

Frithsden Conservation Area



Character Appraisal & Management Proposals



Acknowledgements

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Cover photographs: (Main picture) – *Little Manor and the Green, Frithsden*
Images left to right – *Outbuilding, Alford Arms, Village Post Box, The Alford Arms, Stables formerly Hollybush Farm, 'Cobwebs' and adjoining terrace*

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Part 1 Conservation Area Character Appraisal

1 Introduction

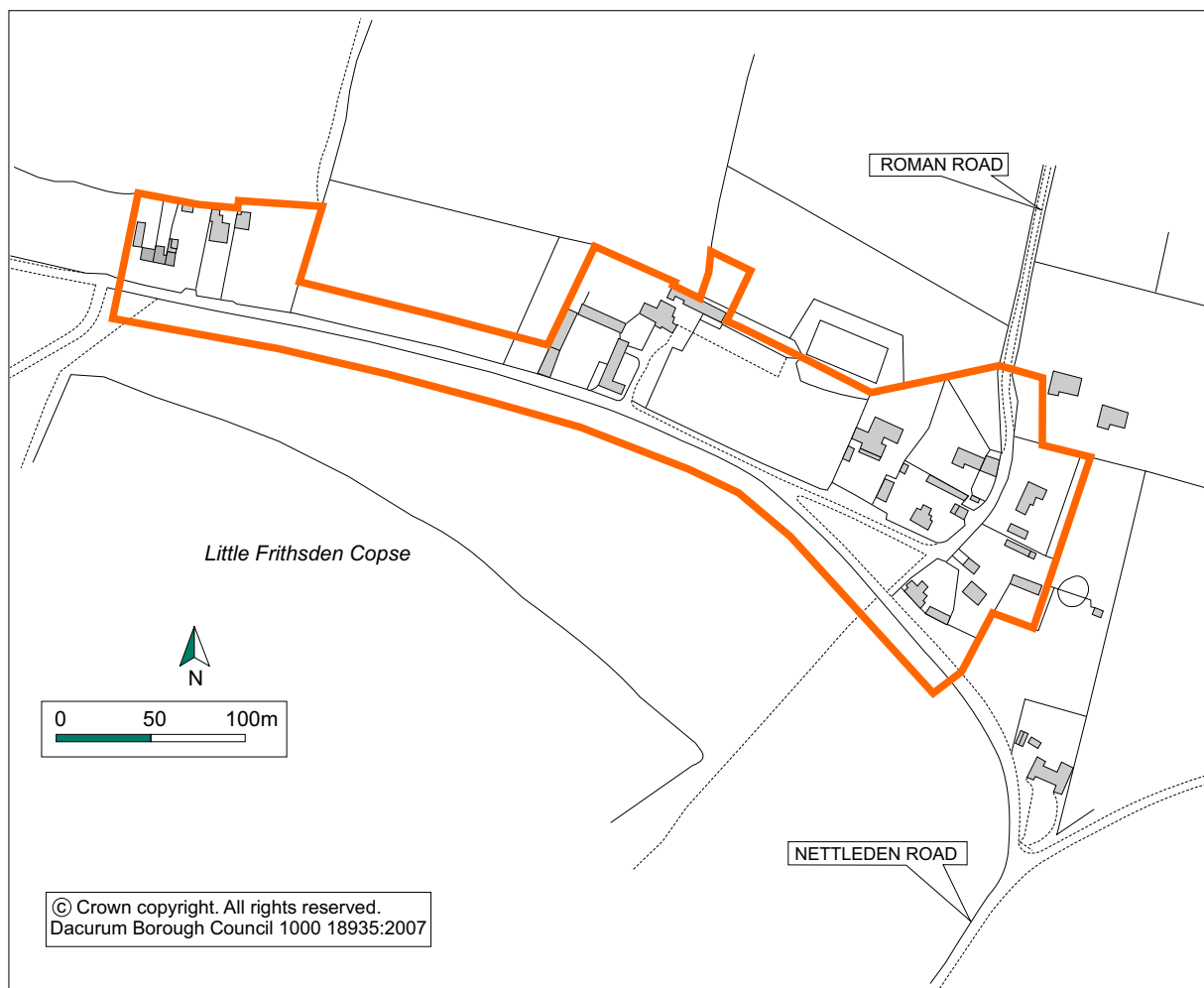
Frithsden Conservation Area comprises the core of the built settlement of Frithsden. It sits within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Beauty.

Frithsden is an idyllic discovery; one is barely aware of its presence when walking in the woods to the south or along the crest of the more open hillside to the north. The settlement occupies a secluded valley bottom position, trees and woodland providing a strong sylvan setting for the built environment. Little Frithsden Copse, part of the National Trust Ashridge Estate, sweeps down the southern valley side to define an abrupt edge to virtually the whole of the southern boundary, pushing all settlement to the north side of the road.

The principal buildings now congregate around the northern side of the triangular green, which forms the heart of the settlement. Despite their small numbers, there is a good selection of buildings dating from the medieval period through to the C19th. The only C20th buildings are ancillary buildings used to house animals or cars.

The vernacular scale of the buildings in the Conservation Area ensures it retains an individual sense of place and a village character. The tallest building in the Conservation Area is in fact a former farm building, now the 'Granary'.

Map 1: Frithsden Conservation Area



The Alford Arms, the only surviving publicly accessible building in the village, is the main magnet attracting visitors to Frithsden; two former institutional buildings, the Bethsheda Chapel and School have now been converted or absorbed into private ownership.

The Alford Arms reminds us that the Ashridge Estate has been a key influence on the evolution of the settlement. Elaborately restored in 1879 to the design of Lady Marion Alford and her son Earl Brownlow, the Little Manor House also symbolizes the connection with the Estate; the house adds a surprisingly cohesive quality to the settlement, despite the fact that its pargetted front is more flamboyant and indeed somewhat out of character with the local vernacular style.

The subtle but strong 'estate' influence in the valley perhaps also manifests itself as much in what has disappeared from the landscape, as compared to what remains. Settlement once straggled westwards along the valley bottom towards the former kitchen gardens of the

Ashridge Estate. However, estate policy in the late C19th and C20th slowly whittled away the number of buildings and structures, with the result that the 'green' area now feels more detached from estate influences.

The Conservation Area displays all the signs of being well cared-for and maintained. Yet it is also subject to major pressures. The settlement is a victim of its own appeal – parked cars inevitably congregate close to the Alford Arms, and this has resulted in some suburban influences creeping in to contain this volume of traffic, particularly in the introduction of some intrusive kerbing around parts of the green.

The Frithsden Conservation Area was first designated in 1968. Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as *“an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”*



Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Although new development and change will always take place in conservation areas, the main purpose of designation is to ensure that any proposals will not have an adverse effect upon the overall character and appearance of an area. Part 1 (The “Appraisal”) highlights the special qualities and features that underpin Frithsden's character and justify its designation. Guidelines provided in Part 2 (“Management Proposals”) are designed to prevent harm and encourage enhancement. This type of assessment conforms

to English Heritage Guidance and to Government Advice (PPS5). It also supports and amplifies those policies aimed at protecting the overall character of conservation areas and forming part of Dacorum Borough Council's Local Development Plan Framework:

Policy 120.1 Designation as a conservation area provides the opportunity to preserve or enhance an area of architectural or historic interest by controlling building demolition and the design, scale and proportions of extensions and new development, as well as the type and colour of materials used.

Policy 121.1 There is a need to control inappropriate types of permitted development which would be detrimental to a conservation area.

[Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011]



Approaching the Conservation Area from the West

2 Location and Setting

Location

The rural settlement of Frithsden is situated in the Borough of Dacorum approximately 4 miles north-west of Hemel Hempstead. There is a single road through the village that links two of the roads radiating from the junction on Berkhamsted Common, both of which pass through Little Gaddesden, the southern road passing by Ashridge House, the northern road through Nettleden village. At one time the county boundary between Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire ran along the valley bottom.

Boundaries

The conservation area is a relatively narrow strip encompassing the core of the valley-bottom settlement, comprising the area around the Green at the eastern end and stretching to Nos. 8 & 9 at the western end. The southern boundary follows the road, taking in part of its southern verge. The northern boundary is roughly parallel with this and principally follows the defined hedge boundary between the rear boundaries of the building plots and the large fields stretching up the valley side. There is a slight belling out towards the eastern end where it takes in a short section of the Roman Road leading to Nettleden. The western end boundary cuts across the road and follows the western plot boundary of No. 8. The eastern boundary aligns with the eastern property boundary of Noways, although Noways itself is excluded from the Conservation Area.

Three adjustments to the Conservation Area boundaries have been identified' (see below).

Topography and Landscape Setting

Frithsden is situated in the Chiltern Hills, in a landscape which is designated as of national importance for its outstanding natural beauty (as an AONB). To the north-west is the Chiltern escarpment and beyond that, the Aylesbury plains, while to the south east lies the Thames valley and the sprawling conurbation of London. The Landscape Character Assessment for Dacorum (2004) identifies Frithsden as part of the Nettleden Ridges and Valleys (Area 122). The area covers a series of parallel ridges and dry valleys that start to the east of Ashridge College, close to Little Gaddesden, and stretch down to the join the High Gade valley to the south east. This landform allows long views down into the Conservation Area from the ridge top separating Frithsden from Nettleden.

