



Patmore Heath Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

ADOPTED JULY 2020



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The Heath itself represents an unusual combination of high environmental qualities – ecological, traditional and visual

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Plan 1: Map from 1874-1894 with adopted conservation area superimposed.

Plan 2: Adopted Management Plan

PATMORE HEATH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

ADOPTED JULY 2020

This document is the adopted Patmore Heath Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan which replaces the draft document that was subject to a public consultation exercise from 22 October 2019 to 3 December 2019. There was a public meeting held on 22 October 2019. Members considered the responses to this consultation at their Council meeting on 22 July 2020. The document was adopted on 22 July 2020. The document now appears with any necessary boundary revisions and textural changes required as a result of consultation feedback and adoption.

The content of Appraisals written from 2016 which include this paragraph may differ from predecessor documents. Selected revisions have been incorporated to reflect content and policies set out in the District Plan which was adopted on 23 October 2018, changes to legislation, nomenclature, consolidation, and other improvements resulting from experience gained to date. This process is ongoing.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The historic environment cannot be replaced and is a resource that is both fragile and finite. Particularly in an age when society and its needs change with rapidity, the various historic and architectural elements of conservation areas can be perceived to interact in a complex manner and create a 'unique sense of place' that is appreciated by those lucky enough to reside in such special places and the many interested persons who appreciate and visit them.

- 1.2 East Hertfordshire District has a particularly rich and vibrant built heritage, currently featuring 42 conservation areas and approximately 4,000 fine listed buildings displaying a variety of styles representative of the best of architectural and historic designs from many centuries. Generally and very importantly the clear distinction between built form and open countryside has been maintained.
- 1.3 The District is situated in an economically buoyant region where an attractive environment, employment opportunities and excellent transport links, road, rail and air, make it a popular destination to live and work. In addition to London a short commuting distance away, the District is influenced by other factors beyond its administrative area, such as Stansted Airport and the towns of Harlow, Stevenage, Royston and Cambridge. With such dynamics it is inevitable that the historic environment will be subject to pressures which emphasize the need to protect it.
- 1.4 The previous Local Plan adopted in April 2007, recognised these facts and committed the Council to review its conservation areas and their boundaries, a process which is now nearing completion. The replacement District Plan which was adopted on 23 October 2018 contains the current policies affecting conservation areas.
- 1.5 Conservation areas are environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. In addition to the individual qualities of the buildings themselves, there are other factors such as the relationships of the buildings with each other, the quality of the spaces between them and the vistas and views that unite or disrupt them. The relationship with adjoining areas and landscape, the quality of trees, boundary treatments, advertisements, road signage, street furniture and hard surfaces,

are also important features which can add to or detract from the conservation area.

- 1.6 This Appraisal recognises the importance of these factors and considers them carefully. This document will be regarded as a 'material consideration' when determining planning applications. Where appropriate the documents put forward simple practical management proposals to improve the character of the conservation area and which are capable of being implemented as and when resources permit.
- 1.7 The recommendations concerning non-listed buildings and structures are normally formed by the field workers observations made from the public realm and seldom involve internal inspection or discussions with owners. Thus such recommendations contained in this Appraisal might be subject to reconsideration through the planning application process, where that is necessary, and which would involve the submission of additional information. Similar considerations apply to estimating dates of buildings and also to their legal status in relation to householder permitted development rights (i.e. either being considered as single dwellings or alternatively as flats). Similar considerations may apply as to determining whether or not a building is within the curtilage of a listed building.
- 1.8 This Conservation Appraisal:
 - Identifies the special character of the conservation area;
 - Identifies elements that should be retained or enhanced;
 - Identifies detracting elements;
 - Reviews the existing boundaries;
 - Puts forward practical enhancement proposals.
- 1.9 The document has been prepared in partnership with the Parish Council and the local community through the consultation process.

- 1.10 Acknowledgement and thanks are recorded to Hertfordshire County Council who's Natural Historic and Built Environment Team has been particularly helpful. Also to the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust who administer the heath which is a Nature Reserve and designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 1.11 This document is written in three parts: Part A - Legal and Policy Framework; Part B - Appraisal; Part C - Management Proposals.

Part A – Legal and Policy Framework

2. Legal and Policy Framework

- 2.1 The legal background for designating a conservation area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This states that the Council shall from time to time designate Conservation Areas, which are defined as being *'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance'*. The same section of the Act also requires that Councils undertake periodic reviews.
- 2.2 Section 71 of the Act requires Councils to *'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement'* of Conservation Areas and hold a public meeting to consider them.
- 2.3 Within conservation areas there are additional planning controls and if these are to be supported it is important that the designated areas accord with the statutory definition and are not devalued by including land or buildings that lack special interest.
- 2.4 Planning permission is required for the demolition of a building in a conservation area but is subject to certain exceptions. For example, it does not apply to Listed Buildings which are protected by their own legislation but is relevant to other non-listed buildings in the conservation area above a threshold size set out in legislation*. Looking for and assessing such buildings is therefore a priority of this Appraisal.

