



# Proposed Chesfield Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

**Client:**  
North Herts Council

**Date:**  
September 2023



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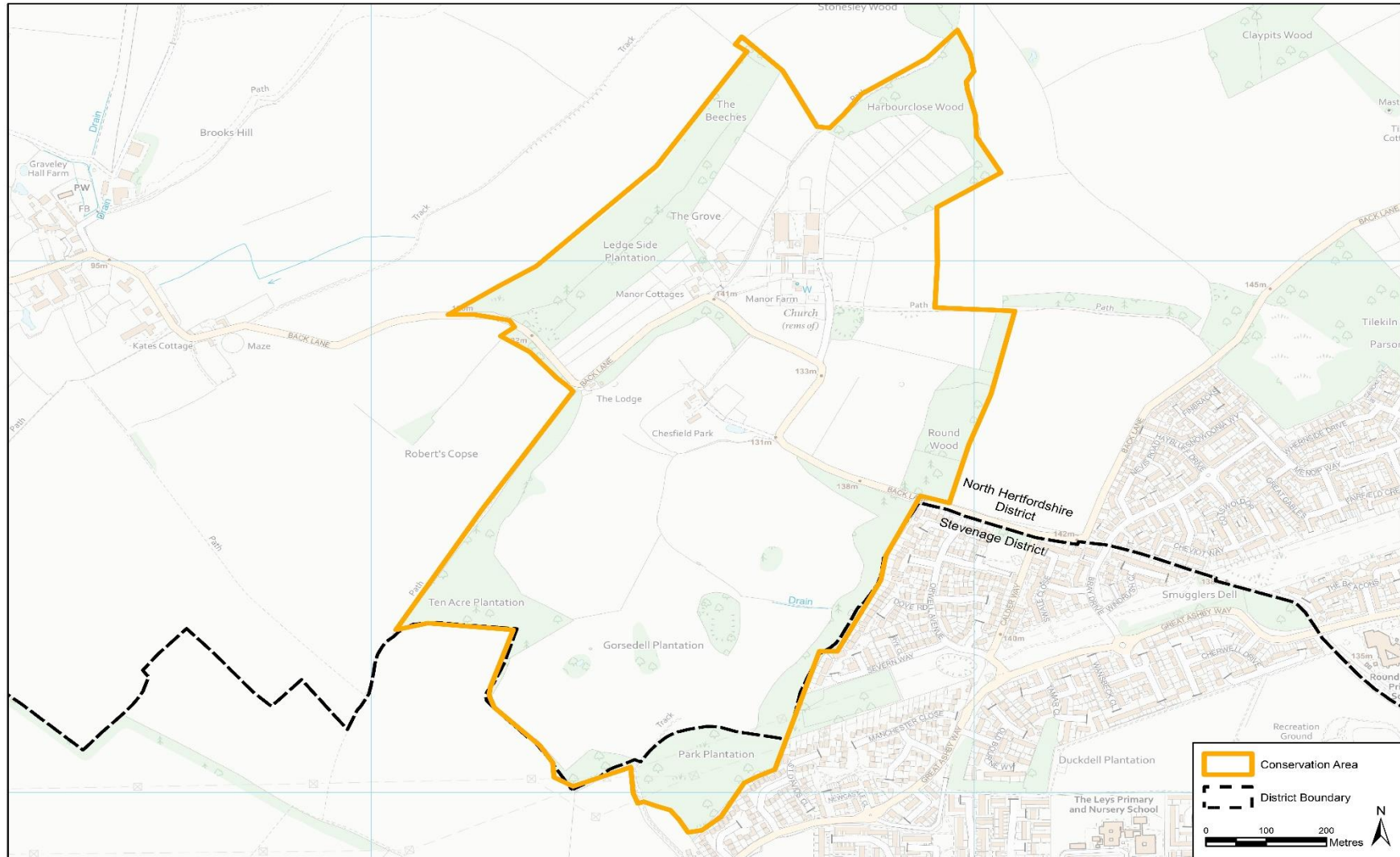


Figure 1: Location Plan showing proposed Chesfield Conservation Area boundary and district boundary

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Summary

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides an overview of the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area, outlining its suitability for designation, proposed boundary, and description of its special interest. The appraisal will also consider buildings, landscapes, and features which contribute to the proposed Conservation Area's character and appearance.

Conservation Area designation provides broader protection than the listing of individual buildings as it recognises all features within the area which form part of its character and appearance and ensures that planning decisions take the enhancement and preservation of the area into consideration.

The proposed Chesfield Conservation Area comprises the landscaped country park of Chesfield including the central house and garden (Chesfield Park), and a farmstead complex, including the former manor house, and ruined church to the north (Chesfield Manor). The proposed Conservation Area is bounded on each side by substantial treelines and, with the exception of its south-eastern edge, arable fields (Figure 1).

The significance of the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area chiefly derives from its rural character, the historic interest of the former manorial site and church and the unaltered, historic landscaped country park.



**Figure 2: The ruins of St. Etheldreda's Church**

## 1.2. Purpose of Appraisal

This document is to be used as a baseline to inform future change, development, and design with regard to the sensitivities of the historic environment and its unique character.

The appraisal recognises designated and non-designated heritage assets within the area which contribute to its special interest, along with their setting. It will consider how different Character Areas within the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area came to be developed, their building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, alleys, streetscapes, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities will be used to assess the key characteristics of each area, highlighting potential impact future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the character of Chesfield. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and analysis of the proposed conservation area.

This appraisal will enhance understanding of the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area and its development, informing future design. Applications that demonstrate an understanding of the character of a Conservation Area are more likely to produce appropriate design and positive outcomes for agents and their clients.

It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the best practice guidance outlined in the bibliography.

## 1.3. Frequently Asked Questions

A selection of frequently asked questions is outlined below. If you require further advice, please contact North Herts Council's planning department.

### **What is a conservation area?**

Conservation areas are designated by the Local Planning Authority as areas of special architectural and historic interest. There are many different types of conservation area, which vary in size and character, and range from historic town centres to country houses set in historic parks. Conservation area designation introduces additional planning controls and considerations, which exist to protect an area's special character and appearance and the features that make it unique and distinctive. Although designation introduces controls over the way that owners can develop their properties, it is generally considered that these controls are beneficial as they sustain and/or enhance the value of properties within conservation areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework regards conservations areas as 'designated heritage assets'.

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act specifies the general duty of Local Authorities, in the exercise of planning functions (Section 72). The 1990 Act states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

## **How are conservation areas designated and managed?**

The designation process includes detailed analysis of the proposed conservation area and adoption by the local planning authority. A review process should be periodically undertaken, and the Conservation Area assessed to safeguard that it retains special architectural or historic interest. Threats can be identified, and the boundary reviewed, to ensure it is still relevant and appropriate.

This Conservation Area is supported by an appraisal and management plan. The appraisal describes the importance of an area in terms of its character, architecture, history, development form and landscaping. The management plan, included within the appraisal, sets out various positive proposals to improve, enhance and protect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## **How can I find out if I live in a conservation area?**

Boundary maps of all conservation areas in the district can be found on North Herts Council's website. The council also has an online interactive map search function, which allows you to search for a specific property. Full details, including contact details for the local authority, can be accessed via the link below. (<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/conservation-areas>)

## **What are the Council's duties regarding development in conservation areas?**

The Local Authority must follow the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). These set out in clear terms how development proposals within Conservation Areas should be considered on the basis of whether they preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Applications which fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area are likely to be refused as a result. An authority's Local Plan also typically includes a specific policy on Conservation Areas.

## **Do I need permission to change a property in a conservation area?**

Permitted development rights are not the same within a conservation area as they are elsewhere. This means things that normally would not require planning permission will require consent within a conservation area's boundary. For example, side extensions, two storey rear extensions, roof extensions and the cladding of buildings, which normally would class as permitted development, require planning permission if the building affected is in a conservation area.

North Herts Council's planning team can provide further information on whether alterations require planning permission. Full details of permitted development rights are set out in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No. 3) Order 2020.

Additionally, further information on the need for planning permission may be found on the Planning Portal. (<https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission>)

Further consideration may also need to be given to the setting of listed buildings, which many conservation areas are likely to contain.

### **What is a non-designated heritage asset?**

All buildings, features and planned landscapes within a Conservation Area make a contribution to its significance. These can be measured on a sliding scale of positive, to neutral, to negative contributors.

Heritage assets are defined in the NPPF 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.*'

Not all heritage assets are designated. Although a building may not be included on the national list, this does not always mean it is of no heritage value. Buildings and other smaller features of the built environment such as fountains, railings, signs and landscaping can make a positive contribution to the appreciation of an area's historic interest and its general appearance.

Local listing is an important tool for local planning authorities to identify non-listed buildings and heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the locality. North Hertfordshire District Council currently has Registers of Buildings of Local Interest for Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth, Newnham, Knebworth (parish) and Royston.

### **Do I need to make an application for routine maintenance work?**

If routine maintenance works are to be carried out using authentic materials and traditional craft techniques, on a like-for-like basis, it is unlikely that you will need to apply for permission from the local authority. However, it is strongly recommended that you contact the local planning authority for clarification before commencing any works. The use of a contractor with the necessary skills and experience of working on historic buildings is essential. Inappropriate maintenance works and the use of the wrong materials will cause damage to the fabric of a historic building.

### **What is an Article 4 Direction?**

Some conservation areas are covered by an Article 4 Direction, which brings certain types of development back under the control of a local planning authority. This is in addition to the exemptions outlined in the Permitted Development Order Act and, where in place, an Article 4 direction allows potentially harmful proposals to be considered on a case by case basis through planning applications. Article 4 Directions are used to control works that could threaten the character of an area and a planning application may be required for development that would otherwise have been permitted development. Historic England provides information on Article 4 Directions on their website. (<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/historic-environment/article4directions>)



### **Can I demolish a building in a conservation area?**

Demolition, or substantial removal of part of a building within a conservation area, will usually require permission from the local planning authority. It is important to speak to them before beginning any demolition works, to clarify if permission is required. This includes the demolition of boundary walls.

### **Will I need to apply for permission for a new or replacement garage, fence, boundary wall or garden structure?**

Any demolition, development or construction in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. A replacement boundary, garage, cartlodge or greenhouse will need to be designed with the special historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area in mind. North Herts Council will provide advice as to how to proceed with an application.

### **Can I remove a tree within a conservation area?**

If you are thinking of cutting down a tree or doing any pruning work, the local planning authority must be notified 6 weeks before any work begins. This enables the authority to assess the contribution the tree makes to the character of the conservation area and, if necessary, create a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect it. Consent will be required for any works to trees that are protected. Further information on TPOs can be found on Historic England's website (see below).

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/consents/tree/>)  
[website.](https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/consents/tree/)

### **How can I find out more?**

Historic England's website has information on conservation areas and their designation. Further information on the importance of conservation areas, and what it means to live in one, can also be accessed via their website (<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/conservation-areas/>).