The area is characterized by strongly undulating topography and the cover of extensive arable fields and relict parkland features. The ridge and valley complex extends westwards beyond the character boundary and into the Ashridge Estate (Area 121), where the designed estate landscape and relic parkland become dominant. For the most part, The Ashridge Park boundary designated by English Heritage butts up against the northern boundary of the Conservation Area, but in the case of the meadow to the west of Holly Bush Farm, the two areas overlap. Transport routes follow the lie of the land and Frithsden is no exception.

Frithsden lies approximately 110 m. above sea level in one of a series of north-west, south-east dry valleys draining down the Chiltern dip slope. The rolling landscape of the Nettleden Ridges and Valleys is predominantly devoted to agriculture, primarily arable but with a proportion of pasture. Significant secondary land cover comprises broadleaf semi-natural woodland and in the Frithsden Valley the contrast is between very large fields to the northern slope and the heavily wooded cover on the southern side. Frithsden vineyard, created in 1971, lies just to the north-east of the Conservation Area.

Geology

The bedrock geology is Upper Chalk with a superficial geology of acidic clay-with-flints on the ridges and areas of exposed chalk drift within parts of the upper and middle valleys. The soils are stagnogleyic paleo-agricultural brown earths. They comprise fine silty over clayey and fine loamey over clay soils, with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging.



Archaeology

No surviving remains prior to the medieval period have as yet been discovered in the Conservation Area itself, and the village is not mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086. However, the discovery of flint tools and the survival of barrows in Great Frithsden Copse, lynchets in Frithsden Copse and earthwork enclosures in Frithsden Beeches hint at activity in the valley from Paleolithic times through the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman periods. Frithsden is an Area of Archaeological Significance (32). Developers should refer to Policy 118 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011.

View looking south. Frithsden Conservation Area sits in the valley, Frithsden Copse on the opposite slope.



Little Manor in 1921 (Hastie p.183)

3 The Historical Development of Frithsden

It is likely that in the Saxon period, the valley area was mostly covered with woodland pasture, the trees being an essential part of the medieval economy in providing renewable resources of wood and nuts as pannage for pigs. There is a C13th reference to the wood of Berkhamstede called 'The Frith' and 'Frithesdene ('valley of the woods') is first mentioned in 1291.

Frithsden probably gradually emerged as a small settlement during the early medieval period, developing around a few farmsteads - Hollybush Farm with its U-shaped farm courtyard (now converted) still being one of the strongest visual links with the village's agricultural roots, although it ceased to be a farm in the 1920s.

The surrounding woods, trees and fields sustained the local economy until the C20th. By the C17th, Hollybush was farmed by John Howe who kept some 30 acres. Richard Dean, another Frithsden farmer, held 40 acres. Most of the other Frithsden holdings were scattered over the surrounding area and amounted to no more than two or three acres each. The valley bottom was peppered with smaller paddocks while the larger fields stretched up to the crest of the hill on the northern side of the valley. Remains of structures on this crest were visible up to the 1940s, raising the possibility of some parallel settlement along the brow of the Nettleden Hills, similar to Gaddesden Row.

Frithsden itself never developed beyond the status of hamlet and therefore lacks a church and its associated features such as a graveyard and rectory. Its wood-pasture location made it fertile territory for Nonconformists. The chapel, built in 1835, is now easily overlooked, but it used to stand in the grounds of Frithsden Cottage, the home of the Neale family who were well known Baptists. (A Nehemiah Neale farmed in Frithsden as long ago as 1669). Services were held here up to 1939. It became a schoolroom for evacuees during World War II and its owners, the Trustees of the Joanna Neale Trust, then sold it after the war.

A key influence on the hamlet, at times promoting its growth, at others restricting it, has been the Ashridge Estate. Apart from its major impact on the landscape (the sense of manicured enclosure is still strong) surrounding the Conservation Area, physical reminders abound in and around the village.

Changes to the road system were made to serve the landowner's whims and needs. A map of 1762 shows there used to be two roads (one separating Little and Great Frithsden Copse, the other separating Frithsden Hither and Far Coppice (the latter two now amalgamated as Great Frithsden Copse) and providing direct routes from Frithsden to Berkhamsted across the Common. However, these were closed when the new sweeping drive to Ashridge was built by the Earl of Brownlow to provide him with access to Berkhamsted rail station. This effectively created a by-pass to the village, and may have been responsible for causing migration of settlement towards the Green and the Nettleden/Berkhamsted road.

In the early C19th, the Duke of Bridgewater also altered the main carriage drive to Ashridge House in order to avoid approaching his estate through Nettleden and eliminating unnecessary encounters with farm carts travelling between the hamlets. (Other accounts claim it was done in order to avoid contact with the villagers of



Alford Arms 1996 (Hastie p.183)

Nettleden and Frithsden). Constructed at a time of high unemployment, the original straight medieval route (also locally called the 'Roman' Road and Spooky Lane) linking Nettleden and Frithsden, was sunk into a deep cutting with revetted flint retaining walls, the new driveway flying across it via an imposing brick and flint bridge, now in poor condition.

By the beginning of the C19th, the Ashridge Estate had acquired most of the holdings in the Frithsden valley and the farmers were all tenants. The village expanded and contracted according to the relative fortunes of the Estate. In the early C19th, work was plentiful and between 1821 and 1830 a total of 85 families lived in Frithsden. Farm buildings such as the yard formerly attached to Holly Bush Farm enshrine the 'model farm' principles adopted by estate landlords. Cottages in the hamlet also housed labourers who worked in the kitchen gardens at the western end of the valley (but outside the Conservation Area). This vast enterprise catered for more than just the needs of Ashridge House, surplus produce being sent to Covent Garden. When the estate was sold in the 1920's the gardens became a prosperous family-run commercial nursery. The skills and expertise generated by the estate gardens no

doubt spilt over into the rest of the hamlet; relic fruit trees are reminders that Frithsden is reputedly the home of the cherry turnover, using only black cherries called caroon cherries – an important early agricultural product in this area of Hertfordshire.

With the demise of the estate in the C20th, the population of the hamlet dwindled drastically. Buildings now punctuate the valley bottom with generous spaces between them but the Tithe Map of 1840 shows as many as 36 houses lining the road from the Alford Arms to Frithsden Gardens. These earlier cottages filled in many of the present gaps between Hollybush Farm and Bede Cottage where eight dwellings once stood; one of which was a beerhouse. In the 1850's three straw-thatched cottages burnt down, The small white gate in the flint wall near the pillar box also led up to a very small cottage which had been demolished by 1940s. Other lost buildings include the group of cottages that stood on the strip of heath land known as Cherry Bounce, on the south side of the Green. Another building probably provided by the estate but now lost was a communal wash-house and a large brick oven, fired by "fuzzen-sticks", where housewives of the hamlet baked bread and cooked the Sunday joint at a cost of one penny.



Ashridge House

There are no physical traces to be found of the straw-plaiting industry, once common in the village and no doubt promoted by the estate (it used to be taught in a cottage close to Little Manor).

Despite this attrition, Ashridge's influence on, in and around the standing buildings is readily apparent. On the Green, the two most prominent buildings are the 'Little Manor' and the Alford Arms. The former is much decorated with fine parquetry work, two panels of which record that the house was built in 1513 and restored in 1879 by the Estate. The present inn was built on the site of an older thatched inn called the Tyrants Inn. In 1840 it was occupied by Minny and Mary Catherall and in 1851 kept by William Newman. Around 1886, when the licensee was John Batchelor, it burnt down and was subsequently rebuilt and, significantly, the new building was renamed the Alford Arms (Alford being one of the titles of Lord Brownlow).

There are a host of other, but now less obvious, estate influences stamped on Frithsden. At the other end of the Hamlet, the School (now Bede Cottage) was endowed by the Countess of Bridgewater who died in 1849. It was attended by children of Potten End, Nettleden and Frithsden until it was closed as long ago as 1880. Allowed to decay for some years, it was then re-conditioned for two old widows, subsequently being sold when the Ashridge Estate was split up. Further along, in the woods opposite Frithsden Gardens and outside the Conservation Area, the



C17th brick-lined icehouse on the south side of the main road served the estate's needs, while in the village, another easily overlooked feature is the water supply, consisting of an underground barrel drain which discharged into the private pond at the eastern end of the village. Most plots still have wells connected to it – these were built approximately every 100m. down the glade by the Duke of Bridgewater. In time of drought people from Potten End a mile off used to bring pails and carry home drinking water.

The strong legacy of the Ashridge Estate continues in Frithsden. No new buildings (apart from outbuildings) were added to the Conservation Area in the C20th (Noways is just outside the Conservation Area). Rather, existing buildings were enlarged or, in the case of farm buildings, converted to residential use, reflecting the emerging 'commuter' status of the village. One significant business - Frithsden Vineyard was established in 1971 on the edge of the Conservation Area– an apt successor in Frithsden's long association with orchards and fruit-growing.