*** The demolition of a building not exceeding 50 cubic metres is not development and can be demolished without planning permission. Demolition of other buildings below 115 cubic metres are regarded as 'Permitted Development' granted by the General Permitted Development Order, subject to conditions that may require the Council's 'prior approval' regarding methods of proposed demolition and restoration.**

- 2.5 Certain ecclesiastical buildings (which are for the time being used for ecclesiastical purposes) are not subject to local authority administration provided an equivalent approved system of control is operated by the church authority. This is known as the 'ecclesiastical exemption'. Importantly in such circumstances, church authorities still need to obtain any other necessary planning permissions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2.6 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England), Order 2015 (further amended) defines the range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required and this range is more restricted in conservation areas. For example, the Order currently requires that the addition of dormer windows to roof slopes, various types of cladding, satellite dishes fronting a highway and a reduced size of extensions, all require planning permission in a conservation area.
- 2.7 However, even within conservation areas there are other minor developments associated with many non-listed buildings that do not require planning permission. So as to provide further protection the law allows Councils to introduce additional controls if appropriate. Examples of such controls can commonly include some developments fronting a highway or open space, such as an external porch or the demolition of some gates, fences or walls or their alteration. The removal of existing important architectural features that are important to the character or appearance of a conservation area such as chimneys, traditional detailing or materials, distinctive porches, windows and doors or walls or railings can be subject to a more detailed assessment and if appropriate made subject to protection by a legal process known as an 'Article 4 Direction' which withdraws 'Permitted Development Rights'. The use of such Directions needs to be made in justified circumstances where a clear assessment of each conservation area has been made. In conducting this

Appraisal, consideration has been given as to whether or not such additional controls are appropriate. The Council has introduced a similar Article 4 Direction elsewhere in the District and agreed the general principle of introducing further Directions in other conservation areas.

- 2.8 Works to Trees. Another additional planning control relates to trees located within conservation areas. Setting aside various exceptions principally relating to size, any proposal to fell or carry out works to trees has to be 'notified' to the Council. The Council may then decide whether to make the tree/s subject to a Tree Preservation Order. This Appraisal diagrammatically identifies only the most significant trees or groups of trees that make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area, particularly when viewed from the public realm. Other trees not specifically identified may still be suitable for statutory protection. Some operations on the heath administered by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust will also require permission from the Forestry Commission.
- 2.9 Some hedges may be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. This legislation is extremely complicated and only applies in certain situations that are determined by the location and extent of the hedge, its age and or its historical importance, the wildlife it supports and its number of woody species. The Regulations do not apply to domestic garden hedges.
- 2.10 National Planning Policy Framework 2019. The principle emphasis of the framework is to promote sustainable development which has three main objectives which are Economic, Social and Environmental. Achieving good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and new development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 2.11 Of particular relevance to this document, the National Planning Policy Framework advises as follows:

- Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.
- Conservation Areas. Such areas must justify such a status virtue of being of special architectural or historic interest and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.
- Heritage assets. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance. They are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance to be enjoyed by present and future generations.
- Considerable weight should be given to conserving such heritage assets and the more important they are the greater the weight. For example the effect of an application affecting a non- designated heritage asset should be taken into account and a balanced judgment reached. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II Listed Building or Registered Park or Garden should be exceptional whilst similarly, substantial harm to heritage assets of higher status, e.g. those listed grade I or II* should be wholly exceptional.
- Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that preserve such elements should be treated favourably.
- The use of Article 4 Directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area.
- Green Spaces. Such areas of particular importance can properly be identified for special protection as Local Green Spaces in selected situations.

2.12 East Hertfordshire's environmental initiatives and Plan Policies. East Hertfordshire is committed to protecting conservation areas and implementing policies which preserve and enhance them; to support their preservation through the publication of

design and technical advice and to be pro-active by offering grants and administering an Historic Buildings Grant Service. With regard to the latter, grants are awarded on a first come first served basis in relation to works which result in the maintenance of listed buildings and other unlisted buildings of architectural or historic interest. The maximum grant will not normally exceed £2,000.

- 2.13 In respect of the above the Council has produced a number of leaflets and guidance notes that are available on line and on request. These guidance notes on the preservation and repair of historic materials and buildings provide useful information relevant to the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. They will be updated as resources permit.
- 2.14 The Council also has a 'Heritage at Risk Register', originally produced in 2006, and further updated. This document is available on the Council's website. Grant assistance not exceeding £10,000 may be available for necessary works that lead to such buildings' long term security.
- 2.15 The Council has prepared a planning policy document which has now replaced the 2007 Local Plan. This is the East Herts District Plan (DP) which was adopted on 23 October 2018 and which contains the relevant planning policies. Policy HA4 of the District Plan advises that development in conservation areas should, inter alia, have regard to the content of the Appraisals.
- 2.16 Patmore Heath Conservation Area was designated following adoption in 1990.

Part B – Appraisal

3. Origins and Historical Development

- 3.1 There are about 15 records within or close to the existing conservation area held by the County Historic Environment Records (HER). Some relate to Listed Buildings, with a selection of some such descriptions being included later in this document. Other interesting entries relate to:
- a) Patmore Heath being Common Land on the parish boundary surrounded by commoner's cottages on three sides. The entry advises that both the parishes of Albury and Furneux Pelham had commoners' rights.
 - b) A mid-19th century tower mill being successor to earlier mills in different position. One such earlier mill is recorded in 1370. The 19th century mill was pulled down in 1921.
 - c) Ponds on the Heath are described as being of at least 19th century date. The ponds may have included *an ancient pool* or alternatively may have been *the result of piecemeal gravel extraction*.
- 3.2 Prehistoric. Unknown but possible as HER records make oblique references to prehistoric enclosures nearby.
- 3.3 Roman settlement. Unknown to author.
- 3.4 The Domesday Book was a census commissioned by William I in 1086. In relation to Patmore Heath the author was unable to find any reliable information. *Source: Domesday Book a complete translation, Alecto Historical Editions Penguin Books 2002.*
- 3.5 Anglo Saxon. Unknown to author.
- 3.6 Medieval settlement. Likely but unknown to author.
- 3.7 The 19th century. Reference to the author's normal source, i.e. Kelly's Directory of 1874 is limited to the fact that Patmore Heath is a small hamlet in Albury Parish. At this time there was a brick maker, a miller and a hurdle maker at

Patmore Heath and a blacksmith and also a draper/grocer (?) at nearby Gravesend. These represent a wide range of local commercial activities, common even for small settlements at this time.