Historic England has also published an advice note called Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management which sets out advice on the appraisal of conservation areas and managing change in conservation areas (Figure 3). (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/>)

In addition, North Herts District Council has information on the conservation areas within its boundary available on its websites. This includes information pertaining to when the conservation area was designated, how far it extends and the reason for its designation. This can be accessed via the link below. (<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/conservation-areas>)

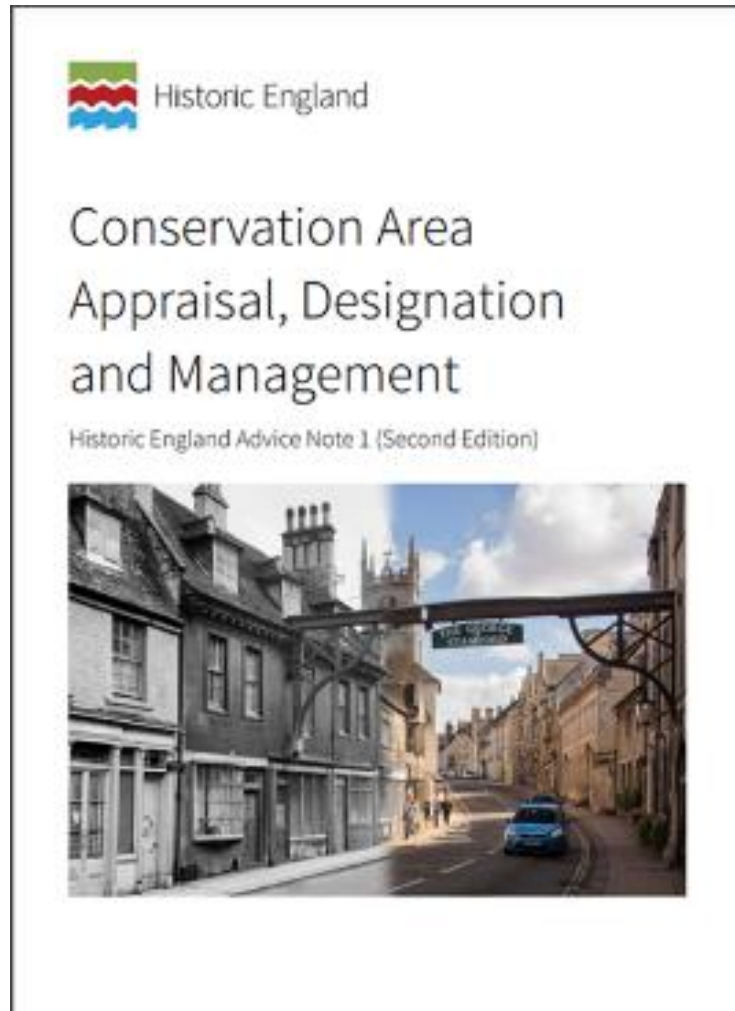


Figure 2 Cover Page, *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management*, Historic England

## 1.4. Planning Policy and Guidance

### National Planning Policies

The national legislative framework for the creation, conservation and enhancement of conservation areas and listed buildings is set out Part II of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (HMSO 1990).

Section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider possess architectural or historic interest worthy of preservation or enhancement as Conservation Areas. As part of this, section 71 of the Act requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas, such as in the form of an appraisal document. It is also the Local Authority's duty to ensure that special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the conservation when making planning decisions, as per section 72 of the Act.

National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in the Government's *National Planning Policy Framework*, or NPPF (2021). Chapter 16 of the NPPF relates specifically to the historic environment, with Annex 2: Glossary providing a definition of heritage terms, some of which are reproduced in Appendix **Error! Reference source not found.** of this document.

Within the NPPF, the importance of heritage assets is outlined, with emphasis placed upon the contribution they make to the quality of life of existing and future generations. Local Planning Authorities should seek to preserve or enhance the historic environment, developing strategies which consider the wider benefits that the conservation of heritage assets can bring, and draw upon the contribution made by the historic environment to local character and distinctiveness.

A further national planning policy which applies is The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No. 3) Order 2020.

Careful consideration must be given to the Permitted Development Order by the Local Planning Authority, Residents and other Interested Parties, as many permitted development rights are removed in Conservation Areas.

### **Local planning policies**

#### **North Hertfordshire Draft Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Policies:**

SP13: Historic Environment

Policy HE1: Designated heritage assets

Policy HE2: Heritage at risk

Policy HE3: Non-designated heritage assets

Policy HE4: Archaeology

## **1.5. Designation of the Conservation Area**

In 2021, a report was commissioned from Place Services by North Hertfordshire District Council to assess the suitability of an area to the north of Stevenage known as Chesfield for conservation area designation.

To ascertain the boundary for the study area, documentary research was carried out utilising a number of primary and secondary sources including local history publications, maps, original plans and historic photographs held by the Hertfordshire Archives. A desk based archaeological assessment has also been conducted, considering the Chesfield area in the context of the wider landscape. Partial site walkovers were also undertaken in September 2021 and July 2022.

Whilst a site walkover of Chesfield Park was not undertaken prior to the preparation of the proposed CAAMP due to it being in private ownership, it is considered that the views of the area from the public realm along with documentary and photographic evidence was sufficient to understand its special historic interest. Should additional evidence come to further inform this assessment, amendments to the boundary may be required.

Through both the site visit and desk-based research, it was determined that as a combination of a well-preserved landscaped estate and agricultural land with archaeological potential, Chesfield has a distinct character and appearance, which contributes to the understanding of the historic use and development of the Chesfield area over time.

## 2. Chesfield

### 2.1. General Character

Chesfield is of an unspoilt rural character and is composed of a managed rural landscape, with woodland, coppices, meadows, and lanes (Figure 4).

The proposed Conservation Area has a central house and garden (Chesfield Park), and a farmstead complex including the former manor house to the north (Chesfield Manor). To the eastern edge of the proposed Conservation Area are areas of modern housing development. Elsewhere, the proposed Conservation Area is bounded by an agrarian landscape comprising large open arable fields; these fields lack a sense of enclosure, are sparsely populated with pockets of woodland and coppices, and hedgerow is widely dispersed.

Back Lane forms the main public route through the proposed Conservation Area and runs roughly west to east, with a branch of the lane forming a circuitous route to the north. There is limited development within the proposed Conservation Area, with the main focus of built structures being around Chesfield Manor and the ruined Church of St Etheldreda in the north of the area. The house at Chesfield Park is secluded, within a walled garden plot, and screened by trees. Aside from Back Lane, there are two public footpaths (Graveley 010 and 009) and a bridleway (Graveley 008), which are publicly accessible routes through the proposed Conservation Area. The majority of the southern section of the area has no direct public access and is the private parkland of Chesfield Park.



Figure 4: Aerial view of proposed Chesfield Conservation Area

## 2.2. Setting and Context

Chesfield is located in North Hertfordshire, approximately one mile east of the village of Graveley. It is within the boundary of North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC). Stevenage, within the boundary of Stevenage Borough Council (SBC), borders the area to the south and east.

Although Stevenage has Saxon origins, the town is characterised by its New Town development, having been the first designated New Town as part of the 1946 New Towns Act. The New Town absorbed small hamlets, farmsteads and settlements surrounding the pre-existing High Street, expanding Stevenage rapidly in the post war years.

St Nicholas/Rectory Road Conservation Area and the proposed Chesfield Conservation share a boundary (Figure 5). The St Nicholas/Rectory Road Conservation Area encapsulates an area surrounding St Nicholas' Church, which is the earliest recorded part of the town and now forms the outer, north-western section of Stevenage. Part of the church tower dates from the twelfth century however a wooden structure may have previously occupied the site.

The St Nicholas/Rectory Road Conservation Area was designated in 1982, extended in 1984 and revised again in 2007. It is within the jurisdiction of Stevenage Borough Council, who have a published an appraisal and management plan for the Conservation Area which is available for download on their website.



**Figure 5: Aerial view of Chesfield (edged in red) showing the St Nicholas/Rectory Road Conservation Area boundary to south-west (edged in green)**

## 2.3. Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history and development of the proposed Conservation Area. Hertfordshire's Historic Environment Record (HHER) has been used as a reference point for this history. Where appropriate HHER references are included within the text. A full list of HHER results within the study area is reproduced in **Appendix 5.5**.

### The Place Name

The historiography of Chesfield has proffered numerous theories as to the origin of the place name of Chesfield. The most convincing view on the subject came from Robert Clutterbuck, in his history of 1821. His theory is that 'Chesfield' is a contraction of Chellsfield, Chells being the name of a small adjoining lordship. Chells Manor lies approximately two miles south-east of Chesfield. Harold A. Roberts, writing in 1952 endorsed this theory because '*Chells and Chesfield were called either Escelveia or Scelva in Domesday Book, Chells being the larger of the two, and from the manor of Chells itself was created the manor of Chesfield.*'<sup>1</sup> This appears to have happened during the reign of Edward I, as in 1274 both were called Scelva, whereas in 1294 one was called Chelse (the manorial name for the family of William de Chelsen), now Chells, and the other change to Chevesfeld. Chesfield, the present name altered from Chisfield, seems but a contraction of Chevesfeld.

### Prehistoric Period (500,000 BC to 43 AD)

No sites of a prehistoric date are recorded within the proposed Conservation Area, however archaeological finds dating from the late bronze to the late iron age have been found in a number of locations close to the proposed boundary, particularly in the immediate vicinity of Round Wood (HHER 12655, 16655, 16656). Several of these finds indicate domestic use.

### Roman Period (43 AD to 410 AD)

A series of earthworks within woodland to the west of the Chesfield Manor farmstead (annotated HHER 9801 on Figure 19) have been interpreted as evidence of cultivation terraces. At least two lynchets (a ridge or ledge) are present within the woodland, with possibly a third visible in grassland to the south. The age of these earthworks is uncertain, but a Roman or Medieval or date seems most likely.

First century Roman coins have also been found in the immediate vicinity of Harbourclose Wood which is located to the north of the proposed Conservation Area (HHER 11399).

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<sup>1</sup> Roberts, Harold, A., *Chesfield: The History of an Ancient Hertfordshire Parish*, (1952) p.6

## Anglo-Saxon (410 AD to 1066 AD)

St Etheldreda (636–679 AD) was an Anglo-Saxon, East Anglian princess and Abbess of Ely. This dedication of the church suggests the Anglo-Saxon origins of a manorial and church complex at Chesfield.

## Medieval (1066 AD to 1540 AD)

The oldest structure in the proposed Conservation Area is the remains of a ruined thirteenth -century church dedicated to St Etheldreda (NHLE no: 1102564). The existing church appears in records during the reign of Edward 1, when it was rated in the ecclesiastical commission made by order of Pope Nicholas IV and therefore it is known that the church was standing in 1291. There is documentary evidence of a church on the site in 1216 which may have preceded the existing structure. The ruins are Grade II\* listed and comprise a single cell chancel, nave and south-east chapel (Figure 17). The church remained in use until 1731, and in 1750 it was partially demolished in order to provide materials for the repair of St Mary’s Church in Gravely (1.2km to the west). There are accounts that along with building materials, pews, furniture and other items were also removed to the church at Gravely.

Aside from the ruins of the twelfth-century Church of St Etheldreda (HHER 35), the HHER records no sites of a Medieval date within the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area. It has been suggested that the remains of a deserted Medieval village lie at Chesfield, but this does not appear to be the case. Presumably, however, there would have been a Medieval predecessor to the current Chesfield Manor Farmhouse, associated with the church. However, it is unknown whether the earlier

dwelling was in the same location as the current farmhouse, or elsewhere in the complex.

In the mid-fifteenth century Edward Barrington, in possession of the manor of Chesfield, purchased the manor of Graveley from Ralph de Monte Caviso. From this point until the mid-nineteenth century, the descent of Graveley manor and Chesfield manor are notably similar.