Two of the wells installed by the Duke of Bridgewater

4 Surviving Historical Features within the Conservation Area

Summary of Historical Features

- Little Manor House
- Holly Bush Farm and converted farmbuildings
- Timber-Framed Buildings
- Public House: Alford Arms
- Former Baptist Chapel
- Former School (Bede Cottage)
- Long Flint Wall (north side of valley road)
- Entrance to Spooky Lane
- Water Supply Features



View looking east towards the Alford Arms and the Green

Street Pattern and Building Plots

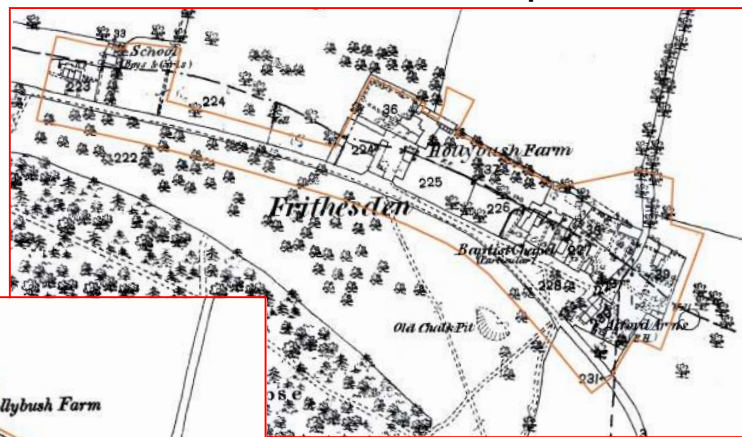
The principal straight three-quarter mile long road runs west to east along the valley bottom, until bifurcating at the Green. Here it turns left up the hill as a trackway into Roman Road (also referred to locally as Spooky Lane), or bends south-east to join the Nettleden road just beyond the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area. Woodland rises up almost the entire length of the slope to the south of the road. All buildings therefore lie to the north side of the road, the generous garden plots and interspersed meadow mostly stretching back to a defined boundary at the base of the slope that then rises as a backdrop of fields to the crest of the hill.

There is a denser, small cluster of buildings at the east end of the Conservation Area with an irregular plot configuration and building lines. (It is not always immediately clear how properties are accessed). Only two buildings therefore face the Green, Little Manor being the most prominent and Frithsden Cottage being set back from the road. The Alford Arms faces the road rather than the Green, while the houses behind it (Nos 13, 14 & 15, and the terrace including Cobwebs) frame the entrance to Spooky Lane. All buildings are aligned east-to-west, reflecting their valley orientation, apart from Nos 14 & 15 which faces west.

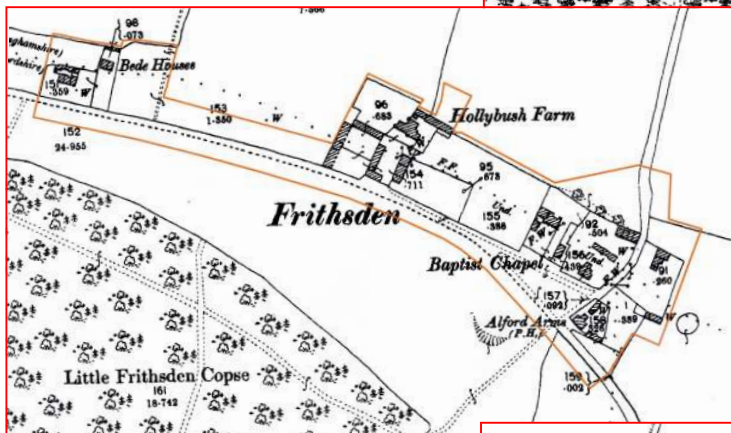
Buildings are mostly set back from the road, apart from 'Cobwebs' and its terrace which is at right angles, the gable end abutting Roman Road. As noted, Little Manor House is the only principal building to have a major presence overlooking the Green but this is compromised by its being tucked away behind a high hedge line – early photographs show a much more open aspect with a modest timber picket fence.

Maps of Frithsden

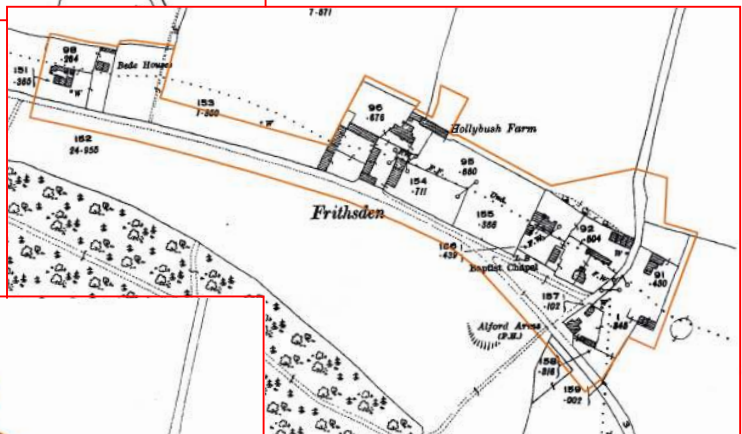
Map 2: 1878 - 1892



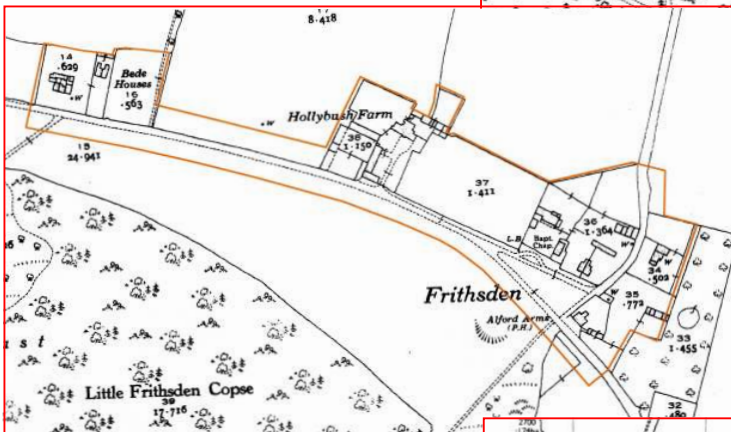
Map 3: 1889 - 1901



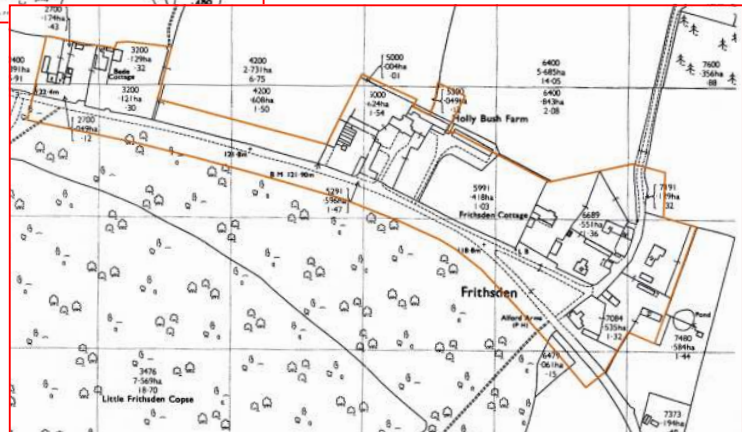
Map 4: 1924 - 1926



Map 5: 1932 - 1953



Map 6: 1962 - 1979



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5 The Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

Analysis

Frithsden Conservation Area is tightly defined as the core of the settlement, centred on the small village green with a westward spur along the valley bottom. From the Green, one can quickly get a sense of the Conservation Area, but there are also some good views into it from outside - looking east along the Valley bottom and from the crest of the hill to the North.

The strong linear nature of the settlement, particularly at the west end, is reinforced by the valley setting, by the strong woodland edge on the south side and by the brick-and-flint wall, four feet high with a coping of bricks which cuts along the whole of the glade road on its north side and then turns the corner up Spooky Lane. This boundary wall almost reads as an extension of the impressive kitchen garden walls which, although they lay outside the Conservation Area, nevertheless proclaim strong estate influences as one approaches from the West. The strong, open line of the wall, and the privacy it extends to the buildings behind it, contrasts with the lack of barriers entering the woodland on the south side of the road, characterized by its generous verge and overhanging trees.

The valley bottom siting tends to dictate a uniform orientation. Buildings are mostly detached, although some represent the throwing together of two or three dwellings; there are also two terraces - the cottages at the west end, and the cottages butting up to Spooky Lane, forming bookends to the Conservation Area. On the whole, houses tend to be tucked away from public view. Little Manor has



Looking west along the valley bottom, with Frithsden Copse on the left. The extended flint wall reinforces the strong linear nature of the settlement. The managed woodland, wall, yellow brickwork etc. all demonstrate the impact of the Ashridge estate on the Conservation Area.

the most presence in the Conservation Area – particularly because of its esoteric pargetting, bearing the arms of Adelbert, Earl Brownlow. (Pargetting is not a feature of this part of the county.)

