

		the local character and distinctiveness.	
	Why should we pay inflated prices for specific conservation items to repair and improve our houses.	Like-for-like repairs will not require planning permission.	Expand section on PD rights and reference materials, etc.
	The report has been a waste and has not been delivered to residents in a timely manor.		
Ramblers Association	The FP from near the manor east towards Gt Ashby is FP10 not 101 has number 10. When searching HCC webpages one does need three digits so they are 008, 009 & 010.		Amend document accordingly.
	There is a T in Etheldreda; it is correct later in the document.		Amend document accordingly.
National Highways	National Highways therefore maintain our previous position that, considering the limited level of growth proposed across the Chesfield Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan, we do not expect that there will be any significant impacts on the operation of the SRN in the area.	N/A	N/A
The Coal Authority	No comments.	N/A	N/A
Environment Agency	No comments.	N/A	N/A
Natural England	No comments.	N/A	N/A

Mr Edward Seebohm	From my point of view I have found the way the Council have carried out this project deeply disturbing.		
	There is a suspicion the establishment of a Conservation Area is mainly a device to protect land from further development, which lessens the value of the nature of a Conservation Area rather than Chesfield being seen as a special area of historical interest, which it is not.		
	It a odd that approximately 200 acres or so of land and woodland is considered of such historic importance when there are only two listed buildings included. On the south side we have the Park with uncertain historic links, on the north side two listed buildings, modern buildings and no land of any historic interest at all.	Special interest described in draft CAAMP (historic maps and archaeology)	
	Then there is the question of the road. The road divides the proposed area in half and is a major negative factor. The Council have largely ignored the impact of the road, possibly because it is controlled by a different authority. However, it can't really be ignored as it runs right through Chesfield and sadly has a growing detrimental effect on the area.		Address in CAAMP – can this form part of the management plan?
	Chesfield will not remain the same Conservation Area or no Conservation area. It requires farming, woodland management and property management of commercial buildings. Viability of some of the buildings are questionable right now, and as the horse riding declines because of the dangerous road and reduced off road riding because of new houses, the		Could potential changes be part of opportunities for enhancement?

	buildings will need to be repurposed. Possibly industrial units or even more residential. Pasture fields may even be ploughed up to make way for different crops.		
	The report doesn't make any reference to woodland management and we are in the process of establishing management plans for all our woodlands with the Forestry Commission. Such plans will include some necessary felling under felling licences granted by the Forestry Commission. A Conservation Area cannot interfere with such plans.		Liaise with NHDC Arb. Team re: management of woodland.
	It is unclear whether fencing and hedges will be controlled by a Conservation Area. We cannot have planners interfering with our normal management of our land.		Expand PD section. Can these remain as PD?
	Another major negative factor ignored in the report is the already encroaching housing around the boundaries of the proposed Conservation Area. The woodland suffers from regular trespass and antisocial behaviour. In particular Round Wood has seen fires, small trees cut down, bicycles and motor bicycles ridden in the wood. The inevitable result is the driving out of wildlife and destruction of flora including bluebells. So much for conservation.	Whilst noted the draft CAAMP can only assess the existing situation and baseline as per national guidance and policy.	
Peter Seebohm	Lack of clarity on the impact on land management.		Liaise with North Herts Arb. Team re: management of woodland.
	Character descriptions have been misleading.		Arrange access to Chesfield Park

	<p>The purpose of the livery and agricultural buildings (1950s concrete) will, similar to all farms and enterprises, have a requirement to evolve and adapt to its environment etc. Any future development would have to go through the usual planning and be subject to Greenbelt rules, existing planning rules in proximity to listed buildings. Adding a Conservation Area designation feels unnecessary.</p>		<p>PD explanation? To be expanded in draft CAAMP.</p>
	<p>Potential funding opportunities (p.49) is simply wishful thinking, any work that gets carried out on St. Etheldreda's Church will have to continue to be privately financed and I am not convinced the Conservation Area will have any impact.</p>		<p>Review this section but retain Section 106 funding.</p>
Dr Hilary Napier	<p>The proposed conservation area regulations will impose extra cost and time which significantly adds to the stresses of farming my land and maintaining the trees. Chesfield Park is actively farmed with livestock and designated arable land.</p>		<p>Liaise with NHDC Arb Team re: management of woodland.</p>
	<p>I do not believe either the setting or the existing buildings merit conservation area status. If they did then there are many thousands of equally "historically important" areas of land in the UK. All land has historical background whether preserved or not.</p>	<p>There are over 10, 000 conservation areas across the UK.</p>	
	<p>The land is protected by Green Belt designation and the historically significant buildings of Manor Farm and St Ethelreda's ruined church are already protected as Grade 2 and heritage assets respectively. The so-called unaltered historic landscaped country park is</p>		<p>Arrange access to Chesfield Park. Is there a confusion in terminology? Check with historic landscape team?</p>