## Post-medieval and Modern (1540 AD to present)

The seventeenth century Chesfield Manor Farmhouse (detailed in Section 2.4) is also recorded in the HHER (2895). The HHER suggests that there is no evidence for the partial demolition of the building (as postulated in the listing entry), and that this manor house presumably became a farmhouse when Chesfield Park was laid out in c.1680 and its associated dwelling constructed.

The majority of the proposed Conservation Area is occupied by Chesfield Park, a large, landscaped park with an associated house and garden (HHER 9567). The park is first recorded on the 1766 Drury and Andrew map of Hertfordshire (Figure 6) but has earlier origins. Whilst the Drury and Andrew map is relatively stylized and cannot be wholly relied upon in terms of both scale and orientation, it clearly shows both Chesfield Park and Chesfield Manor, although at the time of the map’s survey they were referred to as “Chisefield Lodge”. Visible detail includes the walled garden to the north of the Chesfield Park house, a regular-shaped water feature within the park, and the church, which is incorrectly shown to the north of the manor complex and is depicted as

intact. This suggests some artistic license as it is known that the church fell out of use in 1731 with materials removed from the site in 1750.

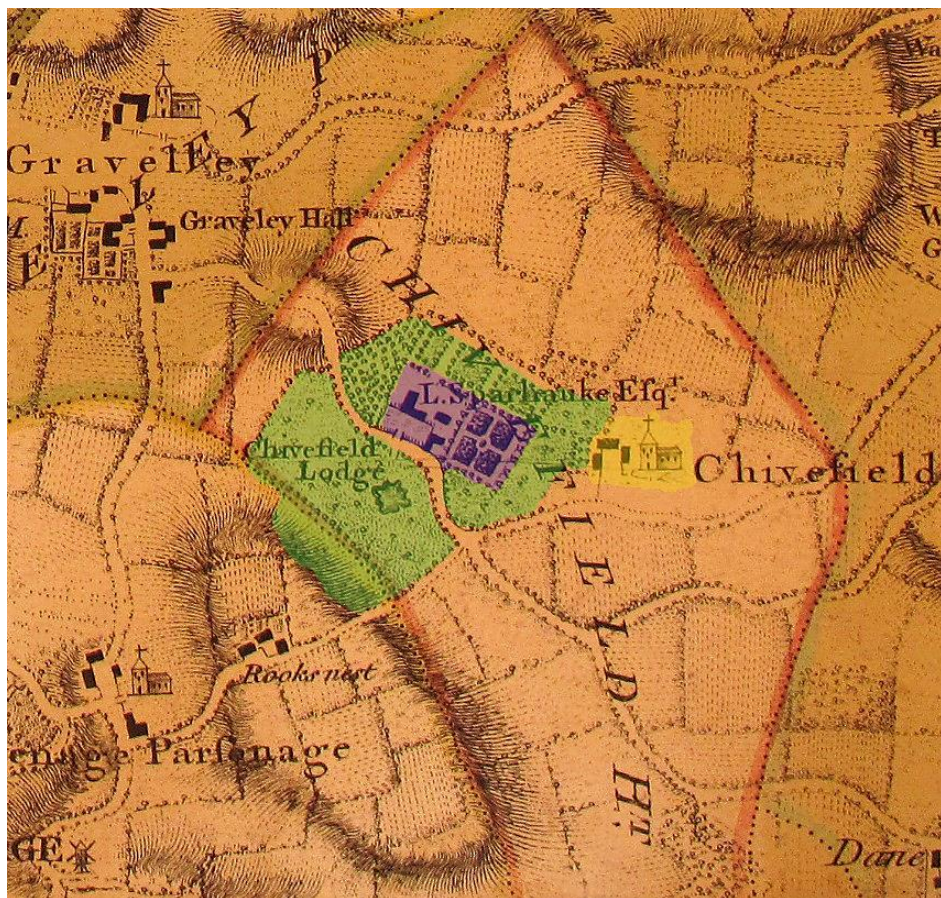


Figure 6: 1766 Drury and Andrew Map of Hertfordshire. Chesfield Park is highlighted in green, with the house and walled garden in blue. Chesfield Manor complex, including the church, are in yellow. North is to the top right

Immediately to the north of the farmhouse and ruined church are the earthwork remains (HHER 1104) of post-medieval farm buildings that were demolished in the nineteenth century. It was initially presumed that these earthworks represented the remains of the aforementioned deserted medieval village, but more research suggests otherwise (Cocroft W. D. 1990). Upon comparison of the 1839 Tithe Map (on which the earlier farm buildings are still extant; Figure 9) with the location of the earthworks (visible to the northwest of the farmstead in Figure 19), this conclusion appears sound.



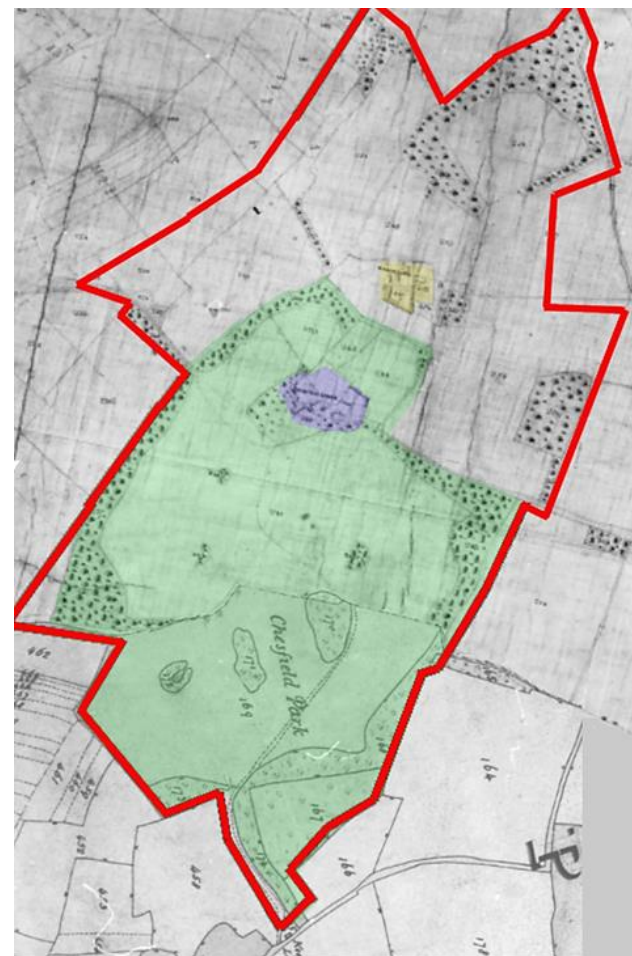
Figure 7: Chesfield Park in 1850, taken from an old print (*Harold A. Roberts*)



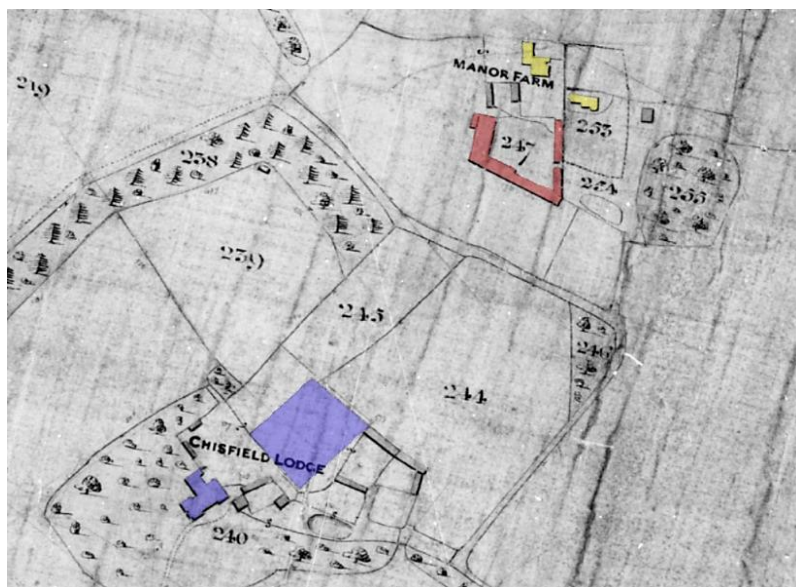
The house at Chesfield Park, erected about 1680, fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1950 by the new owner of the estate who rebuilt a smaller house on the site of the old. The previous building is recorded as being plain, with very little architectural pretension, the front being of brickwork, with painted stone or cement architraves around the windows. Historic prints show a portico to the principal entrance (Figure 7). A feature of particular note is the surviving walled garden to the north of the house, which is visible on the 1766 mapping and is of historic interest.

In 1750, St Etheldreda's Church was demolished under a licence granted by the Bishop of Lincoln, in whose diocese the church then was. Its materials have been used from time to time to repair the Church at Graveley.

The tithe maps are much more accurate than the earlier mapping and serve to show the area in considerable detail for the first time (Figures 8 and 9). Of note is that the large water feature visible on the 1766 map is still present to the south of Chesfield Park (shown as Chisfield Lodge), and that Chesfield Manor contains several farm buildings that have since been demolished. The woodland to the west of Chesfield Manor (the location of cultivation terraces; HHER 9801) is not extant at this point, suggesting the area was still being used as farmland. The accompanying tithe apportionment to these maps shows that the entire area is owned by an "Edward Parkins" (descendant of Edward Barrington) who was also owner of the Manor of Graveley.



**Figure 8: Graveley Tithe map (1839). Chesfield Park house and walled garden are highlighted in blue with Chesfield Manor house and ruined church in yellow**



**Figure 9: Detail of Figure 8 showing buildings in Chesfield Park and Chesfield Manor, from Graveley Tithe map (1839). Chesfield Park house and walled garden highlighted in blue, Chesfield Manor house and ruined church in yellow. Farm buildings in red.**

The farmstead complex to the north of the farmhouse (HHER 9342) is of a typical mid-nineteenth century model farm layout, with three north-south ranges and a fourth perpendicular range at the northern end (Figure 12). Many of the buildings have since been rebuilt, yet several original nineteenth-century buildings survive. The easternmost of the north-south ranges was converted into residential use in 2004, and the work was preceded by a historic building survey (Semmelmann K. 2004). Several large, modern farm buildings were constructed to the north of this complex in the latter half of the twentieth century. A

programme of archaeological monitoring was carried out to the north of this complex in 1997 during the construction of a riding arena, but only modern remains were encountered (Turner C. 1997).

John Edwin Cussans, a Hertfordshire historian, writing in 1874, stated that the church had become a complete ruin.

The six-inch OS map of 1878-1881 (Figure 10) shows many of the same features as the preceding tithe maps, but with some notable changes. A model farm complex in Chesfield Manor has been constructed, with the earlier farm buildings having been demolished. Details of the model farm (HHER ref: 9342) can be found in **Appendix 5.4**.

The woodland containing the cultivation terraces (HHER 9801) to the west is beginning to form, although is still significantly smaller in extent than that of today. The woodland to the south-west ('Ten Acres Plantation') has also expanded slightly. Conversely, the woodland to the far north of the area (labelled as 'Habourclose Wood') has reduced in size, perhaps suggest some deliberate clearance.

The following pages show OS maps from 1896 onwards (Figures 11-15). Very little change occurs between 1896 and 1946. The first encroachment of modern Stevenage towards Chesfield occurred in the late 1990s/early 2000s, with the building of houses along the south-eastern edge of the area.