Otherwise, buildings tend to be small in scale – unusually, the tallest building in the hamlet is the 'Granary', a former agricultural building and part



Buildings in Frithsden Conservation Area are characterized by their modest scale, and unobtrusive siting

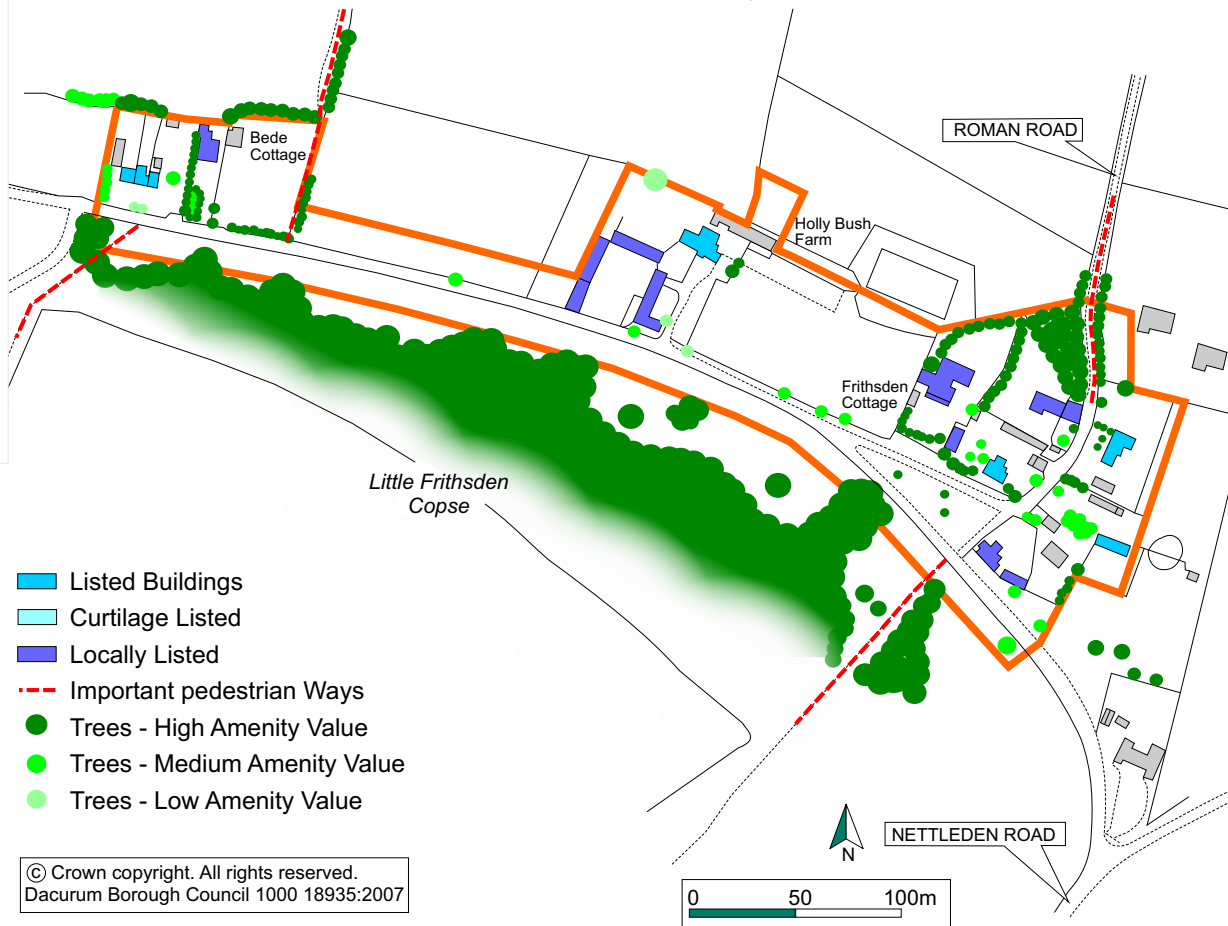
of the farmstead once attached to Holly Bush Farm. Non-residential buildings are also modest – mostly being ancillary buildings associated with the former farms, the pub and the larger houses. Even the exception to this - the former chapel - is compact and now, unfortunately, almost entirely hidden from view.

A very high proportion of the buildings in the Conservation Area are listed or locally listed, reflecting the fact that Frithsden has resisted any C20th residential infilling. Although no single architectural style predominates, the strength and coherence of the Conservation Area's character lies in the modest scale of the buildings, their unobtrusive siting, together with the relative uniformity of the materials (brick, timber, tiles and some slate). Ancillary buildings also play an important role in preserving historic character and defining curtilage. But the most important unifying factor is the strong estate influence, as expressed in various features within the Conservation Area but also in moulding and defining the landscape context within which it sits.

Summary of Townscape Features

- Strong estate influences
- Medieval origins
- Village Green
- Low-built, two-storey houses or cottages, some with mostly single storey ancillary buildings
- No dominant houses – Little Manor is eye-catching but not overwhelming
- Timber-framed buildings, often encased with brick or concealed by later render.
- Numerically brick houses and cottages predominate, with tiled or slate roofs. No thatch.
- Few views into properties except from the thoroughfares.
- Relatively permeable settlement with paths and tracks off the main glade
- Boundary treatments – flint walls, timber paling, some ancient hedgerow boundaries
- Rich treescape

Map 7: Frithsden Conservation Area: Character Analysis



Current Activities and Uses

In the C20th, Frithsden has assumed the characteristics of a commuter village. The popularity of the Alford Arms attracts day-trippers in cars as well as walkers and ramblers. The Alford Arms is the only publicly accessible building – there is no community hall, place of worship or village shop. The Vineyard continues to operate on the edge of the Conservation Area.



The Alford Arms



The setting of the Conservation Area is defined by trees, hedges and greenery

Focal Points, Views and Vistas

There are important views along the valley bottom as one approaches from the west and as sections of the Conservation Area come into view. Looking north, the open fields of the valley slope form a constant backdrop to the widely spaced properties along the valley bottom. There are key views from and to the Village Green, the eye inevitably being drawn to Little Manor. Interesting rooftop glimpses are to be had as one enters Roman Road and looks back over the hamlet. Further up this hill, there are views into the rear of Conservation Area from the crest of the hill, although much is tantalizingly hidden by trees. Because of the heavily wooded landscape on the southern slope, one virtually stumbles into the Conservation Area when approaching by any of the woodland paths from the South.



View approaching from the west



View approaching from the west: the former farm buildings of Holly Bush Farm



View looking west from the Village Green



View looking south

Open Spaces, Landscape and Trees

The Village Green is the key open space in the Conservation Area, and once the scene for Guy Fawkes and May Day celebrations as well as an annual summer fair. The verges to the valley road are also generous (though becoming pinched near the Alford Arms) and the pathways connecting through the adjacent woodland create a sense of permeability and accessibility to the surrounding countryside.

Apart from the looming presence of Frithsden Copse, trees and woodland underscore the strong character of the Conservation Area. Trees

contribute in groups, clusters and as individual specimens to the 'green' aspect of Frithsden:

- Limited planting of individual trees eg on the 'Green'
- Boundary trees to properties
- Trees lining the Roman Road
- Some more exotic garden specimens
- Relict orchards

On the south side of the roadway there used to be many wild cherry trees and the view from the top of the northern ridge used to suggest that the valley was covered with snow.

Cherry trees also stand on the Green. (Frithsden is said to be the originator of the Hertfordshire 'Cherry Turnover'.) There are also remnants of orchards on the older plots.

Hedgerows are also important delineators of boundaries within the Conservation Area. Some tend to shield properties; the Little Manor House and Frithsden Copse on the north side of the Green being the most obvious examples. The high hedgerows on the lane from the Nettleden Road increase the sense of discovery as one comes upon the Alford Arms and the Green.

There is some inappropriate tree planting and hedge management in the house plots themselves, particularly with reference to the proliferation of *Cupressus leylandii* and other non-native species, and the use of high hedges



Orchard trees mixed with more exotic trees in a garden setting



The Village Green

on the boundaries of properties such as 'Little Manor'. These might not appear out of place in a suburban context but are inappropriate here and seriously dilute the special character of the area.



Woodland to the left, hedgerows combined with flint walling to the right



High hedgerows on the approach to the Green from the Nettleden Road

Public Realm: Floorscape, Street Lighting and Street Furniture

The Village Green kerbing is heavy and inappropriate in this rural setting. Signposting is generally adequate and for the benefit of pedestrians, although some refreshing is required. There is no provision for public seating. The post box in the wall in front of Frithsden Cottage is the most distinctive piece of street furniture in the Frithsden Conservation Area.

Frithsden has resisted the introduction of any street lighting and this helps positively to maintain the rural aspect of the village.



Post box



Signage

6 The Buildings of the Conservation Area

Architectural Styles and Detailing

Little Manor stands out due to its ambitious use of pargetting, but Frithsden is still rich in the variety of traditional materials and detailing encountered. The village buildings have a vernacular scale (no residential property being more than two storeys), and single storey outbuildings and additions help to keep the built form low. Very few dormers are evident – those on Holly Bush Farm appear incongruous and out of scale, Roof lights interrupting the plain roofs are prominent on the front elevation of the converted Barn Cottage.



Little Manor

The character of Frithsden Conservation Area owes much to the use of local materials in the construction of its historic buildings and minor structures such as outbuildings and boundary walls. The palette of materials is typical of the Chilterns – timber and clay predominate. Timber frames utilise oak, sometimes elm. Timber-framed farmbuildings are clad with tarred weatherboarding.



Timber, flint and brick

With the growing scarcity of timber from the late C17th, bricks were increasingly used; Red or pinkish-red bricks were available in the neighbourhood from the late medieval period; they are sometimes used in conjunction with blue headers, as in the added west wing at Holly Bush Farm. Chalky white, gritty lime mortars are common in early brickwork and only start to be displaced by cement/sand in the C20th. Frithsden also has examples of the C19th yellow/brown bricks typical of the Bridgewater estate.



Yellow estate brick

In common with the north Chilterns, flint is not abundantly used except in the prominent boundary walls. In Frithsden's case, this does contribute visually to a strong flinty presence, as the long boundary wall sweeps along by the side of the road and then turns up Spooky Lane. Bede Cottage, the old school is also constructed of flint. Otherwise it was used in the brick and flint bases supporting the timber-frames of some of the dwellings in the hamlet.