- 3.8 Mapping from 1874 -1894 (Plan 1) identifies an open heath with no trees but with ponds (probably seven in number); site of Corn Windmill on north east side of heath; the Old Catherine Wheel PH and a Primitive Methodist Chapel, both at Gravesend. The latter was on the east side of the road (is there any local knowledge concerning this building?).
- 3.9 The publication, Place Names of Hertfordshire, Cambridge University Press 1970 advises several names in relation to Patmore Hall being Patemere 1086 and Pattemera 1165. HER records advise Patemere from 1086 can be interpreted as meaning Patta's Pool.
- 3.10 Plan 1 shows the adopted Conservation Area plotted on an historic map dating from 1874-1894.

4. Environmental designations and criteria used to identify other important environmental features

- 4.1 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. A National designation.
- 4.2 Areas of Archaeological Significance. Designated locally by EHDC on advice from HCC. The identification and refinement of such areas is an ongoing process. See below.
- 4.3 Listed buildings. A National designation. Individually listed buildings have been identified, plotted and a selection briefly described, such abbreviated descriptions being based on the national list, occasionally with additional comments *in italics* by the fieldworker. Full descriptions can be obtained on line at Historic England's website List.HistoricEngland.org.uk. Listed buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilage of listed buildings, if they are pre-1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings.
- 4.4 The issue of deciding whether or not a building is 'curtilage listed' can sometimes be problematic and there is no exact legal definition of a building's curtilage. The main tests relate to the physical layout of the land surrounding the main building/s at the date of listing, the physical layout and functional relationship of structures to each other; ownership, past and present and use or function, past and present. Structures need to be ancillary or subordinate to the main Listed Building and form part of the land and not be historically independent. Protection is granted to such objects or structures within the curtilage of a Listed Building if they were built prior to July 1, 1948. In determining the extent of a Listed Building and its curtilage, a key assessment will be to examine the situation at the time of listing.

- 4.5 Non listed buildings of quality and worthy of protection. Several other non-listed buildings and structures that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the conservation area are identified by this Appraisal. The basic questions asked in assessing such buildings/structures are:
- a) Is the non-listed building/structure of sufficient architectural or historic interest whose general external form and appearance remains largely unaltered?
 - b) Does the building contain a sufficient level of external original features and materials?
 - c) Has the building retained its original scale without large inappropriate modern extensions that destroy the visual appearance particularly in respect of the front elevation?
 - d) Is the building visually important in the street scene?
 - e) Determining which properties to include or which to exclude is occasionally a matter of difficult judgement.
- 4.6 Important trees and hedgerows are identified by this Appraisal. Their positions are shown very diagrammatically indeed and access to some rear areas has not been obtained. The basic criteria for identifying important trees and hedgerows are:
- a) They are in good condition.
 - b) They are visible at least in part from public view points.
 - c) They make a significant contribution to the street scene or other publicly accessible areas.
 - d) In the case of Patmore Heath it is recognised that some trees of visual importance on the main part of the heath are detrimental to the open grass heathland of high importance and of SSSI status. Some trees will be

removed under appropriate management to foster proper management of this important habitat.

- 4.7 Open spaces or gaps of quality that contribute to the visual importance of the conservation area where development would be inappropriate are identified by this Appraisal. The basic question asked in identifying such areas is does the open space or gap form an important landscape feature contributing to the general spatial quality and visual importance of the conservation area? Private open spaces forming an important setting for an historic asset and unkempt spaces that have the potential to be enhanced are candidates for selection subject to complying with the principle question.
- 4.8 Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution are identified by this Appraisal. In relation to walls and railings those at and above prescribed heights in a conservation area 1m abutting a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway, waterway or open space) or 2m elsewhere, are protected and require permission for their demolition.
- 4.9 Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions in justified circumstances. The Appraisals undertaken to date have identified elsewhere in the District that many historic architectural features of quality remain unaltered on some non-listed buildings but, on the other hand, the exercise of Permitted Development rights has eroded other parts of some conservation areas. Should Members decide to proceed with such an initiative in Patmore Heath, such important historic detailing including features as identified below could justifiably be retained and inappropriate alterations to them controlled. (Update: Members have introduced a similar Article 4 Direction elsewhere in the District).

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

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

4.11 Important views are identified.

4.12 Conservation area boundaries. In relation to any revisions to the conservation area boundaries, principal consideration has been given as to whether or not the land or buildings in question form part of an area of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be conserved. The conservation area can include open land that has historical associations with the built form. This may particularly be the case if such open land is environmentally important and visually forms part of the conservation area's setting and is distinct from open farmland. Current advice from Historic England advises against the inclusion of agricultural land forming part of the wider landscape.