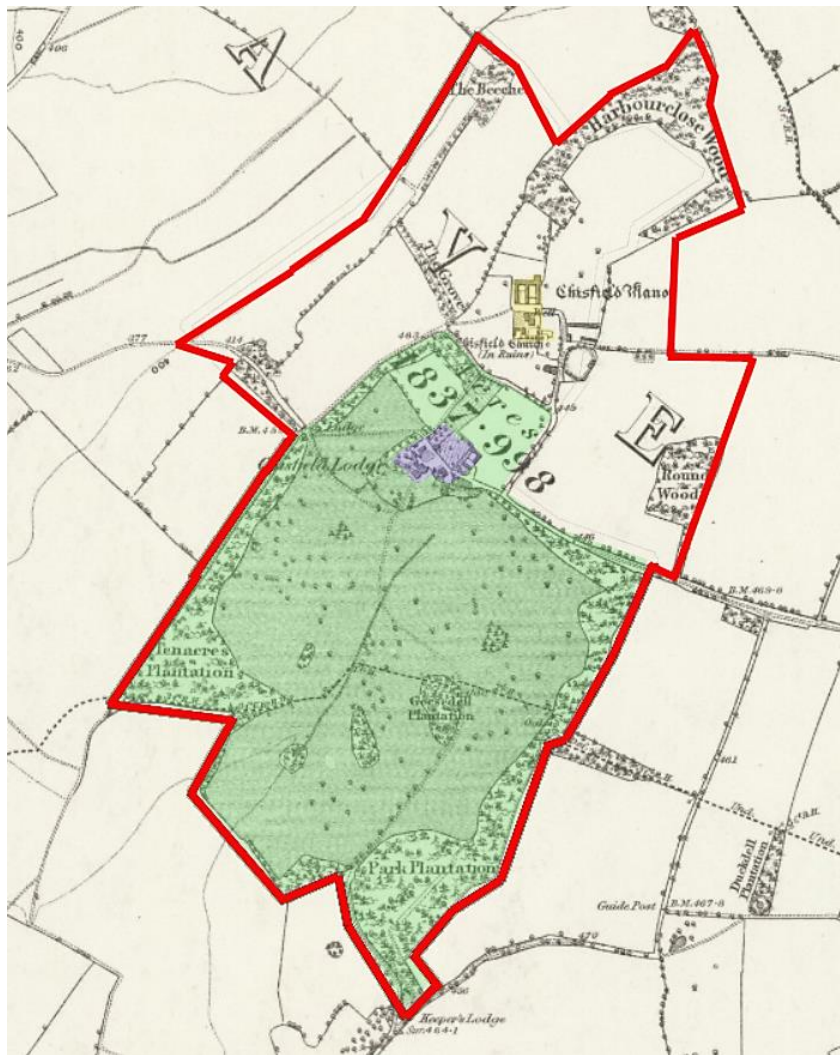


Figure 10: First edition six-inch OS map (1878-1881). Extent of Chesfield Park highlighted in green, with house and garden in blue. Chesfield Manor complex, including church, in yellow

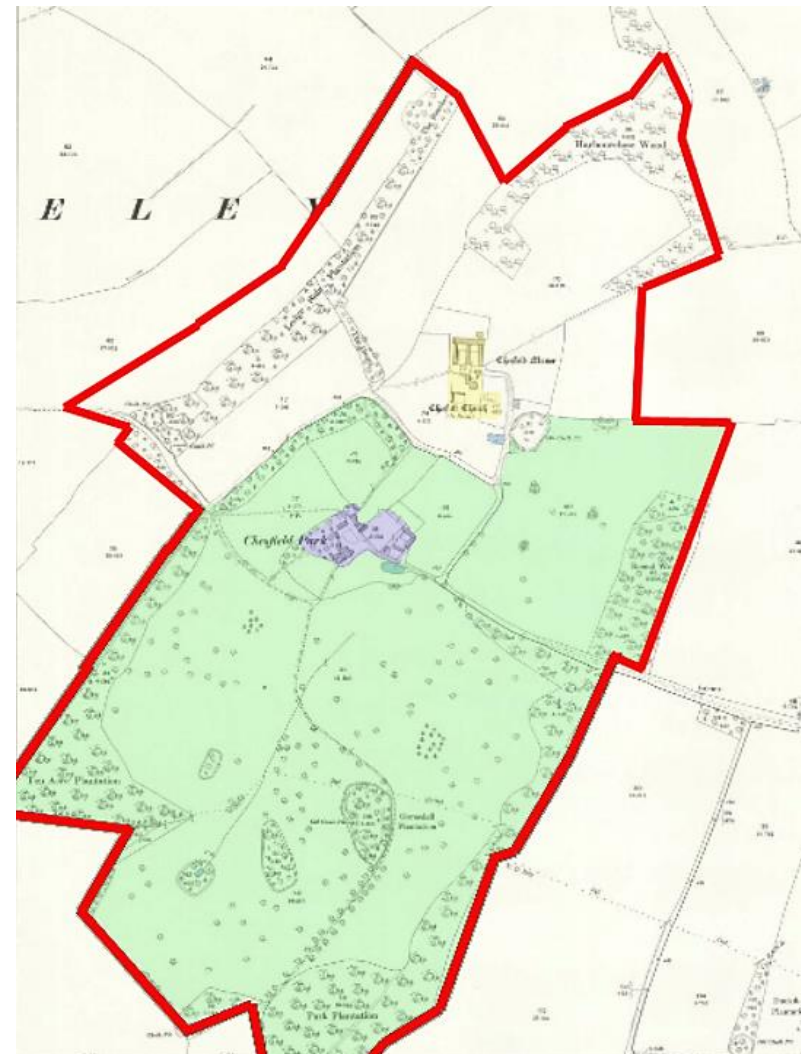


Figure 11: 1896 OS twenty-five-inch map. Extent of Chesfield Park highlighted in green, with house and garden in blue. Chesfield Manor complex, including church, in yellow

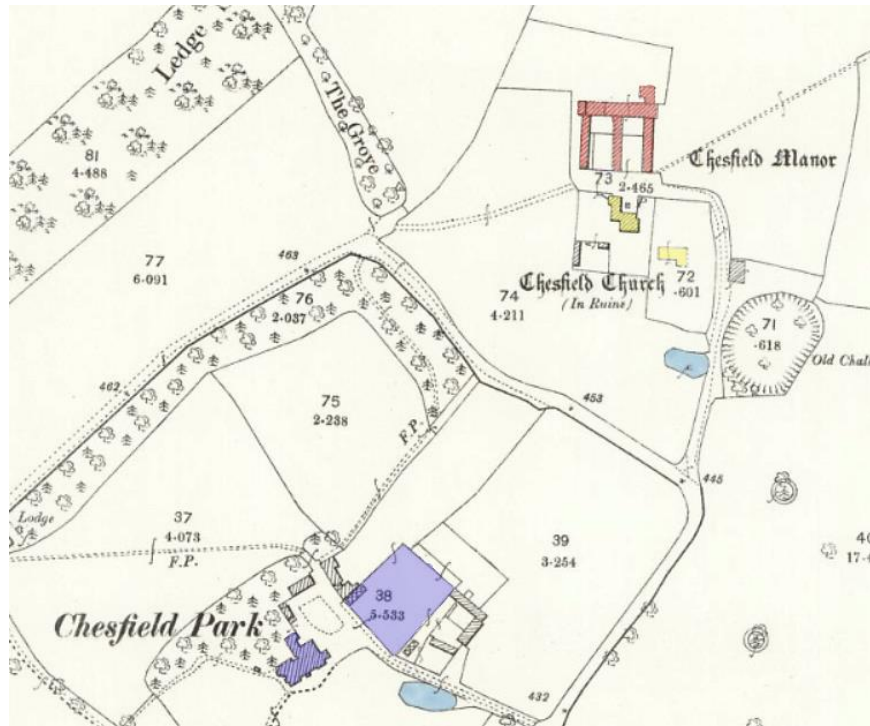


Figure 12: Detail of Figure 11, showing buildings in the area. Chesfield Park house and walled garden highlighted in blue, Chesfield Manor house and ruined church in yellow. Buildings highlighted in red are farm buildings associated with Chesfield Manor

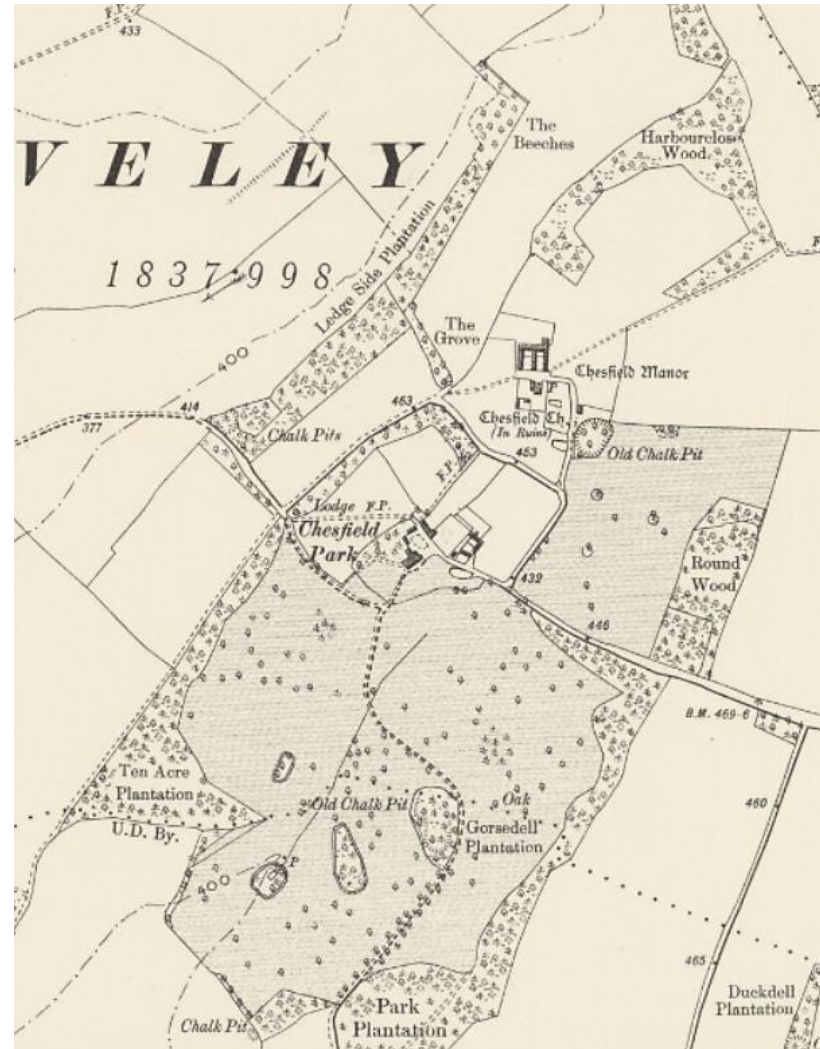


Figure 13: The six-inch 1896 OS map

There is evidence of historic quarrying to the southeast of the Church of St Etheldreda. The Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of the late-nineteenth century label some features as “old chalk pit”. One of these same landscape features appears to be visible on the 1766 Drury and Andrew map (to the south of Chesfield Lodge). Therefore, quarrying at Chesfield is likely to have occurred in the eighteenth century or earlier.