	partly arable, overshadowed by pylons and has housing estates visible in many directions.		
	The proposed conservation area has already been impacted by housing development on the eastern side, but that is dwarfed in comparison when one considers that a further 1800 houses are to be built adjacent to the area to be conserved. The rural feel to the area has been decimated by development with concomitant increases of traffic on Back Lane.		Check with North Herts about the likely impact of new development.
	It seems disingenuous to include a photo of unspoilt views towards Chesfield Park showing the “quality of the well-preserved surrounding rural landscape which makes an important contribution to the historic setting and significance of the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area (Figure 37)” when this is soon to be covered in housing. “The uninterrupted view across open fields and meadows towards Graveley is particularly important given that historically Chesfield and Graveley have been related so closely in manorial and ecclesiastical affairs (Figure 37). “That view is not going to be recognised once NS1 is built.	Whilst noted the draft CAAMP can only assess the existing situation and baseline as per national guidance and policy.	Check status of NS1. Is there an LVIA?
Bidwells – representing Dr and Mr Hilary and Henry Napier and Seebohm	Within the area, only a limited number of structures are considered to be of sufficient architectural or historic interest to warrant statutory protection and these are all located to the north of Back Lane. To the south, the house at Chesfield Park is a 1950s replacement and whilst its gardens and former park appear to be of historic origin, this has not been judged to be of sufficient interest to include the gardens on the Register of Parks and Gardens. If it		Arrange access to Chesfield Park. Has the parkland ever been assessed by HE?

	were, then the combination of designated assets, including a Registered Park, might meet the threshold for designation as a Conservation Area for the overall group value. Without such recognition of merit, the test of specialness is not satisfied.		
	At the public consultation event, Cllr Brown made reference to the purpose of the Conservation Area proposal at Chesfield was to help “prevent” development. If this is the aim, then existing green belt, heritage and other land use policies already provide more than sufficient protection for this land. The designation of a Conservation Area would not be justified and would, contrary to policy 191 of the NPPF, de-value the intent of such designations.		
	It is our clients’ opinion, therefore, that the proposed designation area does not have a sufficiently ‘special’ character or appearance to justify its designation as a Conservation Area. Furthermore, we find that certain assessment made within the Place Services document which is intended to define the character and appearance are not correct.		Arrange access to Chesfield Park
Hertfordshire County Council – Environment and Infrastructure Department	No comments.	N/A	N/A
Anne Conchie	This is an interim response; there may be more after our committee have discussed it. I am writing personally as the website editor and committee		

<p>(Friends of the Forster Country)</p>	<p>member with a further interest specified later. Please give us a deadline for final comments for the draft before it becomes final.</p> <p>You are correct that we should show an interest as this is arguably in Forster Country and if not, then adjacent to it. But at the moment our main concern is the recent planning permission for several hundred houses within Stevenage just south of Chesfield, including some in a Conservation Area. Historic England were not happy with the proposed designs but that did not stop the granting of planning permission.</p> <p>The application for a park or meadow (both terms were used in the local plan) i.e. the open space near Chesfield Park, shown in your fig 37 was referred back to Stevenage planners at a meeting recently. FoFC argued strongly against a carpark with toilets, larger than in any other in Stevenage park, along with many hard surface routes needed for maintenance; not the open meadow suggested in the Local Plan. But the main concern for Chesfield in the original application was for a mound containing all the spoil from the building works. This would be very near the Stevenage/Graveley border, on land I think shown in fig 37.</p> <p>Another factor not mentioned in the draft consultation document is the recently approved Local Plan for North Herts which allows many more hundreds of houses between Graveley FP9 and Graveley village</p>		
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	<p>and North Road B197 spoiling the view shown in fig.32. No details are publicly available yet.</p>		
<p>Hertfordshire Gardens Trust (Kate Harwood)</p>	<p>A minor query on p.17. where the history of Chesfield Park house is outlined. It states that the architraves were of painted stone or cement. I find this quite surprising. In the late 18/early 19 century houses were sometimes covered with a patent cement /stucco render, especially round here as stone was in short supply. But I have not heard of any brick building with only cement architraves - stone where they could afford it, but not cement. Would it be possible for you to let me know the source for this information?</p> <p>Chesfield Park itself is on the Herts Gardens Trust Local List for NHDC. We have done local parks and gardens lists for all the LPAs in Hertfordshire, some have been adopted and we've helped with polygons, brief resumes of info etc. NHDC has not asked us to supply information so we hold it here in a fairly raw form. Chesfield Park is an interesting late 18/early 19 century park which seems to have developed out of the very large garden (given as 150 acres in Prince 2008) depicted in the Dury & Andrews map (which I always take with a pinch of salt) and is first shown on the 1820/21 Bryant map of Hertfordshire. The sculpted edges to the shelter belts, the views southwest across the landscape to St Nicholas church spire at Stevenage and beyond, and the sinuous approach drive snaking across the parkland, visible on the LiDAR are fairly typical of the period and there is much still there. I don't know if you are required to flag up the Local importance of Chesfield Park as a heritage asset but it would be very welcome if you could.</p>		