Shepherd's Cottage

Clay peg-tile roofs predominate, mostly with gable ends and plain third round ridges (the hipped roof of Nos 14 & 15 is an exception). Scalloped tiles appear on the former school. Bargeboards and fascias, where they appear at all, tend to be restrained; rafter ends are sometimes left exposed. Slates, introduced from c.1800, occupy flatter pitches – a good example is Frithsden Cottage. No examples of thatch survive in the Conservation Area, although cottages appear to have retained thatch into the C19th.



Slate used on Frithsden Cottage



Flint

Roofs in Frithsden are for the most part uncluttered by dormers, rooflights or solar panels; their absence contributes to the strong, simple roofscapes which characterise the Conservation Area. Windows in Frithsden Conservation Area tend to be plain timber casements – there are also a few surviving sash windows e.g. at Frithsden Cottage.

Medieval to c.1600

Within this small conservation area, there are good examples of timber-framing from the late medieval period through to the C17th. Holly Bush Farm is an example of a former open hall; the development of framed buildings from the early C16th to the C19th can be traced through Clayton Cottage, Shepherd's Cottage, Clampitts House and the various farm buildings to Holly Bush Farm. The framing tends to be in large panels, with brick replacing daub as the most common infill material. In a number of cases, timbers have been concealed by brick casing (e.g Holly Bush). Buildings tend to have clay tile roofs (thatch disappeared in the C19th). Chimneys are of brick; end stacks have tiled offsets.



Holly Bush Farm, with medieval open-hall origins

1800-1900

Building activity increased during this period due to estate influences, particularly noticeable at Holly Bush Farm, where the characteristic yellow brick of the Brownlow estate is in evidence in the farm buildings. The flintwork of the former School was the preferred choice in the C19th for institutional buildings in the Chilterns. The Alford Arms, rebuilt towards the end of the period, utilises plum bricks, although these have since been concealed on the main facades under paintwork.



The former school

1600-1800

The lack of development of the village in this period was linked to the lack of estate activity at Ashridge. Few entirely new buildings appear in the village during this period, although it is possible that the terrace incorporating 'Cobwebs' was built at this time. Holly Bush Farm received a new west wing with chequered brickwork while some properties such as Shepherd's Cottage were re-faced in brick at this time.

New materials such as slates were imported into the village and used on a number of buildings, such as the former school, chapel and pub. They also appear on the C18th terrace, probably replacing tiles or thatch when the cottages were being upgraded in the C19th.



Terrace of cottages, probably late C17th or early C18th in origin

1900-Present

There has been strong resistance to infilling in the Conservation Area, with the result that no new dwellings have been erected in the Conservation Area since the late C19th. However, the existing building stock has been subject to pressures to modernise, resulting in conversions and extensions, some more

successful than others. New outbuildings, especially garages, for the most part have been designed to respect local materials and massing.



Former farm buildings to Holly Bush Farm, converted in the C20th to residential use



Garages have been designed to respect local materials and massing



Boundaries

Plots are generally characterised by strong front boundaries, creating discrete enclosures. Frithsden has a pleasant mix of traditional boundary treatments. Flint and brick predominate, particularly in the long wall on the north flank of the glade road and in the approach to Spooky Lane. Hedgerows are also a strong feature, particularly when approaching the Green from the East. Timber fencing is generally of the picket or post and rail variety.



Flint and brick wall with picket gate

Listed Buildings

A listed building is one that is included on the Government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings are protected by law and consent is required from Dacorum Borough Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition, and involving works both internally and externally, can be carried out. The listed buildings are marked on the Conservation Analysis Map. (Also see Appendix 2).



Bede Cottages - a listed building

Locally Listed Buildings

These are buildings which have been identified by Dacorum Borough Council as being individually of special architectural or historic interest but falling just 'beneath the line' for inclusion within the statutory list. They make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.

English Heritage accompanying Guidance PPS5 advises that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area

In Frithsden there are a few such buildings. (See Appendix 3).

Exclusion from these lists does not mean that a building is not of significant architectural or historic interest – it is highly likely that early fabric lies concealed behind later alterations. Always contact Dacorum Borough Council for advice.



The Bethesda Chapel – a locally listed building

7 Negative Features and Issues

The heavy kerbing to the Green is an unfortunate introduction. In a few places, there have been some inappropriate changes to boundary treatments, e.g. by the School, where fence panels have been introduced.



Inappropriate boundary treatment

Negative Buildings

Few buildings in the Frithsden Conservation Area detract from its character – some have been inelegantly extended or converted.



Clumsy extensions to the rear of the Alford Arms

Inappropriate Alterations to Buildings

Over-investment in properties has tended to be more damaging to Frithsden in recent years than neglect. Extensions to properties inevitably damage historic fabric and can 'swamp' or unbalance their original integrity. Domestic buildings in the Conservation Area are also suffering from an incremental loss of architectural detailing. Some traditional materials and details are being eroded by the use of

inappropriate materials (plastic for windows, doors, fascias and rainwater goods; concrete and cement for blockwork, roofing materials, renders, re-pointing etc.). Simple exposed brickwork can be spoilt by painting or rendering. Buildings are sprouting aerials, satellite dishes, alarm boxes and boiler flues whilst curtilages are being eaten into by inappropriate hard landscaping. Accretions of such seemingly minor additions can seriously erode the character of the conservation area.



Residential conversion with prominent rooflights, aerial, external lighting etc.

Intrusive Traffic

The centre of Frithsden is subject to periodic parking congestion. This detracts from the environmental quality and attractiveness of the area. There is no easy remedy to this situation. More discrete off-road parking for users of the Alford Arms would be desirable if it could be achieved without detrimental harm to the natural environment.



Cars detract from the character of the Conservation Area

Inappropriate Landscaping

There is always the danger of 'suburban creep' into this rural setting – inappropriate driveway treatment, gated drives and security lighting. All compromise the open, 'soft' nature of this character area.



Hard surfacing, bins, cars and security lighting

1. Introduction

1.1 The Management Proposals

The designation and appraisal of any conservation area is not an end in itself. This Conservation Area is under pressure from infill, inappropriate extensions and alterations, and development on its fringes. It is important that the development control process ensures the preservation of its special character and that opportunities are taken to identify and implement enhancements.

As well as defining the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and what makes it special, it is important to develop proposals for the future management of the Conservation Area. The resulting Management Plan relates the designation and management of a Conservation Area to the principles of historic environment planning.

1.2 Mechanisms for Management

There are several mechanisms through which the Council can manage the future of the Conservation Area:

- Application of policy
- Policy and design guidance
- Development briefs
- Application of an Article 4 Direction
- Monitoring change
- Boundary changes
- Appraising the condition of significant buildings that contribute positively to the Conservation Area and developing a strategy for repair
- Enforcement proceedings
- Proposed enhancement schemes
- Proposals for economic development and regeneration (including grants)
- Designation of Heritage Assets

2. Application of policy

2.1 Introduction

Designation as a conservation area brings a number of specific statutory provisions aimed at assisting the 'preservation and enhancement' of the area. Dacorum Borough Council will apply such policies rigorously when considering development proposals affecting the Conservation Area.

Recent changes in national planning policy regarding the historic environment, in the form of Planning Policy Statement 5 (Planning For The Historic Environment), place renewed emphasis on conserving and sustaining the significance of heritage assets and their settings. This includes designated heritage assets (such as Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, etc) and non-designated heritage assets (including local interest buildings, unregistered parks & gardens or areas of archaeological interest). Non-designated heritage assets are identified at Appendices 2 and 3

At a local level, a historic environment policy will be included in the emerging Local Development Framework, which will replace the existing Dacorum Local Plan.

This Conservation Area Appraisal is an approved Council document and will, therefore, be a material consideration in any planning decision. It is anticipated that the Conservation Area Appraisal will help inform and strengthen decisions made in line with this policy framework, which will be one of the most direct and effective means of managing the Conservation Area in the long term. For example, the Appraisal helps define the plan form of the area, the typical scale, form, massing and materials of buildings, traditional detailing, important views, significant trees, etc. These elements should be considered when looking at any development proposal. The Appraisal also sets out key buildings and

features that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such, there should be a preference against demolition or loss of any building or feature identified as meeting these criteria. **The exclusion of any building or feature within the Appraisal does not necessarily indicate that it makes no positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.**

The Conservation Area Appraisal can also be used to inform decision-makers about other local or national conservation policy considerations, such as the statutory requirement for decision makers to have regard to the need to conserve and enhance the Natural Beauty of the landscape in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

By defining and identifying significant buildings and areas of open space, trees, etc, the Conservation Area Appraisal provides information that will inform planning decisions on the merits of development proposals.

2.2 Legal framework

The legal basis for Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. National policy guidance is provided by Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5): Planning for the Historic Environment. Further policy is contained within the Dacorum Local Plan.

2.3 The Local Development Framework

The existing Dacorum Local Plan is due to be replaced by a new Local Development Framework (LDF). This Conservation Area Appraisal will be used to support the conservation/heritage Development Management policy that will form part of the LDF Core Strategy. In the interim period the Conservation Area Appraisal will assist in the local interpretation and implementation of Planning Policy Statement 5.