The OS map of 1896 (Figure 10) shows the area referred to as “Chesfield” for the first time. A continuing growth of the woodland to the west of the area is also visible and is labelled as “*Ledge Side Plantation*”. The woodland on the eastern extent of the site (Round Wood) has also increased in size. The large water feature in the south of the park, as well as some others around the periphery of the area (such as one to the east of the farm complex) are now labelled as “Old Chalk Pits”. Given some of these have been present from the earliest mapping, their age is uncertain, but are presumably Medieval or Post-Medieval in origin. It certainly appears they predate the landscaping of the park and have been incorporated into its design subsequently.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Chesfield Park has expanded in size by the date of this map, with the field to the north-east having been incorporated into it no longer in arable use. This is visible most clearly on the smaller scale six-inch OS map of 1896, on which the park’s extents are shaded (Figure 13).

Figure 14 shows the 25” OS map (surveyed 1922). This map shows essentially no change from the 1896 OS map.

Figure 15 shows the six-inch OS map surveyed 1946. As with the previous map, little has changed by the time of this map’s survey. In the interim between this map and the current layout of the area, the

woodland to the west has grown in size, while the one to the north has reduced further. The remainder of the woodlands surrounding the site have remained largely identical in extent (Figure 2). As mentioned previously, several large modern farm buildings have been constructed to the north of Chesfield Manor, but apart from this the area has remained undeveloped.

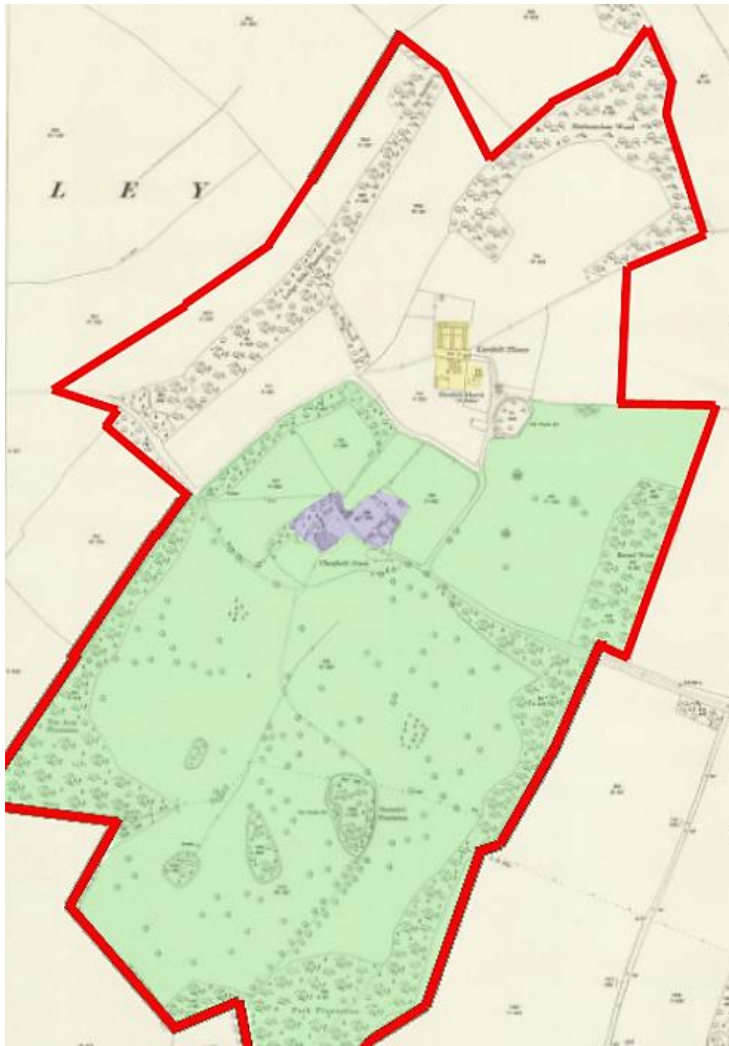


Figure 14: The twenty-five-inch OS map (1922) shows little change in the early twentieth century.

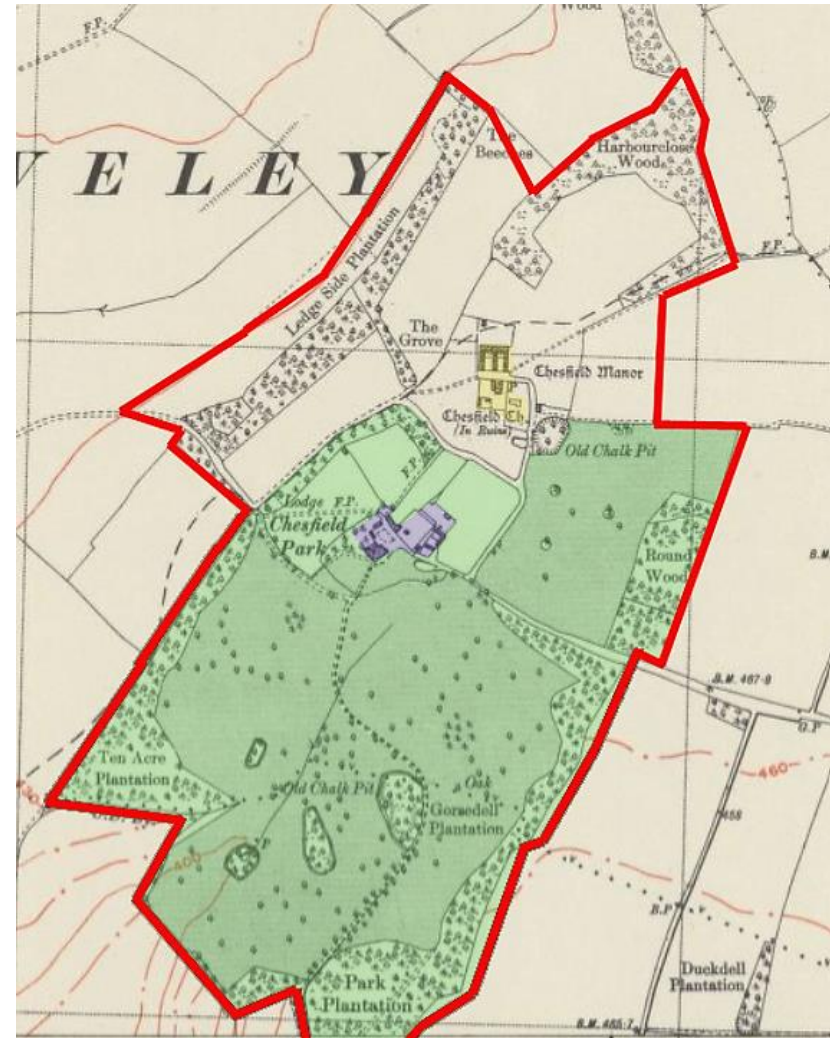


Figure 15: The six-inch OS map (1946). The extent of Chesfield Park has been highlighted in green, with house and garden in blue. Chesfield Manor complex, including church, is in yellow.

In the 1950s a small group of volunteers undertook a programme of site clearance, removing the ivy, other vegetation and trees (Figure 16). Following this, repairs and restoration of the walls were completed.



**Figure 16: Chesfield Manor and St Eltheldreda's Church (1951). The church is ruinous and covered with a thick vegetation (*Harold A. Roberts*)**

## 2.4. Designated Heritage Assets

Within the proposed Conservation Area are three Listed Buildings and one Scheduled Monument (Figure 19).

### Listed Buildings

All three of the listed buildings are located in the north of the proposed area, within the farmstead complex of Chesfield Manor.

The oldest is the remains of the ruined thirteenth-century church dedicated to St Etheldreda (NHLE no: 1102564) (Figure 17).

The ruins of St Etheldreda were consolidated in the 1950s and again in the 1980s. The structure consists of flint rubble walls with clunch dressings. The structure is unroofed, perhaps due to it being robbed of materials in the eighteenth century. Plastering remains on some walls and some areas of internal plaster have traces of painting to simulate masonry.



Figure 17: The ruins of Grade II\* Listed and Scheduled St Etheldreda Church



Immediately to the north-west of the ruined church lies the grade II listed Chesfield Manor Farmhouse (NHLE no: 1102563) (Figure 18). Constructed in the late seventeenth century, the listing entry describes it as being partially demolished before being converted into a farmhouse in the c.1770s. However, the HHER (see Appendix 5.4) disputes this account. Regardless, the building was renovated and had rear extensions added in the nineteenth century.

Manor House is a two-storey red-brick, hipped roof farmhouse, now house, with red-brick chimney stacks, gabled nineteenth-century entrance, and a varied fenestration.

The final statutorily listed structure in the area is the Grade II listed boundary wall and gate piers to the south-west of the farmhouse (NHLE no: 1347400), added to the site in the eighteenth century. It is constructed of red brick in Flemish-bond and approximately three metres in height, with square gate piers.

### Scheduled Monument

The grounds of the ruined church are a scheduled monument (NHLE: 1003542). Due to its poor condition, it is on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register.



Figure 18: The rear of the Grade II Listed Chesfield Manor Farmhouse

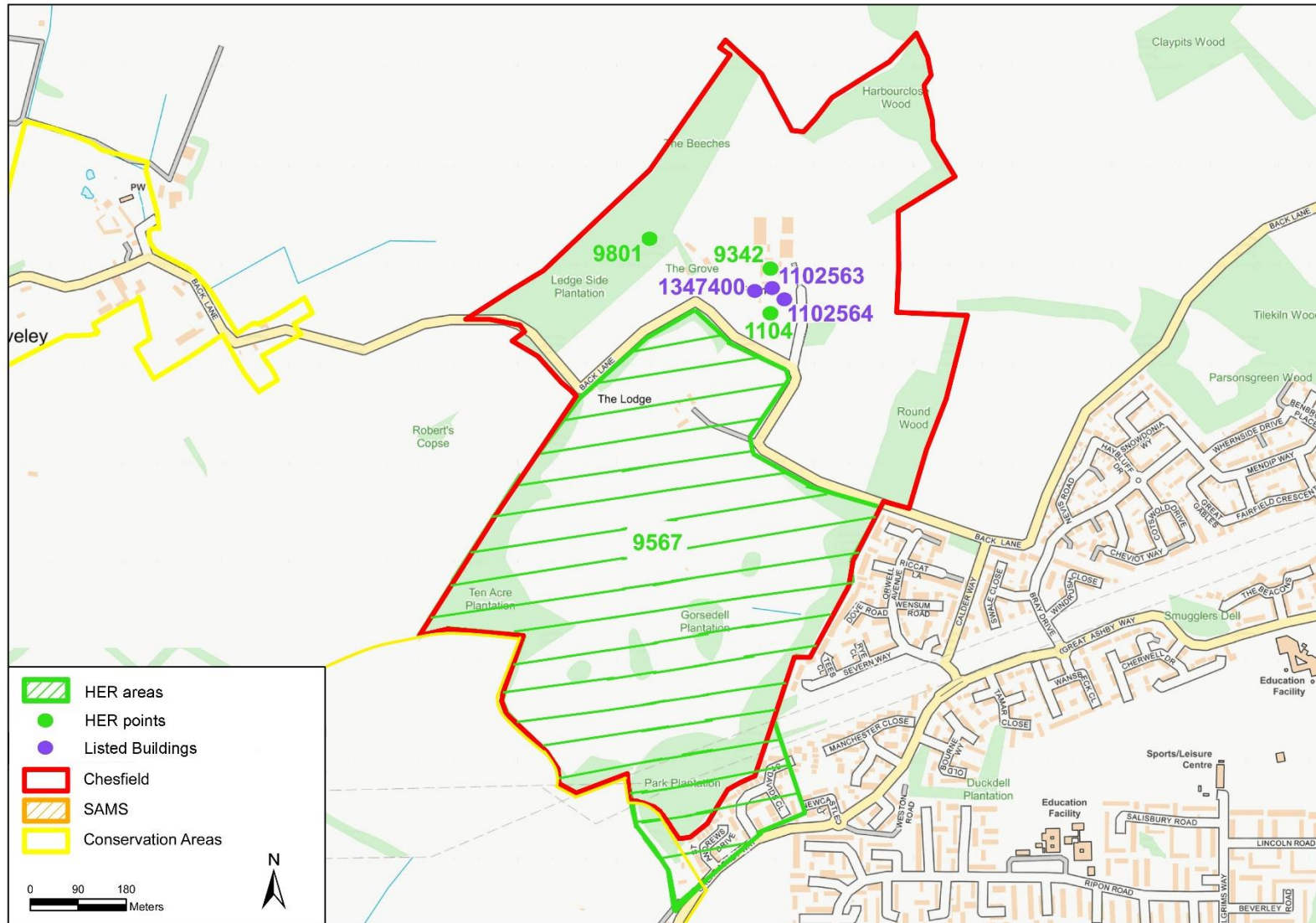


Figure 19: A map of the proposed Conservation Area showing designated heritage assets and HHER features