- 4.13 Wildlife sites. For information there are two locally designated sites which are adjacent to the conservation area and shown on the District Plan Policies Map.
- 4.14 Site of Special Scientific Interest/Nature Reserve. Patmore Heath is so designated. The designation consists of the main large triangle and two smaller northern areas located beyond the east/west access road.

5. Character Analysis

- 5.1 **General Landscape setting:** The Council's Landscape Character Assessment produced in 2007 (which is Supplementary Planning Guidance) identifies the distinct landscapes of the District in terms of their wider settings. The conservation area is located within Area 148, the Anstey and Pelhams Plateau and generally described as being *An organic, ancient landscape with frequent settlements containing a high proportion of vernacular properties*. Patmore Heath is described as *a scarce example of grass heath habitat with ponds*.
- 5.2 **General overview:** The essential character of the conservation area is that of a combination of historic and modern properties enclosing a large heath grazed in part by sheep. Adjacent Gravesend is also of historic interest. It is linked to the main part of the settlement by a short length of narrow lane enclosed by hedgerows and over-arching trees and sunken in parts.
- 5.3 Positive attributes. The Heath itself is extensive and contains a number of ponds and trees. It is accepted the presence of selected trees on the main part of the heath, which as set out previously is an important grass heath habitat, conflict with the objective of retaining the important heathland habitat. There are two concentrations of listed buildings, one on the northern edge of the Heath and one to the south east of it. There is also a scatter of historic properties at Gravesend which has now been included within the conservation area. About 50% of the listed properties have thatched roofs.
- 5.4 Negative attributes. The conservation area's character is compromised by 20th century developments principally on the western and north eastern boundaries. However the continuous enclosure of the heath by development is a feature important to its layout and character. Types of front boundary treatments vary.

- 5.5 ***Individually Listed Buildings:*** There are 16 listed buildings/groups within the existing and proposed extension to the conservation area. The listed building descriptions provided by Historic England (HE) are very brief and one does not contain a date. There is therefore a case for asking HE to review these entries. It is also noted that EHDC mapping records need amending to accurately identify the location of walls that are specifically mentioned in a Listed Building description.
- 5.6 Of these 16 listed buildings, 7 (44%) date from the 17th century, 5 (31%) from the 18th century and 3 (19%) from the 19th century. One is undated.
- 5.7 All of the above buildings are listed grade II.
- 5.8 A selection of Listed Buildings with abbreviated descriptions based on the National list is provided below. Any comments by the fieldworker are in *italics*. The selection includes one description beyond the existing conservation area but now included within it.
- 5.9 Heath End Cottage - Grade II. 18th century cottage, plastered, tiled half hipped roof. Two storeys, casement windows, eyebrow dormer, one central chimney stack, one gable stack. Formerly two cottages, and before that an old lock-up.



Picture 1: Heath End Cottage

- 5.10 Patmore Cottage - Grade II. 17th century, timber framed, plastered and thatched. One storey and attics, single storey outshuts at both east and west extremities of building. Modern casement windows, three dormers, axial chimney stack. Later extension to east of main range.



Picture 2: Patmore Cottage dating from the 17th century – one of a number of listed buildings in the settlement which are thatched

- 5.11 Elm Cottage - Grade II. *Now within extended conservation area.* 17-18th century cottage, timber-framed, refaced in plaster on the front elevation and rear, weatherboarded on side elevation, one storey and attics. Four modern casements, doorcase with thatched weather porch, one gabled dormer, central brick chimney stack, hipped thatched roof sloping to outshut at rear.



Picture 3: Elm Cottage - now within the extended conservation area

- 5.12 Hitch Lane Cottage – Grade II. 19th century cottage, weatherboarded with slate roof. Two storeys with later single storey lean-to extension to the east. Casement windows, central slated porch and brick chimney stack. Modern extension to the west.



Picture 4: Hitch Lane Cottage. Hidden away and dating from the 19th century

- 5.13 The Cottage and Thatched Cottage - Grade II. 18th century pair of cottages, timber-framed, plastered and weather boarded with a thatched roof. Two storeys with single storey lean-to extension to the east. Central brick chimney stack.



Picture 5: The Cottage and Thatched Cottage – thatched properties predominate amongst those buildings which are listed

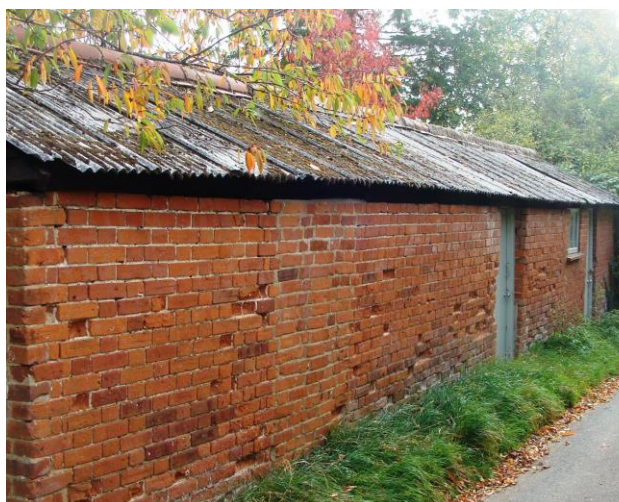
- 5.14 Flintbury Cottage and flint and brick dressed wall on the western boundary - Grade II. 19th century cottage, flint with brick dressings to window and door surrounds and wall quoins. Two storey, slate roof, complete range of original metal casement windows. Two entrance doors, two gable and one central brick chimney stacks. Flint and brick boundary wall along frontage to the Heath.
Height of boundary wall varies, about 1.5m.



