

# Nettleden Conservation Area



## Character Appraisal & Management Proposals



---

## **Acknowledgements**

This document was produced by the Conservation & Design Team, Dacorum Borough Council. Dr James Moir researched and wrote the document and took the photographs. Emma Adams, SallyAnn Hirst and Laurie Humphries all provided useful guidance and advice.

Produced by Dacorum Borough Council

Nettleden Conservation Area  
Character Appraisal & Management Proposals

© Published 2010

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without the prior permission of Dacorum Borough Council

---

Cover photographs: (Main picture) – *the view from the Churchyard towards Pipers Cottage and No. 7*  
Images left to right: *Church House, the Church, Forge Farm and 7/8 Nettleden*

# Contents

## Part 1 Conservation Area Character Appraisal

	Page No.
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Location and Setting</b>	<b>4</b>
● Location	4
● Boundaries	4
● Topography and Landscape Setting	4
● Geology	5
● Archaeology	5
<b>3 The Historical Development of Nettleden</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4 Surviving Historical Features within the Conservation Area</b>	<b>8</b>
● Summary of historical features	8
● Street pattern and building plots	8
<b>5 The Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area</b>	<b>10</b>
● Analysis	10
● Summary of townscape features	12
● Current activities and uses	12
● Focal points, views and vistas	13
● Open spaces, landscape and trees	13
● Public Realm: Floorscape, street lighting and street furniture	14
<b>6 The Buildings of the Conservation Area</b>	<b>15</b>
● Architectural styles and detailing	17
● Boundaries	18
● Listed buildings	19
● Locally listed buildings	19
<b>7 Negative Features and Issues</b>	<b>20</b>

# Contents

## Part 2 Conservation and Management Proposals

	Page No.
1 Introduction	22
2 Monitoring and Review	33
Further Reading and Sources of Information	34

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Listed Buildings in Nettleden Conservation Area	35
Appendix 2: Locally Listed Buildings in Nettleden Conservation Area	35
Appendix 3: Historic Environment Record: Herts County Council	35
Appendix 4: Nettleden Conservation Area - updated boundary 2011	36

## Maps

Map 1: Nettleden Conservation Area	1
Map 2: 1878-1892	7
Map 3: 1889-1901	8
Map 4: 1924-1926	8
Map 5: 1962-1979	9
Map 6: Nettleden Conservation Area: Character Analysis	11
Map 7: Proposed extensions to Conservation Area	29
Map 8: Revised Conservation Area boundary (Appendix 4)	36