2.4 Planning controls in Conservation Areas

In addition to the above, there are a number of planning controls that relate specifically to Conservation Areas:

- ***Extensions to dwelling houses***

Planning permission is required for any extension that would extend beyond a wall forming a side elevation of the original house, or if the extension would have more than one storey and extend beyond the rear wall of the original house;

- ***Cladding or rendering the exterior of a house***

No part of the exterior of a dwelling house can be clad in stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles without planning permission from the District Planning Authority;

- ***Alterations to the roof of a dwelling house***

Planning permission must be obtained for any enlargement of the house, which would consist of alterations to the roof (i.e. loft conversion). Any alterations that would protrude more than 150mm beyond the plane of the original roof, or would result in part of the roof being higher than the highest part of the original roof, will require planning permission;

- ***Erecting new outbuildings in the grounds of dwelling houses***

The provision within the curtilage (grounds) of any building or enclosure, swimming pool or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the house, or the maintenance, improvement or alterations of such buildings or enclosures, will require planning permission if the building, enclosure, pool or container would be situated on land between a wall forming a side elevation of the house and the boundary of the curtilage of the house;

- ***Installing, replacing or altering chimneys, flues and soil vents on dwelling houses***

The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue (including flues for biomass or combined heat and power systems) or soil vent pipe on the wall or roof slope which fronts a highway and forms either the principal elevation or side elevation of the house will require planning permission;

- **Microwave antennas**

The installation of an antenna on a chimney, wall or roof slope which faces onto, and is visible from a highway, or on any building which exceeds 15 metres in height, requires planning permission in Conservation Areas. Generally, planning permission is needed for all of the following: more than two antennas; a single antenna exceeding 100cm in length; two antennas which do not fit the relevant size criteria (only one may exceed 60cm for example); an antenna installed on a chimney, where the length of the antenna would exceed 60cm or would protrude above the chimney; an antenna with the cubic capacity in excess of 35 litres; an antenna installed on a roof without a chimney where the highest part of the antenna exceeds the highest part of the roof; or in the case of an antenna installed on a roof with a chimney, if the highest part of the antenna would be higher than the highest part of the chimney, or 60cm measured from the highest part of the ridge tiles of the roof, whichever is the lower.

- **Installing, replacing or altering solar photovoltaic or solar thermal equipment on a dwelling house**

If the solar photovoltaic or solar thermal equipment on the roof of a house or a building within the curtilage (grounds) of the house will protrude more than 200mm beyond the plane of the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof, or would be higher than the highest part of the roof excluding the chimney, planning permission will be required. Permission will also be required if it is to be installed on the wall forming the principal elevation of the house and is visible from the highway.

- **Installing, replacing or altering stand alone solar within the curtilage (grounds) of a dwelling house**

Planning permission will be required for any stand alone solar within the grounds of a dwelling house if it is visible from the highway or if more than one is installed; permission will also be required if the solar will: be higher than 4 metres above the ground; be situated within 5 metres of the boundary of the curtilage; be within the curtilage of a listed building; or have a surface area exceeding 9 square metres or any other dimension including housing exceeding 3 square metres.

- **Installing, altering or replacing a ground or water source heat pump within the curtilage (grounds) of a dwelling house**

Installing, altering or replacing a ground or water source heat pump within the curtilage (grounds) of a dwelling house is permitted development and planning permission is therefore not normally required.

- **Display of advertisements**

Advertisements are regulated by controls set out in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. The display of advertisements in Conservation Areas is subject to additional restrictions. Illumination, for example, generally requires advertisement consent. Tethered balloons, illuminated signs in retail parks and business premises, flags displayed by house builders and advert hoardings around building sites also require advertisement consent. Further guidance on advertisements in Conservation Areas can be found in Policy 113 of the Dacorum Local Plan.

- **Demolition** A listed building will always require Listed Building Consent for demolition. However, the total or substantial demolition of unlisted buildings within the Conservation Area that are over 115 cubic metres requires Conservation Area Consent. The demolition of any wall over 1 metre high facing a highway, waterway or open space, or any wall over 2 metres high elsewhere, will also require Conservation Area Consent.

- **Works to trees** In most cases, six weeks notice must be given to the District Planning Authority for any cutting down, topping, lopping or up rooting of trees greater than 100mm diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground in a Conservation Area. There are however exceptions to this: Where a tree is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), for example, a formal application seeking approval to carry out works to trees protected by a TPO must be made to the District Planning Authority. Alternatively, where works to trees have been approved by planning permission in conjunction with development proposals, additional applications are not required.

2.5 Special planning controls

Planning authorities have the power to introduce stricter planning controls in Conservation Areas

by means of an Article 4 Direction. An Article 4 Direction further removes permitted development rights where it is considered that such rights would have a damaging effect on the character of an area. They can ensure that traditional details such as sash windows, timber doors, chimneys, etc are not removed or altered without planning permission. Currently, there is no Article 4 Direction in place within the Frithsden Conservation Area, although this situation may change in the future (see 5 below).

2.6 Other statutory designations

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are recognised in statute as being of special architectural or historic interest. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it is a criminal offence to demolish or alter the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building without approval from the District Planning Authority. There are three types of listed building: grade I and II* (considered to be the most special listed buildings); and grade II buildings.

The listing covers both the inside and outside of the building, and any structure or building within its curtilage which was built before 1947. 'Listed Building Consent' is required from the Council for any work which affects the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building. There are presently 5 listed buildings within the Conservation Area.

Extensions and alterations to listed buildings should conform with Policy 119 of the Local Plan and should generally:

- Take into account the prevailing forms of development
- Complement the form and character of the original building
- Be subordinate in bulk and scale to the principal building
- Use high quality materials and detailing
- Pay particular attention to roof lines, roof shape, eaves detail, verge details and chimneys

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Certain important archaeological sites and monuments enjoy special protection under the Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. There is one Scheduled Ancient Monument in Frithsden

Tree Preservation Orders

There are a number of TPOs within the Bovingdon Conservation Area. A tree preservation order (referred to as a TPO) is an order made by a local planning authority in respect of trees or woodlands, the principal effect of which is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping or damaging of those trees without District Planning Authority approval.

It is worth noting that regardless of whether a tree is covered by a TPO or not, it is likely to be protected if it lies within the Conservation Area boundary. Advice should always be sought from the District Planning Authority on any proposed works.

Disclaimer

This advice is intended to be a general guide and does not purport to be a definitive guide to the legislation covering Conservation Areas. For specific proposals you should seek advice from the District Planning Authority.

2.7 The consent process

Where permission is required for development within the Conservation Area, details will need to be submitted to the Council for consideration. For most works in a Conservation Area you may only require planning permission. Where demolition is involved, however, you may also require Conservation Area Consent.

If your building is listed, works to it including extensions and installation of a satellite dish, will require a separate Listed Building Consent.

If you have any doubts as to whether or not your building is listed or in a Conservation Area, or would like to know whether specific works require planning permission or other consents, then please seek advice from the planning

authority. Contact details are given at the back of this document.

2.8 New development in Conservation Areas and the importance of design

The purpose of Conservation Area designation is not to arrest development but to guide it so that the special character of an area is not adversely affected. New developments should be sympathetic in their design and use appropriate materials. They should complement established patterns and strengthen local distinctiveness, but not necessarily imitate existing buildings. Before applying for planning permission it is advisable to contact the Council's Development Control and Conservation Teams to discuss your proposals. The value of employing a suitably qualified architect/designer with a track record of conservation projects to draw up your proposals cannot be stressed highly enough.

There are a number of features that contribute to Frithsden's identity and character and which should be preserved through a programme of regular maintenance. These elements should be retained and used to influence further development or alterations to existing properties within the conservation area.

Frithsden's layout has evolved over time and the 'unplanned' nature of the buildings and ancillary structures contribute to its unique character. If any infill development is contemplated the relatively 'unplanned' character of the village must be observed and any development should respond positively to this organic layout/form

Whilst some improvement or enlargement of existing buildings may be possible, subject to very rigorous controls, there are clearly very few opportunities for large-scale redevelopment within the Conservation Area.

Non-residential uses of land and buildings should be protected, and residential development or conversion avoided. The need to protect the rural, soft edges of the Conservation Area means any new development at the

boundaries should be resisted. Should any opportunities arise, buildings should remain two-storey, should face the road, should respect the massing and scale of the neighbouring buildings, and employ a palette of materials sympathetic to and consistent with the prevailing character and appearance of that part of the Conservation Area. Only good quality schemes that respond positively to their historic setting and incorporate exceptionally high standards of quality and design will be considered acceptable.

Views

The setting of the conservation area is very important and development which impacts in a detrimental way upon the immediate setting and longer views into and from the conservation area will be resisted.

Boundary Treatments and Tree Planting

A defining feature of the Frithsden Conservation Area is the subtle and restrained use of traditional materials for boundary treatments, complementing those areas where defined boundaries are noticeably absent.

Encouragement will be given to the use of semi-natural species in respect of hedging to maintain local character. It is important that materials and detailing found in the locality are used to help fit new development into its context. The Council will resist proposals to remove traditional boundary walls or which fail to respect the form and materials of traditional boundary treatments in the area.

The use of inappropriate tree planting and hedge management can have a suburbanising effect in rural Conservation Areas, particularly with reference to the proliferation of cupressus leylandii and other non-native species, and the use of tall hedges to provide screening. In contrast, the planting of fruit trees where opportunities arise to reflect the area's particular orchard heritage, now lost, will be encouraged.