Picture 6: Flintbury Cottage, a charming 19th century cottage of flint wall and slate roof construction. Boundary wall also included in listing

- 5.15 The Hunting Box, stable to the north and red brick walls on northern, southern and western boundaries - Grade II. 17th century or earlier, brick construction, plain tiled roof. Two storey main range with projecting gabled staircase enclosure to south, second and later projecting gabled wing to the north, main roof slopes down to outshut on northern elevation. Casement windows, central chimney stack. Interior has two small inglenook fire- places, one with bread oven, and good newel staircase. 18th century stable block to the north, brick with tiled roof, lead covered canopies over stable doors. Good red brick boundary wall, partially rebuilt.
- 5.16 **Scheduled Ancient Monuments:** There are none.
- 5.17 **Areas of Archaeological Significance:** Curiously only part of Gravesend is so designated and this matter has been raised with Hertfordshire County Council's Natural Historic and Built Environment Team.

- 5.18 ***Important buildings within the curtilages of Listed Building:*** This appraisal has identified two such buildings. One of these may potentially be considered thus but more detailed information and consideration at any future application stage may reveal otherwise.
- 5.19 Barn to north side of footpath 15. Single storey barn of brick construction with asbestos roof and rounded ridge tiles. Dates from 19th century. Of interest and worthy of note and retention. Appears to be used as storage. Its potential status as a curtilage listed building may need further consideration (See para. 1.7).



Picture 7: 19th century barn north side of footpath 15 which adds historical and architectural interest and diversity in this area. Should further information reveal this building not to be 'curtilage listed' then it should be regarded as a building worthy of retention within the parameters of the legislation

- 5.20 Barn/s associated with Gravesend Farm. Probably dating from the 19th century/ Render and boarded. Later roof materials. Nevertheless its simple form is not compromised and it contributes to the diversity of the extended conservation area in this location.

5.21 ***Other non-listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution:*** This Appraisal identifies several such buildings.

5.22 Former Mission Hall. This curious building lies within the extended conservation area and is located to the south west of Hitch Lane Cottage and dates from the late 19th century. Hertfordshire Churches in Photographs advises its building was instigated by a John Caton who was a local shopkeeper and Primitive Methodist. It is in a state of decline and dereliction and seems to have suffered from some vandalism. It is principally of wooden construction with roof covered with metal sheeting. An application for change of use to residential was refused in 2016 in part because of harm to the rural character and appearance of the site. The building is an unusual historically important element of the community and its loss would be regretted. Officers would be interested to discuss the matter further with the owner.



Picture 8: The late 19th century Mission Hall building now in a state of decline
Officers would welcome discussion with the owner

- 5.23 Mill Cottage. Probably late 19th century date. Ground floor render, first floor weather boarded; slate roof and chimney to rear which is visible from public view. Modern windows. A prominent building in the street scene. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.
- 5.24 Mill House. A prominent building in the street scene dating from the late 19th century. Pyramidal slate roof with prominent chimney and chimney stack to west elevation, the same elevation has a bay window with slate roof. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 9: Mill House to right and Mill Cottage; two 19th century properties in a strategic location that add to the quality of the conservation area

- 5.25 Holly Cottage and Penrose Cottage. A pair of mid-20th century rendered properties with tiled roof and chimneys. Pyramidal porch detailing to front. Of simple design but worthy of retention. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

5.26 Rose Cottage and Lilac Tree Cottage. A pair of two storey cottages probably dating from the late 19th/early 20th century. Rendered with slate roof and chimneys to front elevation. Despite later addition to Lilac Tree Cottage, the pair retain essential original form. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

In the extended conservation area

5.27 Gravesend Cottage and No. 2 Gravesend Cottages. Two storey rendered with tiled roof and prominent chimney stacks. Fine window detailing to Gravesend Cottage interpreted as formerly being a shop window. Lead canopy detailing above 'shop' window and entrance doors, probably contemporary with 19th century or earlier building. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 10: Gravesend Cottage and No.2 Gravesend Cottages make a significant visual contribution in the extended conservation area

5.28 Nos. 1-4 Patmore Heath Cottages, No. 4 named Heathview. Two pairs of 20th century semi - detached dwellings which appear on mapping from 1920- 24. Render with hipped slate roofs, each with central chimney. No. 1 extended later to south. On balance an Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 11: Despite later extension to No.1 these early 20th century properties add to the architectural and historic diversity of the extension of the conservation area

5.29 Hillside Cottage and Ashvale Cottage. Probably of late 19th/early 20th century date. Rendered with slate roofs and chimneys. Despite alterations and additions these properties (combined with Nos. 1-4 above) are considered to have sufficient architectural and historic interest to be identified thus. On balance an Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 12: Hillside Cottage and Ashvale Cottage – Despite modern window and later additions this group is considered to be of sufficient architectural and historic quality to be retained and if possible, enhanced

5.30 The Barn. Probably dates from 19th century. Assumed to originally have been an agricultural building. Now a single story dwelling with modern detailing. Old tiled roof, probably original elements. Contributes to the variety of historic buildings in the extended conservation area. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 13: The Barn assumed to originally have been an agricultural building.