## 2.5. Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Chesfield Park house and garden wall are set back from Back Lane, although views of them can be attained from the public realm on Back Lane. The garden boundary wall surrounding Chesfield Park House is an unlisted structure that is likely to be contemporary with the earlier seventeenth to eighteenth-century building on the site that was demolished in the 1950s, when the house was rebuilt (Figure 20). The wall should be considered as a non-designated heritage asset due to its historic and architectural interest.



**Figure 20: The garden wall at Chesfield Park**

## 2.6. Heritage at Risk

The ruins of the Church of St Etheldreda are both a Grade II\* Listed structure and a Scheduled Monument. The Heritage at Risk Register from Historic England includes an entry for the Scheduled Monument. The list entry is based on a survey carried out in 2017 and describes the structure as being in poor condition, with slow decay and no solution agreed as to its future conservation (Figure 21). The building is in private ownership, being within the grounds of Chesfield Manor. Being a roofless ruin, the conservation of the heritage asset would be limited to the upkeep of the masonry structure and the reduction of invasive plants and the prevention of root damage. It is constructed of unconsolidated flint rubble and the Heritage at Risk Register notes that the wall facing is being lost. Stone arches, quoins and dressings around openings are also deteriorating and part of the structure is propped up internally with scaffolding.



Figure 21: Scaffold shoring within the ruins of the Church of St Etheldreda

## 2.7. Archaeological Potential

Archaeological remains of a post-Medieval date are by far the most likely to survive on the site and there is high potential for archaeological finds within the study area from this period. Evidence may survive within the country park relating to since-removed landscape features such as ponds or gardens, and occupation evidence of this date will survive around both the Chesfield Park house complex and Chesfield Manor farmstead. Indeed, the earthworks to the south of the farmstead have already been established to be the remains of post-medieval farm buildings (Section 2.3).

Earlier, medieval remains are likely to be focused to the north of the area, around the thirteenth/fourteenth century church. Amongst these are probably the remains of an earlier dwelling contemporary with the church, although, as postulated previously, this may lie beneath the current seventeenth century house. Even though the presence of a deserted medieval village has been discounted, the site appears to represent a manorial/church complex, a form of settlement that is prominent in the early Medieval period. The presence of other remains, including buildings relating to this complex seems likely.

Based on the evidence provided by the HHER and NHLE, the potential of archaeological remains of a prehistoric, Roman or Anglo-Saxon origin within the proposed Conservation Area is low. A small selection of Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age pottery sherds was found immediately to the east during a trial-trenching evaluation (HHER 16655, 16656) but the small scale of the associated remains suggest they may not project into the area.

Although the potential for archaeological remains pre-dating the Medieval period on the site appears low, it should be noted that previous archaeological investigations in the area have been extremely limited. With this in mind, the possibility of prehistoric, Roman, or Anglo-Saxon remains surviving within the proposed Conservation Area should not be entirely discounted. In particular, the extensive landscaping undertaken during the construction of the country park in the post-medieval period may have masked evidence of earlier landscape uses and settlement activity.

A search of the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record within the study area identified six known heritage assets and two areas of previous archaeological work. A map of these assets is included on the previous page on Figure 19; the HHER records are almost exclusively mapped in the areas of the study area in which built form is present. The exception to this is record 9801, which is recorded as earthworks providing evidence of cultivation terraces within the woodland

## 2.8. Landscape

The South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland National Character Area covers the four counties of Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It stretches from Bury St Edmunds in the north-west to Ipswich in the north-east, roughly following the line of the A14 trunk road through the Gipping Valley. It then embraces the Colchester hinterland before encompassing the urban areas of Braintree and Chelmsford in the south and stretching to Bishop's Stortford and Stevenage in the west.

It is an ancient landscape of wooded arable countryside with a distinct sense of enclosure. The overall character is of a gently undulating, chalky boulder clay plateau, the undulations being caused by the numerous small-scale river valleys that dissect the plateau. There is a complex network of old species-rich hedgerows, ancient woods and parklands, meadows with streams and rivers that flow eastwards. Traditional irregular field patterns are still discernible over much of the area, despite field enlargements in the second half of the twentieth century. The widespread moderately fertile, chalky clay soils give the vegetation a more or less calcareous character. Gravel and sand deposits under the clay are important geological features, often exposed during mineral extraction, which contribute to our understanding of ice-age environmental change.

The area's rich archaeology provides evidence of a long history of settlement and significant past wealth and importance, including Palaeolithic finds, Roman sites, medieval monasteries and castles, isolated moated farmsteads, barns and a number of large country houses.

## 3. Assessment of Significance

### 3.1. Summary

The significance of the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area derives from its special architectural and historic interest.

Architecturally, the proposed Conservation Area contains a rich variety of building types and ages illustrating the development of the area, whilst also contributing aesthetically to the variety of building materials, styles, design, and detailing. The building stock can be easily appreciated within the historic landscape contributing to a strong sense of place.

The historic functions of the buildings and their settings contribute to an understanding of the development of the area and its historic land use.

The landscape of the proposed Conservation Area which includes the unaltered designed parkland of Chesfield Park, the agrarian fields, and dense woodland permit also make a positive contribution to the rural character and appearance of Chesfield.

### 3.2. Character Areas

For the purpose of this appraisal, the proposed Conservation Area is divided into two unified Character Areas, loosely defined as:

- Character Area One: Chesfield Manor
- Character Area Two: Chesfield Park

The areas have been determined by building typology, historical development, land use and appearance. Many of the defining characteristics of each Character Area are present and repeated in both sections of the proposed Conservation Area, which emphasises the local character and appearance of the proposed Conservation Area. The following descriptions are not exhaustive, aiming instead to provide an accessible account of each Character Area which will allow for an informed understanding of the special interest and defining features of the proposed Conservation Area.

Key buildings, prevailing architectural styles, building materials, spatial planning, landscaping and boundary materials are detailed in the description of each Character Area to highlight the special architectural and historic interest of the two zones. Photographs are included to aid the descriptions, providing examples of where appropriate.

Key views have been identified within each Character Area, and views from outside the proposed Conservation Area from which its special

interest can be recognised are also highlighted where appropriate. There may, nevertheless, be other views of significance within or beyond the proposed Conservation Area's boundary which contribute to how it is appreciated and understood. Any proposals for development within the proposed Conservation Area, or its environs, should thus not only consider the views identified within this document but also any others which are relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.



### 3.2.1. Character Area One: Chesfield Manor

#### Summary

Character Area One has an unspoilt, enduring rustic character and encompasses the northern section of the proposed Conservation Area (Figure 22). The Character Area is centred on the site of Chesfield Manor, and is bounded to the east, north, and west by woodland. The historic attributes and features within this area can be easily appreciated within its rural setting, the more prominent of these being the three designated heritage assets which include Chesfield Manor, the boundary wall, and the ruinous church of St Ethledreda.

From Back Lane along the public footpaths, the arable fields within the Character Area can be easily viewed permitting a sense of openness despite the sections of dense woodland which partially enclose the Character Area.

The well-maintained path, lined by mature trees, hedgerows, and timber post-and-rail fencing provide a tranquil means by which to experience the Character Area, enhancing the rural character.

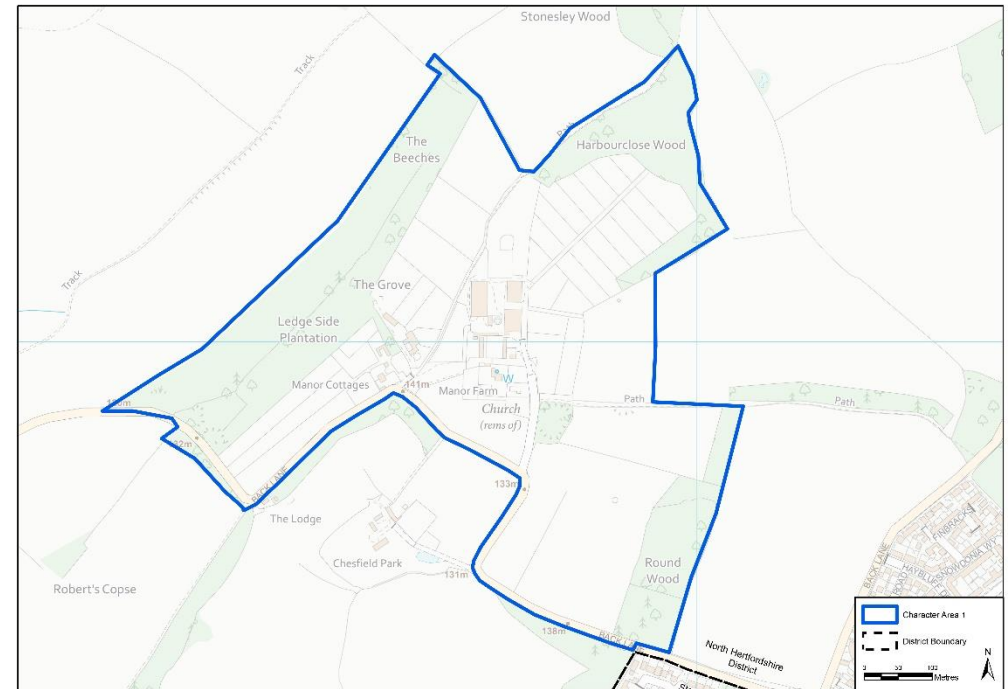


Figure 22: Map showing Character Area One edged in blue

## Layout and Land Usage

The land usage is predominantly pastoral, although the area has not recently been used for intensive modern farming or arable agriculture. The fields and meadows are primarily used for pasture while paddocks for horses are also common to the north and east. Within this Character Area buildings are almost exclusively farm buildings associated with Chesfield Manor, with some residential uses.