The Public Realm and Enhancement

The appraisal has identified the absence of pavements and traffic calming measures as a positive characteristic of the village. Streetlighting

would be an inappropriate intrusion into this rural settlement. Inappropriate signage can serve to detract from the quality of the public realm and character of the area and redundant modern features should be removed. The inappropriate quality of the kerbing around the Green has been identified as a negative characteristic.

The appraisal has identified that the Conservation Area retains a strong historic road pattern, and there is strong presumption in favour of preserving the roads, lanes, trackways and paths of Frithsden, together with the vegetation and boundary materials that form their borders. The Council will seek to work with Hertfordshire County Council, landowners and partners to ensure that the historic road pattern is fully protected.

The appraisal identified the Green as being an important green lung within the heart of the Conservation Area boundary. The Council will endeavour to ensure, again in conjunction with the appropriate partners, that the Village Green is appropriately managed and protected from development.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

In addition to the listed buildings, there are many individual and groups of buildings and associated features which are of considerable local interest. These are included on a Local List and the Council will seek to retain these buildings and ensure that new development does not harm the character, appearance or setting of the building. There is a presumption that all such buildings will be retained. Policies 110-121 (inclusive) of DBC Local Plan provides the criteria against which all such proposals for alterations will be assessed. There are presently six locally listed buildings (a terrace or group is counted as one) within the conservation area. The Council will seek to ensure that all Locally Listed Buildings (as identified on the Conservation Area Map) are protected from inappropriate forms of development or unjustified demolition.

3. Policy and design guidance

The Council has produced relevant guidance documents on development in Conservation Areas, including Development in Conservation Areas or affecting Listed Buildings - Environmental Guidelines SPG Section 7. Further advice is contained on the Council's website: www.dacorum.gov.uk.

These guidance sources are relevant to anyone thinking of undertaking development within Conservation Areas. It is hoped that this advice will help stakeholders of the historic environment make informed decisions and, therefore, contribute positively to the management of Conservation Areas. In addition to policy guidance, local generic guidance will be produced from time to time with specific advice on topics relevant to Conservation Areas e.g. window replacement.

4. Development briefs

The Management Plan can be used to identify any sites that would benefit from a development brief. A development brief is an outline of what might be expected or acceptable in principle on an identified development site prior to a formal development proposal. For example, this might be a gap site, or a site under pressure for demolition and re-development, or perhaps areas that have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area where redevelopment might readily be accommodated. The definition and characterisation of the Conservation Area can be expanded to form a detailed design brief in order to help promote an appropriate form of development on the site. At the time of writing this Appraisal, there are no such sites identified by the Council within the Conservation Area boundary.

Where development is proposed on garden sites or infill plots, and the Council considers the principle of development in this location acceptable, the Council may take the opportunity

to produce development briefs to inform developers or applicants as to what may be appropriate in terms of design and layout for the site.

5. Application of an Article 4 Direction

5.1 Common to many historic environments is the cumulative effect of piecemeal, but significant, alterations to the architectural features of properties that contribute positively to a Conservation Area. Many of these alterations do not require planning permission and are regarded as permitted development. A good example of this is when traditional timber windows are replaced with PVC- u in a different style and profile. Alterations like this can be very harmful to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. It is possible to bring such alterations under planning control with the implementation of an Article 4 Direction, which would require an application for planning permission for alterations that otherwise fall outside normal planning control.

5.2 An Article 4 Direction can provide a positive framework for helping manage the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. The implementation of an Article 4 Direction requires a strong justification for proposing the Direction as well as appropriate stakeholder support. There are significant resource implications in the implementation of an Article 4 Direction, particularly for the planning authority, which has to effectively manage additional planning applications and enforce the Article 4 Direction. The Council will consider this option further by carrying out a full Article 4 Direction survey in line with government guidance. The Council will consult affected residents and property owners after this survey has been carried out.

6. Monitoring change

Monitoring change, both positive and negative, is very important for the long- term management of a Conservation Area. For example, it can help

highlight problems that can be best tackled through an Article 4 Direction (see above) or show how effective policies have been. Monitoring change can assist in identifying where more resources are required and in modifying priorities or policies.

A Conservation Area is thoroughly surveyed and described when first designated or when modified. Local planning authorities should seek to review Conservation Areas from time to time and update Appraisals. The Council will develop a schedule of Conservation Area reviews in due course.

The following actions are recommended to ensure that this appraisal and management proposals are accepted and acted upon by the local community:

Public Consultation

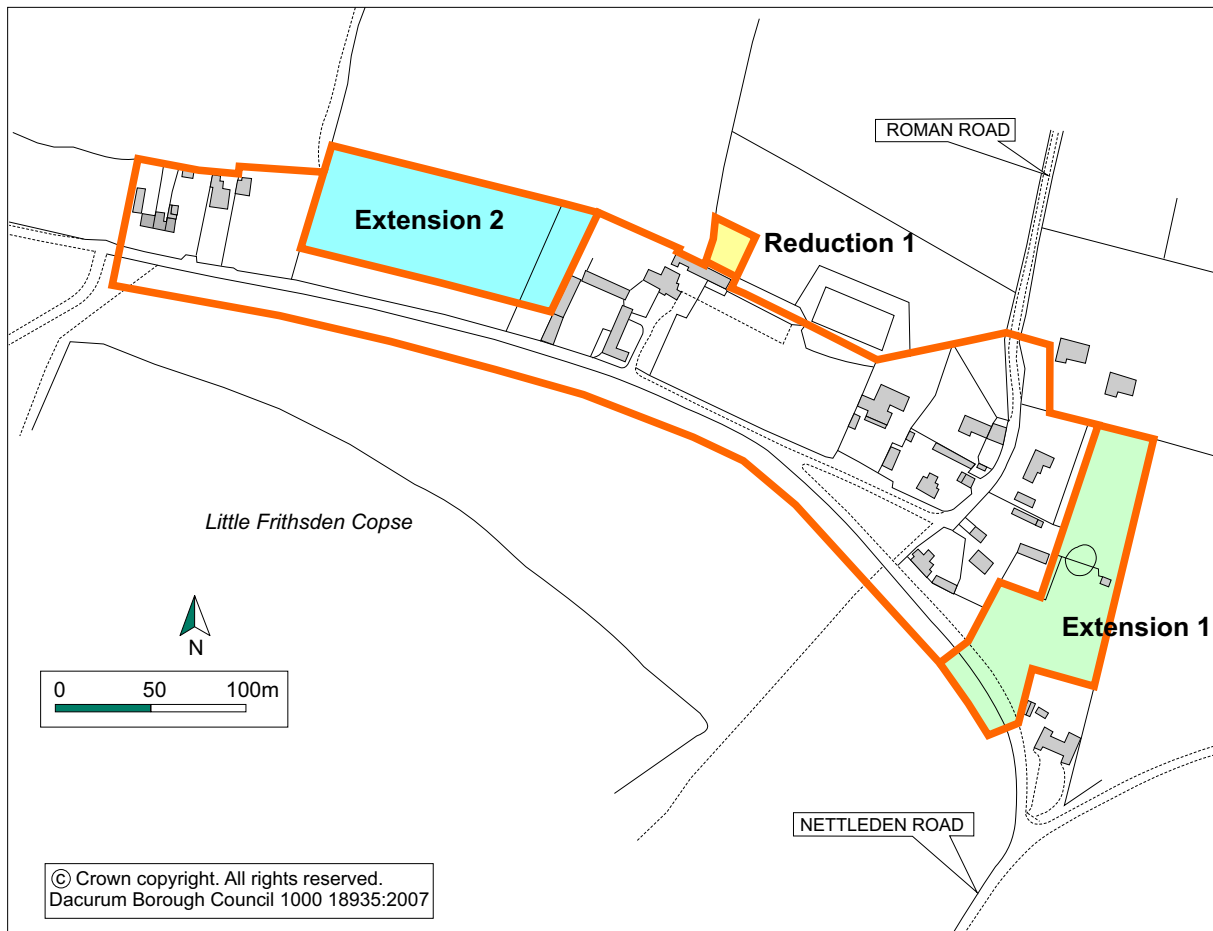
The appraisal and management plan has been subject to a period of four-week public consultation commencing on 1st February 2011. This included placing the document on the Council's website and in local libraries and consultation with local amenity and residents' groups. The document has subsequently been amended to incorporate relevant comments and suggestions.

Document Review

This document should be reviewed every five years in the light of the Local Development Framework and emerging government policy. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area and boundaries;
- An updated 'Heritage Count';
- An assessment of whether the management proposals in this document have been acted upon, including proposed enhancements;
- A Buildings at Risk survey;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and proposed actions and amendments
- Public consultation on the review findings, any proposed changes and input into the final review.

Map 8: Proposed changes to Conservation Area



7. Boundary changes

An important aspect of Appraisals will be considering where the boundary of the Conservation Area should be drawn. Thought should be given to the appropriateness of the boundary. Conservation Area boundary reconfiguration might include reduction or extension to an area. Specific justification should be given for proposed changes. For example, an extension to the boundary might be proposed to incorporate the wider setting of a Conservation Area.

The appraisal has examined the conservation area boundaries and is proposing that the three changes shown on the Map below should be considered:

Extension 1: The eastern boundary should follow the visually strong tree-lined boundary immediately to the east of the existing eastern Conservation Area boundaries

Reason: This extension was proposed (but not formally implemented) when the Conservation area boundaries were reviewed by the county council in 1978. The justification for designation is to align the eastern boundary with a strongly demarcated historic boundary and includes an old pond.