Contributes to the variety of historic buildings in the extended conservation area

- 5.31 Nos 1-2 Catherine Wheel Cottages and Elderberie Cottage. This contiguous group dates from the late 19th century. Rendered, tiled and slate roofs, prominent central chimney. Porch to front detracts. Other modern details. Nevertheless this group and its massing generally contributes positively to the street scene and on balance an Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 14: 1-2 Catherine Wheel Cottages and Elderberie Cottage generally make a positive contribution to the extended conservation area

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

5.33 As previously identified walls to the frontage of Flintbury Cottage and walls at The Hunting Box are included in the listed building description.

In extended conservation area

5.34 Wall to front of listed building – Gravesend Farm. About 1m in height of flint construction. Would benefit from repairs and removal of ivy.



Picture 15: Wall at Gravesend Farm that would benefit from repair work and removal of ivy

5.35 **Site of Special Scientific Interest:** Patmore Heath (including associated areas to the north) is so designated and there are some 24 restrictions to works and operations which require Natural England's consent. Some operations such as tree works may also require other permission or notification (e.g. Forestry Commission and EHDC respectively). Patmore Heath is described in its SSI citation as *the finest example in Hertfordshire of dry grass heathland, now a scarce habitat...*

5.36 **Nature Reserve:** Patmore Heath is a Nature Reserve and is owned by Albury Parish Council and administered with Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust

(HMWT). Rare grasses and orchids can be found and the several ponds support all three native newt species. Seasonal highlights include various insects, reptiles and birds. It is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (see above).

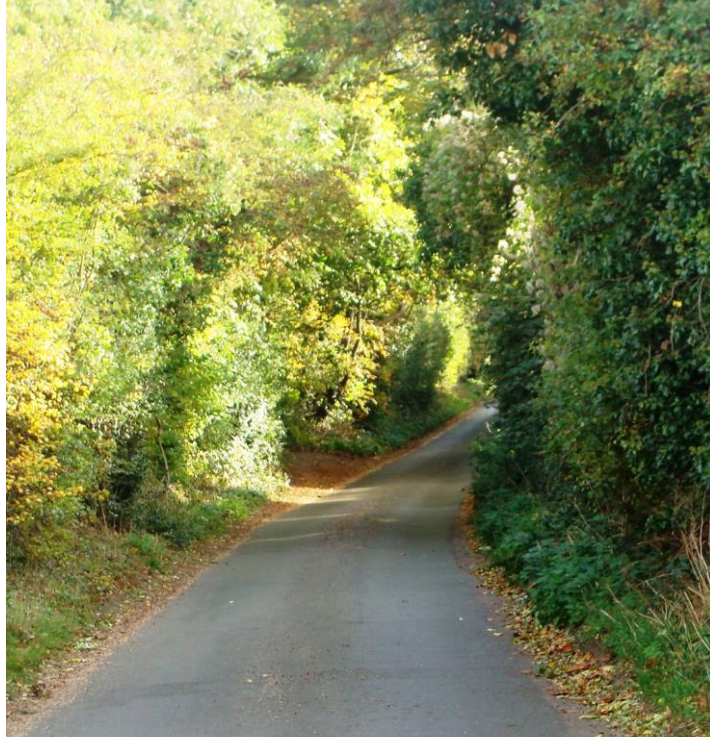
- 5.37 It is Common Land with sporadic grazing rights which declined after WW2 which HMWT advise led to the encroachment of trees and the consequent decline in the quality of the heath. The grazing rights contribute to recreating an appropriate form of management. See illustration below.



Picture 16: Sheep grazing on the Heath

- 5.38 The site/s contains a number of ponds and many trees. The author is advised that in the mid-20th century the site was open and without tree cover. HMWT are currently drafting a new management plan involving the retention of some of the most mature trees and the removal of others. Restoration of open grass heathland will be prioritised to the east and western areas of the heath.

- 5.39 **Important Open Spaces:** Patmore Heath, in addition to the designations identified above, is also visually and historically important and most worthy of retention and appropriate management.
- 5.40 *The open countryside and wider landscape to rear of Heath House and The Hunting Box, extending north.* During the consultation process concern was raised relating to ensuring proper protection of these areas. Historic England advises that conservation area designation is *not generally an appropriate means of protecting the wider landscape*. It should be noted however that these areas form part of the 'Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt' and are subject to, and thus protected by, District Plan Policy GBR2. The Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt is a considerable and significant countryside resource, which Policy GBR2 seeks to maintain.
- 5.41 This Appraisal therefore recognises the importance of maintaining the general openness of these wider landscapes (and indeed the entirety of Patmore Heath) from inappropriate development and as such these areas will be protected by Policy GBR2 as a valued countryside resource.
- 5.42 **Particularly important trees and hedgerows:** Those trees that are most important are shown very diagrammatically on the accompanying plans. As previously advised HMWT's management plan for the heathland will involve the removal of selected trees in the interest of proper management of the important habitats. As HMWT continue selected management and remove further trees on the heath, any information shown on the plans will progressively become outdated.
- 5.43 **Village approach linking with Gravesend:** This narrow approach enclosed by trees and hedgerows and in part by steep banks, is attractive and an environmental feature of quality and note.



Picture 17: The approach road linking Patmore Heath with Gravesend is an attractive environmental feature worthy of note and retention

5.44 ***Property boundaries surrounding the Heath:*** The residential properties surrounding the large triangle of heathland alternatively add to it or detract from it, dependant on their qualities. Some have architectural and historic qualities whilst others are modern. However the essential historic quality of Patmore Heath is that of an extensive triangle of open space surrounded by properties. It is considered the visual quality and rural nature of the Heath could be enhanced if selected boundary treatments were more co-ordinated, ideally with a common natural hedging solution. Although the Parish Council did not present a view it is recognized that following the public consultation exercise, there was some opposition to this idea. Nevertheless it is considered an abbreviated reference remains appropriate for the voluntary consideration of future owners.