## Landscaping and Open Spaces

By virtue of the principal land usage, Character Area One features swathes of open space which makes a significant contribution to the character of the area. Mature trees are plentiful within the Character Area, particularly along Back Lane on the approach northwards to Chesfield Manor adding to its rural character and appearance (Figure 23). Small, landscaped gardens, associated with Chesfield Manor and the residential buildings, can occasionally be glimpsed from Back Lane.

## Traditional and Local Building Materials

Although limited, much of the built form within the proposed Conservation Area falls within the boundary of Character Area One. Many of the buildings have been constructed using traditional, natural materials.

## Roofs

The roof coverings of the farmstead buildings around Chesfield Manor and the house itself are predominantly clay plain tiles, whilst the more recent twentieth-century dwelling to the east has utilised a pantile roof covering. Some of the more modern agricultural buildings and stables to the north of the farm buildings have used cementitious tiles which have a comparatively flat appearance. The red-brick chimneystacks to the residential dwellings, particularly Chesfield Manor, are an attractive and prominent feature of the roofscape.

Rooflights are not a common feature within the Character Area and, where present, detract from the traditional and vernacular appearance of the roofscape.

## Walls

Red brick and timber weatherboarding are common walling materials and typify the Hertfordshire vernacular, while the twentieth-century dwelling is of rendered masonry.

Flint, along with clunch, was used in the construction of St Etheldreda's Church, the remnants of which remain. Both flint and clunch are common materials in East Anglia, with the former being especially utilised in higher status buildings.



**Figure 23: (Above): Red-brick chimneystack at Chesfield Manor**

**Figure 24: (Below): The remains of a flint wall at St Etheldreda's Church**

## Boundary Treatments

Hedgerow and low-lying wooden fences are the dominant boundary type which responds to and reinforces the rural character and appearance of the Character Area (Figure 25). The only exception is the boundary wall to the south-west of Chesfield Manor which is a more formal eighteenth-century brick wall with square gate piers featuring stone capping, listed at Grade II (Figure 33).



**Figure 25: Hedgerows and fencing are common boundary treatments**

## Public Realm

There are very few areas of public realm, which is largely confined to the thoroughfare of Back Lane, and public footpaths.

Lined with mature trees, hedgerows, and post-and-rail fencing, these public areas make a positive contribution to the rural and rustic character of the area (Figure 26).

Street furniture is minimal, which adds to the naturalistic character of the area, and is almost exclusively confined to signposts indicating public footpaths (Figure 27).

## Key Buildings

### Designated

All three listed buildings within the Conservation Area are located within Character Area One:

- The Grade II\* listed Church of St Etheldreda (the grounds of which are a Scheduled Monument)
- The Grade II listed Manor Farmhouse
- The Grade II listed Boundary Wall and Gate Piers to Garden on South West and West of Manor Farmhouse

These buildings are described in Section 2.4 of this document.



Figure 26: Mature trees along Black Lane on the approach to Chesfield Manor



Figure 27: Signpost indicating public footpath 009 and post-and-rail fencing

### **Negative and Neutral Contributors**

A number of the more modern agricultural buildings to the north of Chesfield Manor are of an industrial character with modern materials used in their construction, such as corrugated cementitious cladding (Figure 28).

However, whilst these structures have a negative impact on the character and appearance of Character Area One and the setting of the designated heritage assets located at Chesfield Manor, they are typical of modern agricultural buildings and are therefore not at odds with the pastoral character of the proposed Conservation Area.

Whilst 1 and 2 Manor Cottages are not considered to be of special architectural or historic interest, their scale, design, and materiality responds to, and reinforces, the local character and distinctiveness. They do not detract from the area and are considered to make a neutral contribution to the character area.



**Figure 28: Modern buildings behind Chesfield Manor with corrugated cladding**

### 3.2.2. Character Area Two: Chesfield Park

#### Summary

Character Area Two comprises the unaltered, historic landscaped parkland of Chesfield Park including house and walled garden, encompassing the southern section of the proposed Conservation Area (Figure 29). Whilst views of the park are limited from public vantage points, the open spaces, and historic features and attributes make a significant contribution to its character.

The dense woodland which surrounds the Character Area allows for a strong sense of enclosure which is a key characteristic and enhances the understanding of the park's original intended use.

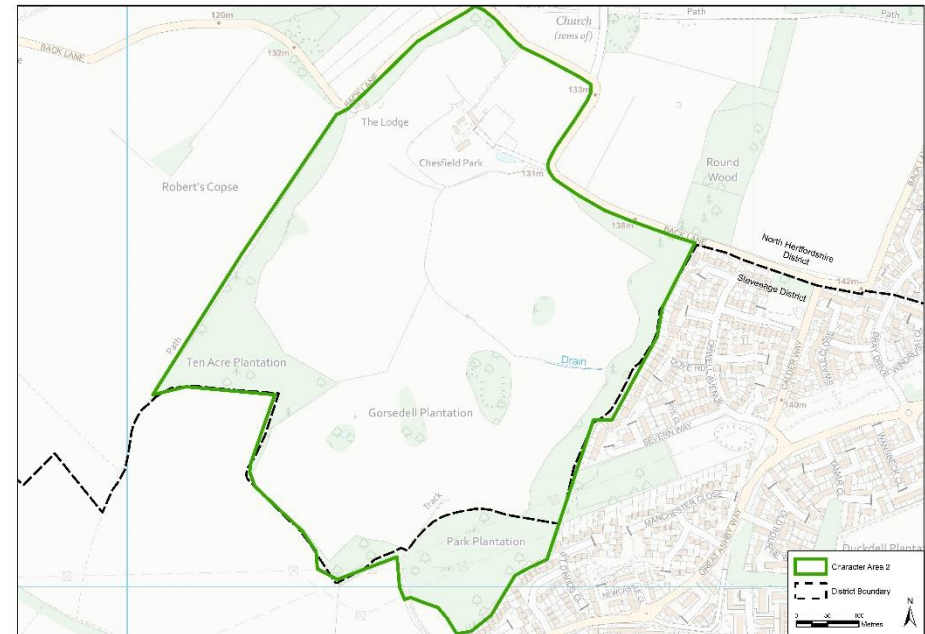


Figure 29: Map showing Character Area Two edged in green

### Layout and Land Usage

Chesfield Park comprises elements of a designed landscape, fields and meadows, and pockets of dense woodland (Figure 30). The land use is predominantly pastoral and is in private ownership.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces

The woodland that surrounds the Chesfield area provides a physical barrier, between the parkland and the agrarian fields beyond, which helps retain the individual character of the parkland. The landscaped park can be seen from limited areas, as public access is restricted. However, overall, the open spaces of the area make a significant contribution to its character and its significance is not hindered by a lack of public access.

### Traditional and Local Building Materials

Red brick and clay plain tiles are the dominant materials in the Character Area with boundary treatments including hedgerows and low-lying timber fencing (Figure 31).

Non-traditional materials, such as UPVC windows, have been introduced to the Character Area as part of twentieth-century development; this is an incongruent feature within the area.



Figure 30: A view south from Back Lane across the landscaped parkland of Chesfield Park



**Figure 31: Red-brick dwelling with clay plain tiles, bounded by hedgerow and timber post-and-rail fencing**



**Figure 32: Bridleway looking south with the enclosed park to the east**



## Public Realm

The majority of Character Area Two is in private ownership with the public realm being confined to the public Bridleway (Graveley 008). The Bridleway is bounded to the east by the woodland enclosing the park overlooks an open arable landscape to the west enhancing the isolated and enclosed character of the area (Figure 32).

## Key Buildings

### Non-designated

The garden boundary wall surrounding Chesfield Park House is likely to be contemporaneous with the earlier seventeenth-century building which was demolished in the 1950s when the existing house was partially rebuilt. The red brick wall and piers with decorative stone caps can be seen from Back Lane on the eastern approach into the Conservation Area (Figure 33).

## Negative Contributors

Character Area Two has been intersected by electricity pylons, which are prominent in some views of the parkland, and make a negative contribution to the character of the area.



**Figure 33: Garden boundary wall surrounding Chesfield Park House**

### 3.3. Views

Key viewpoints within the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area are identified on Figure 34. The views included in this assessment are a selection of key views; this list is not exhaustive and there may be numerous other views of significance. Any proposals for development within the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area, or its environs, should consider these views and any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.

Key views are largely those from which the designated and non-designated heritage assets can be appreciated within their rural environs, those out across the wider agrarian landscape, and those which enhance the sense of enclosure to the parkland.

**View 1:** This view allows for an appreciation of the non-designated garden wall surrounding Chesfield Park House, with the chimneystack of the house visible just above the treeline (Figure 35).

**Views 2 and 3:** Views of Chesfield Manor, including the farmhouse and ruined Church of St Etheldreda, can be seen from Back Lane. (Figure 36).

**View 4:** This view permits unobstructed views across arable fields bounded by woodland (Figure 36).

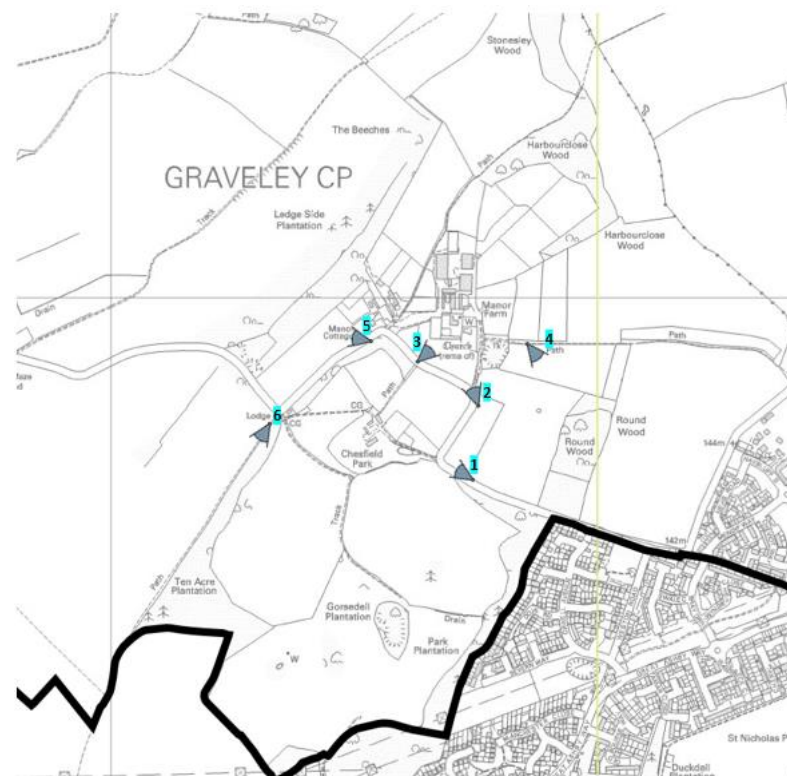


Figure 34: Map of key views within proposed Chesfield Conservation Area

**View 5:** This view also permits an important view across arable fields bounded by woodland (Figure 36).

**View 6:** This is an important view that allows for an appreciation of sense of enclosure of the parkland (Figure 32)



**Figure 35: View 1**



**Figure 36: Clockwise from top left: View 2; View 3; View 4, View 5**

### 3.4. Setting of the Conservation Area

The NPPF describes the setting of a heritage asset as:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

*Historic England Good Practice Advice 3: Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) indicates that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which the asset is experienced. It goes on to note 'Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset'.<sup>2</sup>*

Historic England provides detailed guidance on the setting of heritage assets, stating that all heritage assets have a setting, whether they are designated or not, irrespective of the form in which they survive. In the analysis of setting, the important contribution of views to the significance of heritage assets and the ability to appreciate that significance is often a primary consideration. Yet the contribution a setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset, such as the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area, is not limited to views alone. Setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses. The detrimental alteration of

the character of a setting may reduce our ability to understand the historic relationship between places. The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access, view or experience that setting.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, any application for development within the setting of a heritage asset is subject to constraints.