Extension 2: Include the full area of the meadow between Holy Bush Farm and Bede Cottage, an area of natural landscaping linking the two building groups. The current northern boundary running between Hollybush Farm and Bede Cottage follows no physical or legal boundary. By moving that part of the boundary further north it would run along the field, which is also physically demarcated.

Reason: This extension was proposed (but not formally implemented) when the Conservation area boundaries were reviewed by the county council in 1978. The justification for designation is to align the boundary with the strong physical meadow boundary.

Reduction 1: The small boundary diversion to the north of Holly Bush Farm should be omitted. **Reason:** This reduction was proposed (but not formally implemented) when the Conservation area boundaries were reviewed by the county council in 1978. The omission ensures the re-alignment of this part of the boundary with the strong physical boundary.

These boundary changes are indicated on the map and have been adopted as a result of the appraisal process.

8. Appraising the condition of heritage assets

A survey is carried out from time to time at both a national and local level to assess the condition of heritage assets. This survey includes the identification of buildings that have fallen into disuse, dereliction or disrepair, commonly referred to as 'Buildings at Risk'.

This survey can provide a useful means of monitoring many significant historic buildings within Conservation Areas. The national Heritage at Risk Register covers grade I and II* buildings at risk and is available through www.english-heritage.org.uk.

A Building at Risk can be addressed through the grant aiding of target buildings, or through the use of legislation such as Repairs Notices or Urgent Works Notices, to bring about works to a building to either repair it or make it secure or weather tight. This is of particular relevance where a building is important for maintaining the character and appearance of the area. The Council may carry out such works as are necessary and recover the costs incurred from the owners.

Generally, the buildings in Frithsden are well maintained and there were no obvious "Building at Risk" at the time of survey (July 2009). The Council will monitor the condition of statutory listed buildings in the conservation area and, where a listed building is threatened by a lack of maintenance or repair, the Council will use the available statutory powers to force the owner to

take action. The Council will monitor the condition of other unlisted buildings as resources permit.

9. Enforcement proceedings

Unauthorised works and breaches of planning control can cumulatively harm the quality of both the built environment and surrounding spaces within a Conservation Area. An obvious example of this sort of damage could be unauthorised works to a listed building. A listed building is a building of special architectural or historic interest and is enshrined in law under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Listed Building Consent is required for any works of alteration to a listed building and it is a criminal offence to carry out unauthorised works. The removal of traditional timber windows and doors, for example, and their replacement with PVC-u or poor modern imitations, can be detrimental to the building's intrinsic special interest.

It is not only alterations to listed buildings that can damage the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The unauthorised demolition of buildings, or detrimental alterations to unlisted buildings, can all erode the special character of a Conservation Area. The use of non-approved materials, for example, can be particularly harmful (e.g. modern cement rendering, inappropriate 'ribbon' pointing style, plastic rainwater goods, etc).

It is important, therefore, that the Council investigates breaches of planning law within Conservation Areas, as this can help preserve the quality of the historic environment. The survey process utilised in the production of an Appraisal may highlight planning breaches and unlawful alterations to listed buildings. In response to this survey, the Council will take appropriate action with owners on an individual basis. Anyone can report a suspected planning breach by contacting the Council's Enforcement Team. The District Council regularly follows up reports of unauthorised work and may take enforcement action.

Where work has been carried out without planning permission and it is considered that such works are harmful to the character of the Conservation Area then an enforcement notice may be served requiring remedial measures to be taken.

10. Proposed enhancement schemes

The Council will explore, where necessary, landscape enhancements with the local community to improve this area. Frithsden Conservation Area could be greatly enhanced by

- amelioration of parking and traffic problems
- parking should be restricted to one side of the road
- surfacing – remove kerbing

This is a situation that will be monitored and, should the opportunity arise, then reference will be made to the Appraisal in developing priorities and an appropriate enhancement strategy. All works should accord with the spirit of English Heritage's guidance.

The Council would also support the conservation of original features on historic buildings, and where appropriate the re-installation of tradition materials/features (such as timber windows, clay tiles or lime-based pointing), particularly where modern materials/features (such as UPVC windows, concrete tiles or cement pointing) have a detrimental impact on the character of the building, nearby listed buildings and the surrounding Conservation Area.

The removal of highway clutter and replacement of standard highway signage with non-standard/village-specific signs would be supported by the Council

11. Proposals for economic development and regeneration (including grants)

Information on grant schemes is available on the relevant part of the Council's website. Should there be a grant scheme proposed that is specific to the Frithsden Conservation Area, details of this will also be advertised on the website and relevant local stakeholders will be notified.

12. Designation of Heritage Assets

Dacorum Borough Council will actively keep under review whether there should be additions to the entries in Appendices 1-3 of the listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and non-designated assets such as unlisted buildings or structures and unscheduled archaeological remains within the Conservation Area.

When assessing the contribution made by heritage assets, consideration will be given to the impact on the special architectural or historic significance of a Conservation Area made by the heritage asset. For example, if a building is the work of a particular noteworthy local architect, it may carry historic significance. Other reasons to consider the significance of unlisted buildings might include:

- Qualities of age, style, materials or other characteristics that reflect those of a substantial number of the buildings in the Conservation Area;
- Age, materials or other historic characteristics that relate strongly to adjacent listed buildings;
- Group value of buildings;
- Relationship to historic roads and layouts;
- Landmark qualities or contribution to recognised spaces and amenity;
- Usage where this reflects the historic nature of an area;
- Association with past events or people;
- Artistic significance.

The overarching question is whether or not the building in question contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and whether the loss or substantial alteration of it would be harmful to the intrinsic special interest of the Conservation Area.

Any building or structure meeting any of these key criteria should be considered as a heritage asset.

Disclaimer:

The appendices are by no means exhaustive. The absence of any building or structure from the appendices does not necessarily mean that it is of no interest or that it makes no positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Further Reading and Sources of Information

Further Reading:

Hastie, S. A Hertfordshire Valley (1996)
Moir, J., 'Past premise; future promise: an integrated buildings strategy for the Chilterns' in Solik, M. (ed.) New Perspectives on Chiltern Landscapes. Papers presented at the Chilterns Historic Environment Conference 2003. (2003)
Moir J, 'Flint: Technical Note, Chiltern Building Design Guide, Chiltern Conservation Board (2003)
Moir J, 'Brick: Technical Note, Chiltern Building Design Guide, Chiltern Conservation Board (2005)
Moir J., Roofing Materials Technical Note, Chiltern Buildings Design Guide, Chiltern Conservation Board (2007)
Chilterns Buildings Design Guide (2010).
The National Trust Archaeological Survey of the Ashridge Estate, Berkhamsted Common, Frithsden Copse, Hill Farm, Little Heath, Water End' Vol. IX, August 2010.
'The National Trust Archaeological Survey of the Ashridge Estate, The Park (including Park Farm and Frithsden Lands)', Vol. VIII August 2009

For Further Information regarding all Planning and Conservation Matters:

Dacorum Borough Council
Civic Centre
The Marlowes
Hemel Hempstead HP1 1HH
Tel: 01442 228000
www.dacorum.gov.uk

For Further Information relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas:

English Heritage
1, Waterhouse Square,
138-142 Holborn,
London EC1N 2ST
General enquiries: 020 7973 3000
www.english-heritage.org.uk

For Technical Guidance:

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
37 Spital Square
London E1 6DY
Tel: 020 7377 1644
www.s_Hlt182735644p_Hlt182735644ab.org.uk

The Georgian Group
6 Fitzroy Square
London W1T 5DX
Tel: 087 1750 2936
www.georgiangroup.org.uk

The Victorian Society
1 Priory Gardens
Bedford Park
London W4 1TT
Tel: 020 8994 1019
www.victorian-society._Hlt216068075o_Hlt216068075rg.uk

The Twentieth Century Society
70 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EJ
Tel: 020 7250 3857
www.c20society.org.uk

Appendix 1 : Listed Buildings in Frithsden Conservation Area

all buildings below in Appendix 1 are listed Grade II unless otherwise stated

Hollybush Farm. Medieval and later.

Little Manor. Dates 1513 and 1879 on pargetted front.

13, Clayton Cottage. Late C16th, Timber-frame.

14/15, Shepherd's Cottage. (formerly Wheelgates)
C16th, Timber-frame.

**Bede Houses (w. side now Little Copse, e. side
now Clampitts House).** Two cottages, refaced t/f.

Appendix 2: Locally Listed Buildings in Frithsden Conservation Area

The Alford Arms and attached outbuilding. Late C19 purpose-built as inn.

Farm Buildings to S.W. of Hollybush Farm. Three groups enclosing the farmyard, tall yellow stock brick granary with single storey wings to w., single storey cattle pens to north side, converted t/f barn to e. side.

Frithsden Cottage. C19th villa with glazed veranda.

'Cobwebs' and Adjoining Cottages in Terrace.
C18th terrace. Square leaded lights to first floor windows.

Bede Cottage. Former C19th school. Flint.

Bethsheda Chapel. 1835. Now in grounds of Little Manor

Appendix 3: Historic Environment Record: Herts County Council

There are records relating to the following (as at May 2010)

ID

15894 Clayton Cottage

15322 Holly Bush Farm

15164 Timber Farm Buildings at Holly Bush Farm

6296 Pigeon Loft (pt of farm buildings at Holly Bush Farm)

(See www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

Appendix 4: Frithsden Conservation Area - updated boundary 2011

Map 9: Revised Conservation Area boundary