- 5.45 **Water features:** The ponds on the Heath are important for habitats as previously mentioned (Locations taken from OS mapping as areas dry at time of survey).
- 5.46 **Important views:** A selection as shown on accompanying plans.
- 5.47 **Elements out of character with the Conservation Area:** Various utility poles. The Parish Council may wish to contact the appropriate utility company and explore the potential of selective improvements.
- 5.48 **Opportunities to secure improvements:** The idea of replacing selected front boundaries with native hedging; would only be achievable with owners' co-operation and over a long period of time. Discuss future of Mission Hall with owner. Consider repairs to front wall at Gravesend Farm. Explore potential of selective improvements relating to utility poles.
- 5.9 **Other Actions:** Contact Historic England to consider reviewing the very brief existing listed building descriptions. Revise EHDC listed building mapping base relating to selected boundary wall (The Hunting Box). Contact Hertfordshire County Council's Natural Historic and Built Environment Team to ascertain if revisions to the Areas of Archaeological Significance need revision.
- 5.50 **Boundary changes:** It is proposed to amend the conservation area as follows:

- (a) Extend to include area at Gravesend. Includes land to both sides of connecting lane with Patmore Heath and the following properties: Elm Cottage; Longmead; Gravesend Cottage and No. 2 Gravesend Cottages; Patmore Heath Cottages Nos.1-4 (Heathview); Hillside Cottage; Ashvale Cottage; Gravesend Farm; The Barn; 1/2 Catherine Wheel Cottages; Elderberie Cottage; Chestnuts; the Catherine Wheel PH.

Explanation for inclusion: This area contains several listed buildings and other unlisted properties worthy of retention and the protection afforded by conservation area designation. Two modern properties particularly on the edges of the new area are well designed and attractive with their use of traditional materials. The link road between Patmore Heath and Gravesend is lined with overhanging trees and hedgerows and is visually most attractive and its sunken characteristics in part have some historic importance.

- (b) Extend to include former Mission Hall (SW of Hitch Lane Cottage).
- (c) Minor extension/adjustments to include rear garden areas to Garden House; Fir Tree Cottage; Jaspers Cottage; Rambleside; Heathcote.
- (d) Minor extension/adjustment to include garden area associated with Ashleigh.
- (e) Minor extension/adjustment to include garden areas to rear of The Lane House, Pightle Cottage and The White Cottage.
- (f) Exclude Heath House and associated buildings and pasture land to the south.

- (g) Exclude pasture land to rear of The Hunting Box extending north to rear of Gamekeepers Cottage and readjusted to follow rear boundaries of The Birches and Mill Bungalow.
- (h) Minor adjustment to exclude land to the north-west of Penrose House.



Picture18: Part of pasture land to rear and north of The Hunting Box which is considered to be part of the wider landscape and thus inappropriately included in the conservation area, following local practice and Historic England advice

6. Overall Summary

- 6.1 Patmore Heath's conservation area is of high quality, whose rural and remote location is enhanced by its unique setting around heathland of visual and particularly high quality ecological importance. There are a number of listed buildings and other non-listed buildings of merit which warrant additional protection. Despite some more modern development which by necessity remains within the conservation area, the area is of sufficient high quality to be

worthy of its designated status and be extended to include Gravesend subject to modifying the boundary as set out.

Part C – Management Proposals

7. Management Proposals

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

- a) Extend to include area at Gravesend. Includes land to both sides of connecting lane with Patmore Heath and the following properties: Elm Cottage; Longmead; Gravesend Cottage and No. 2 Gravesend Cottages; Patmore Heath Cottages Nos.1-4 (Heathview); Hillside Cottage; Ashvale Cottage; Gravesend Farm; The Barn; 1/2 Catherine Wheel Cottages; Elderberrie Cottage; Chestnuts; the Catherine Wheel PH.
- b) Extend to include former Mission Hall (SW of Hitch Lane Cottage).
- c) Minor extension/adjustments to include rear garden areas to Garden House; Fir Tree Cottage; Jaspers Cottage; Rambleside; Heathcote.
- d) Minor extension/adjustment to include garden area associated with Ashleigh.
- e) Minor extension/adjustment to include garden areas to rear of The Lane House, Pightle Cottage and The White Cottage.
- f) Exclude Heath House and associated buildings and pasture land to the south.
- g) Exclude pasture land to rear of The Hunting Box extending north to rear of Gamekeepers Cottage and readjusted to follow rear boundaries of The Birches and Mill Bungalow.
- h) Minor adjustment to exclude land to the north-west of Penrose House.