The NPPF states that for any development within the setting of a heritage asset, a thorough assessment of the impact on the setting is required. This should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it (NPPF, paragraph 194).

In addition, paragraph 206 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets (including the setting of Conservation Areas), to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. Therefore, the favourable treatment of proposals that retain the open, agrarian character of the proposed Conservation Area's setting is an important consideration.

When assessing an application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities should also consider the implications of cumulative change and incremental harm.

<sup>2</sup> Historic England. 2017 *The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (Second Edition)

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

New developments and changes can not only detract from a heritage asset's significance in the short-term but may also damage its significance and economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its on-going conservation.

## Surrounding Landscape

The proposed Chesfield Conservation Area draws significance from the surrounding open, largely undeveloped, rural landscape. The proposed Conservation Area's setting within a historically agrarian landscape permits an understanding and appreciation of historic development of Chesfield, as an isolated rural manor and settlement.

The quality of the well-preserved surrounding rural landscape therefore makes an important contribution to the historic setting and significance of the proposed Chesfield Conservation Area (Figure 37).

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).

The approach towards Chesfield from the north, west, and south is characterised by open fields bounded by woodland. The eastern approach into is characterised by a tree-lined throughfare with glimpses of modern residential development to the south.



**Figure 37: The view looking northeast from outside the area towards Chesfield Park. The extensive arable field in the foreground forms the setting of Chesfield, which lies beyond the treeline**

## 4. Opportunities for Enhancement

### 4.1. Maintenance

Maintenance, and the lack of it, can detract from the quality of the proposed Conservation Area. In general, Chesfield is well maintained however the risk of decay is most common on privately owned land, and there is scope for better engagement with landowners to maintain and improve the appearance of properties and landscapes. Regular maintenance, including painting, cleaning and the clearance of vegetation should be promoted as a key component of preserving the quality of the Conservation Area.

### 4.2. Neutral Contributors

A small number of buildings are considered to make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the proposed Conservation Area. The buildings that fall within the category still contribute to the area's character and appearance, and their contribution should not be considered negative. The majority of these buildings have the potential to make a positive contribution to the area's

character but due to the introduction of non-traditional materials and features are considered neutral. Small scale improvements such as the replacement of non-traditional roof covering and windows with more appropriate materials would enhance these buildings, potentially allowing their positive contribution to be realised.

### 4.3. Public Realm

Although limited, the signposts indicating the public footpaths and bridleways are a notable feature. Some have moved from their upright positions and bowed over time and should be repaired and maintained to ensure the overall sense of a well-managed public realm.

### 4.4. Trees and Planting

Appropriate levels of maintenance need to be ensured and, where required, opportunities for enhancement sought to maintain and manage the trees within the proposed Conservation Area.

## 5. Management Proposals

### 5.1. Positive Management

There are a wide range of issues facing conservation areas, some of which are relevant to Chesfield. This chapter aims to recommend management proposals which addresses these issues in both the short and the long term.

#### General Maintenance: Public Realm

Through the agreement of a standard good practice within the proposed Conservation Area between relevant Local Authority teams, short-term goals can be set to ensure the repair or, where appropriate, the replacement of the existing fences, streetlamps and signposts.

#### Heritage Statements, Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments

In accordance with the NPPF (Paragraph 194), applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

North Herts Council's requirements are as follows.

Heritage statements must be provided if the development affects a listed building.

Design and Access statements need to be provided for:

- Major development
- One of more new houses within a conservation area
- Applications where floorspace created is more than 100m<sup>2</sup> and any part of the development is within a Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Applications within the Conservation Area and immediate setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition, alteration or removal of buildings, structures, trees or highways on key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the proposed Conservation Area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with *Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.

#### Local Heritage List

A Local List identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest, and these are considered to be 'non-designated heritage assets' under the provisions of the NPPF. A Local List may be beneficial to ensure the upkeep of buildings which are significant to the history and character of Chesfield. The exercise would also facilitate a greater understanding of the area and could be utilised as a public engagement strategy to improve awareness and understanding. The

garden boundary wall surrounding Chesfield Park House is of sufficient quality to be considered for local list status, as highlighted in Section 2.6.

### Neutral Elements

There are some twentieth century buildings which make a neutral or negative impact on the character of the proposed Conservation Area. There is scope to enhance these sites and buildings through a considered design approach which can guide future improvements. Should opportunities for redevelopment arise in the future, high quality design should be pursued and encouraged through design guidance.

### New Development

There are limited opportunities within Chesfield and its setting for development which makes a positive contribution to the proposed Conservation Area. To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character and distinctiveness of the proposed Conservation Area and its setting, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

Successful new development will:

- Relate to the geography, topography and history of the place;
- Sit sympathetically in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it (including public footpaths);
- Respect important views;

- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings; and
- Use traditional materials and building methods which are as high in quality of those used in existing buildings.

North Herts Council should guide development in a positive manner by:

- Engaging with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application Process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials.
- Ensuring large scale development schemes within the Proposed Conservation Area and its setting are referred to a Design Review Panel (or similar) to ensure that new buildings, additions and alterations are designed to be in sympathy with the established character of the area. The choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure its appropriate to a conservation area; and
- Seeking opportunities for developed to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.

### Public resources

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a



property within a conservation area. In addition, a maintenance guide would assist property owners in caring for their property in an appropriate manner. Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of the fabric of the built environment and the loss of architectural details. Improved awareness of simple maintenance and repair would be conducive with the preservation of Chesfield's built heritage.

### Tree Management

In line with the Town and Country Planning Act, all trees in conservation areas are afforded the same protection as a Tree Preservation Order. Trees which have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm, at a height of 1.5m from the ground, may not be felled or lopped unless six weeks written notice has been given to the Council. Six weeks' notice has to be given to the council under S211 of the Act.

It is also considered that any prominent trees, street trees, and trees with amenity value on private land throughout the proposed Conservation Area should be monitored and maintained appropriately. This will ensure the symmetry along tree lined streets and visual rhythm, as well as maintain the green character of the area. Any tree that makes a positive contribution to the area should be retained, maintained and, if felled (only if dead, dying or dangerous) replaced with an appropriate new tree.

### Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed from time to time to monitor change and inform management proposals.

### Conservation Area Boundary

The proposed Conservation Area boundary has been identified within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2021) and Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2018).

The boundary should be assessed as part of future reviews of the Management Plan to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

## 5.2. Funding Opportunities

### Section 106 Agreements

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon the proposed Conservation Area. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site-specific improvements.

### Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)

*Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas* is a programme run by Historic England to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. As the name suggests, the scheme forms partnerships with local authorities (along with any additional funding partners) to facilitate the regeneration of an area through the conservation of its built heritage. The scheme makes funds available to individuals to enable them to carry out repairs or improvement works to their property to enhance the area. This would

be suitable to preserve and enhance the architectural detailing throughout the proposed Conservation Area.

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1. Heritage Assets

#### Designated Heritage Assets

List Entry Number	Name of Heritage Asset	Grade
1102564	<u>Church of St Etheldreda</u>	II*
1102563	<u>Manor Farmhouse</u>	II
1347400	<u>Boundary Wall and Gate Piers to Garden on South West and West of Manor Farmhouse</u>	II
1003542	<u>Chesfield Church</u>	N/A

## 6.2. Bibliography

### Publications

Cocroft, W D 1990 Medieval Settlement Research Group: Annual Report 5

Historic England. *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management*. Advice Note 1 (Second Edition)

Historic England *The Setting of Heritage Assets*. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (Second Edition)

Semmelmann, K. 2004 Manor Farm Barn, Chesfield: historic building record, Report No 240, The Heritage Network

Roberts, Harold A. 1952 Chesfield Near Stevenage: The History of an Ancient Parish

Turner C. 1997 Outdoor Riding Arena, Manor Farm, Chesfield, Herts: archaeological observation report

### Websites

British History Online. Parishes: Graveley Pages 85-90 A History of the County of Hertford: Volume 3. Originally published by Victoria County History, London, 1912 <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/herts/vol3/pp85-90> (accessed 2 August 2022)

### 6.3. Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Results Within the Study Area

HER	Site	Type	Monument	Summary	Date
35	Ruins of Church of St Etheldreda	Building	Church	Ruins of medieval parish church.	Medieval
1004	Post-medieval farmstead earthworks	Monument	Farmstead	Earthwork remains of a farmstead demolished in the 19th century.	Post-medieval
2895	Chesfield Manor House	Building	Farmhouse, Manor House	Late 17th century manor house of unusual form, which became a farmhouse in the late 18th century.	Post-medieval
9342	Chesfield Manor Farm	Building	Farmstead, Model Farm	Farmstead with 19th century planned layout, associated with earlier manor house.	Post-medieval
9567	Chesfield Park	Landscape	Country House, Landscape Park, Pump	Post-medieval country house replaced in 1950; in its original park.	Post-medieval
9801	Cultivation Terraces, Side Plantation Ledge	Monument	Lynchets	Earthworks of cultivation terraces within woodland.	Unknown
11399 <i>note: outside proposed</i>	Roman Coins	Find Spot	Findspot	1st century and later Roman coins.	Roman

<i>conservation area</i>					
12655 <i>note: outside proposed conservation area</i>	Probable late Iron Age features	Monument		A small pit and possible post hole and a gully slightly to the east were found in evaluation.	Late Iron Age
16655 <i>note: outside proposed conservation area</i>	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age ditch	Monument	Ditch	Small ditch containing flint-tempered pottery	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age
16656 <i>note: outside proposed conservation area</i>	Middle Iron Age pits	Monument	Pit, Post Hole	Pit and post hole containing probably middle Iron Age pottery	Middle Iron Age

## 6.4. Legislation, Policy and Guidance

LEGISLATION/POLICY/GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
<b>Primary Legislation</b>	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.  72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
<b>National Planning Policy</b>	National Planning Policy Framework (2021) DLUGH	Section 16;  Annex 2
<b>National Guidance</b>	National Planning Practice Guidance (2014) DLUGH	ID: 18a
<b>National Guidance</b>	Historic England (2017) Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets	
<b>National Guidance</b>	Historic England. Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management. Advice	

	Note 1 (Second Edition) February 2019
<b>National Guidance</b>	English Heritage (2019) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance
<b>North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011 - 2031</b>	<p>Policy SP13: Historic environment</p> <p>Policy HE1: Designated heritage assets</p> <p>Policy HE2: Heritage at risk</p> <p>Policy HE3: Local heritage.</p> <p>Policy HE4: Archaeology</p> <p>Section 4 Communities: Graveley and North of Stevenage (Page 155)</p> <p>Policy SP16: Site NS1 – North of Stevenage</p>



## 6.5. Glossary

Term	Description
Archaeological interest	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
Conservation (for heritage policy)	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Historic environment record	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
Lynchets	A ridge or ledge formed along the downhill side of a plot by ploughing in ancient times.

Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

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