- 7.2 **General Planning Control and Good Practice within the Conservation Area:** Planning policies are contained in the East Herts District Plan adopted in October 2018. It is against this document and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that the District Council will process applications. The NPPF is supplemented by Planning Practice Guidance. Specific guidance is available which advises on enhancing and conserving the historic environment. This guidance is available to view online: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>. District Plan policies HA1, HA4, HA5 and HA6 are particularly relevant.
- 7.3 Applicants considering submitting any application should carefully consider the relevant District Plan policies and if necessary contact Officers to seek pre-application advice.
- Telephone 01279 655261 (For development proposals ask for Development Management. For general conservation advice ask for a Conservation Officer).
- E-mail: planning@eastherts.gov.uk
- Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk
- Or write to Development Management, East Herts District Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EQ
- 7.4 Applicants may also wish to refer to one of the several Guidance Notes previously referred to which will be updated as resources permit.
- 7.5 **Planning Control - Potential need to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation:** Within the Areas of Archaeological Significance, the contents of District Plan policies HA1 and HA3 are particularly relevant.
- 7.6 **Listed Building Control and Good Practice:** Those buildings that are individually listed are identified. Other pre-1948 buildings, structures or walls within the

curtilage of a Listed Building are similarly protected in law. District Plan Policy HA7 particularly applies.

- 7.7 Listed Buildings are a significant asset in contributing to the quality of the conservation area. It is essential that their architectural detailing is not eroded nor their other qualities and settings compromised.
- 7.8 ***Planning Control - Other Unlisted Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution:*** This Appraisal has identified several unlisted buildings/ groups of buildings that are considered to have sufficient qualities to be described thus. Any proposal involving the demolition of these buildings is unlikely to be approved. District Plan Policy HA2 and HA4 II particularly apply.
- 7.9 These buildings are: former Mission Hall, Mill Cottage, Mill House, Holly Cottage and Penrose Cottage, Rose Cottage and Lilac Tree Cottage, Gravesend Cottage and No. 2 Gravesend Cottages, Nos. 1-4 Patmore Heath Cottages (No. 4 named Heathview), Hillside Cottage, Ashvale Cottage, The Barn, Nos. 1-2 Catherine Wheel Cottages, Elderberrie Cottage.
- 7.10 There are other distinctive features that are integral to some of the important unlisted buildings identified above that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including selected chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing where protection could be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via an Article 4 Direction. The associated legislation is complex. Should the Council consider such a course of action appropriate there would be a process of notifying the affected owners separately at a later date. This would be associated with further detailed consideration and possible refinement. District Plan Policy HA4 I(f) particularly applies.

- 7.11 **Planning Control – Other distinctive features that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution:** This Appraisal has identified several walls that make a particular contribution to the character of the conservation area. These will be protected from demolition within the parameters of legislation.
- 7.12 **Planning Control – Important open land, open spaces and gaps:** This Appraisal has identified the following particularly important open spaces: the main large triangular shaped Heath and two adjacent areas to its north; District Plan Policy HA4 I(e) particularly applies.
- 7.13 **Planning Control – Site of Special Scientific Interest and Nature Reserve:** The Heathland areas represent a natural environment of high ecological importance and must be carefully protected in a manner that carefully balances all environmental considerations. HMWT are currently drafting a new management plan involving the retention of some of the most mature trees and the removal of others. District Plan Policy NE1 particularly applies.
- 7.14 Planning Control – The open countryside and wider landscape to rear of Heath House and The Hunting Box, extending north: This land will be protected as a valued countryside resource. District Plan Policy GBR2 particularly applies.**
- 7.15 **Planning Control – Water features:** The ponds associated with the Nature Reserve are particularly important to wildlife and need careful protection. District Plan Policy NE3 particularly applies.
- 7.16 **Planning Control – Particularly important trees and hedgerows:** Only the most significant trees are shown very diagrammatically. Subject to certain exceptions all trees in a conservation area are afforded protection and a person wanting to carry out works has to notify the Council. Trees that have not been identified may still be considered suitable for protection by Tree Preservation Orders.

Owners are advised to make regular inspections to check the health of trees in the interests of amenity and Health and Safety. District Plan Policy NE3 III particularly applies. In relation to the heath HMWT are currently drafting a new management plan involving the retention of some of the most mature trees and the removal of others.

- 7.17 **Village approach linking with Gravesend:** This narrow approach enclosed by trees, hedgerows and banks is attractive and is an environmental feature of considerable quality that should be protected. District Plan Policy NE3 III particularly applies.
- 7.18 **Planning Control - Important views:** A selection of general views is diagrammatically shown. District Plan Policy HA4 I(e) is particularly relevant.
- 7.19 **Enhancement Proposals:** The Appraisal has identified several elements that detract which are summarised in the Table below together with a proposed course of action; other actions are also identified. Within the staff and financial resources available, Council Officers will be pro-active and provide assistance. It must be recognized that such improvements will generally be achieved only by the owner's co-operation. The reader's attention is drawn to the potential of grant assistance in eligible circumstances.

Detracting Element	Location	Proposed Action
Derelict Mission Hall	SW of Hitch Lane Cottage	Discuss future with owner and if appropriate, with others.
Frontage wall	Gravesend Farm	Discuss repair works with owner. Without prejudice, grant assistance may be

		available.
Other actions, including opportunities to secure improvements		
HMWT's representations request residents refrain from parking cars on the heath other than in the designated parking area.		
PC may wish to discuss improvements relating to selective utility poles.		
Consider contacting Historic England with view of expanding/ reviewing the very limited and brief Listed Building descriptions.		
Check EHDC mapping data base references: walls at The Hunting Box.		
Contact Hertfordshire County Council's Natural Historic and Built Environment Team to ascertain whether or not additional Areas of Archaeological Significance need identifying. <u>Update:</u> HCC has advised they will review subject to availability of resources.		
Replacing selected 'hard' front boundaries with hedging. Retain as idea to be considered perhaps with owners' future co-operation.		