# Part 1 Conservation Area Character Appraisal

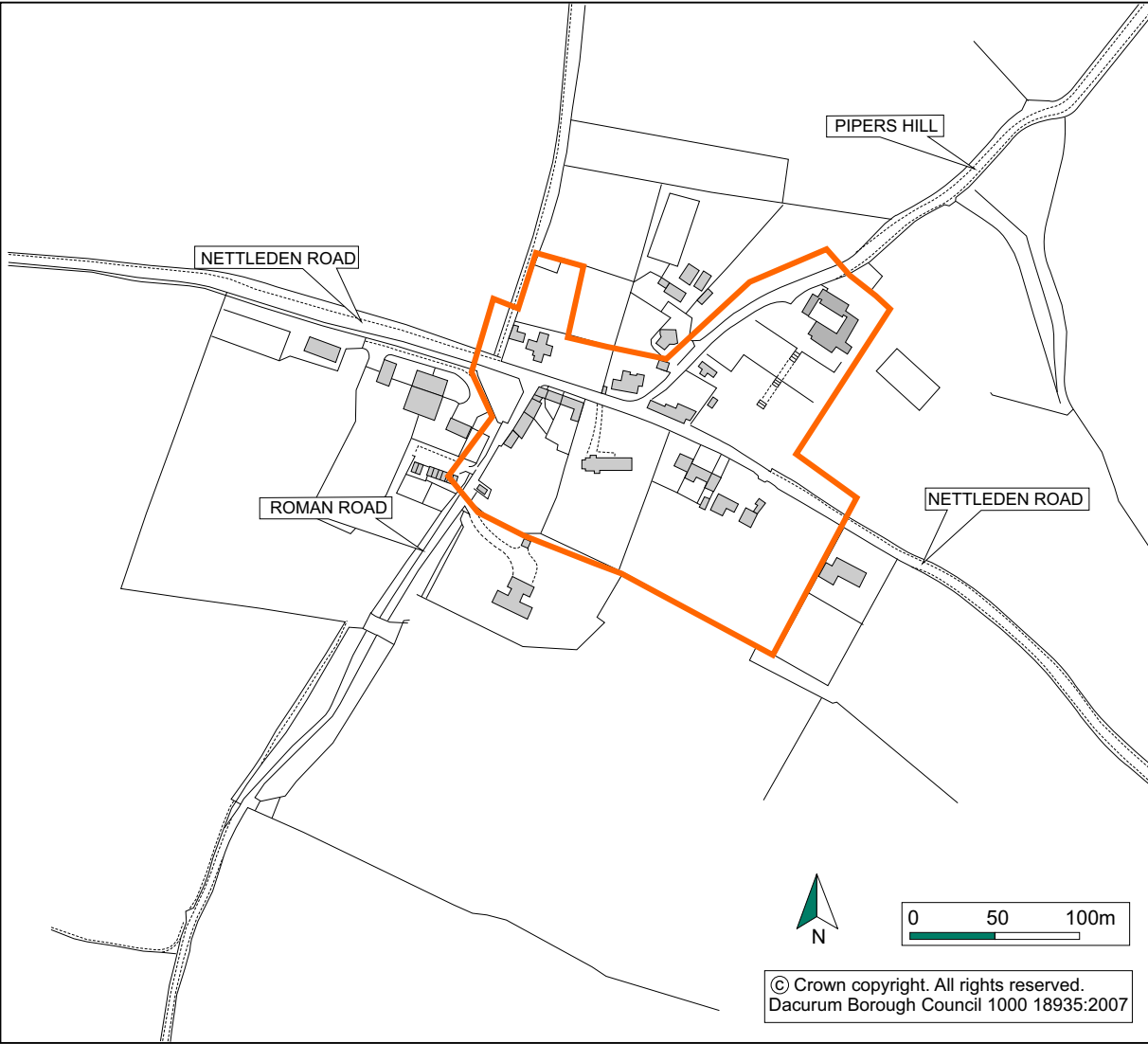
## 1 Introduction

Nettleden Conservation Area comprises the whole of the built settlement of Nettleden. It is a small, compact and nucleated hamlet which sits unobtrusively within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Beauty, occupying the central dry valley in a series of parallel ridges and dry valleys. Although the village is surrounded by open fields, the undulating topography, slightly sinuous street pattern and presence of trees and hedges contributes to the sense of concealment and discovery.

The Church of St Lawrence forms a solid anchor at the very centre of the village. The Nettleden Road bisecting the Conservation Area passes to

the north of the churchyard. Roman Road bleeds off at an angle into a trackway to the west and Piper Hill heads off at a corresponding angle opposite the Church. Nettleden House, the former Parsonage, dominates to the north, with glimpses of the terracing down the hillside to its front. However, most of the settlement sits close to each side of the Nettleden Road in the valley bottom, although the cottages return around the corner of Roman Road and some piecemeal later development nestles at the bottom of Pipers Lane. In addition, the two farms – Nettleden Farm and Roman Farm – flank Roman Road and are accessed from it.

Map 1: Nettleden Conservation Area



Apart from the Church, there are no other community buildings in the hamlet. Although limited in number, there is surprising variety in the age, form, construction and materials found in the buildings within the Conservation Area. It is their vernacular scale that ensures the Conservation Area retains an individual sense of place and a village character. The withdrawal of agricultural enterprises to the surrounding rural farms in the C20th left the few farm buildings in the village ripe for conversion – there are few ancillary buildings left in the settlement.

By the mid C19th, when it was at its greatest extent, the Ashridge Park designed landscape had pushed south-eastwards right up to the boundary of the Conservation Area. Estate influences in the village itself are today less

evident here than in neighbouring Frithsden, but the deeply-cut 'Roman Road', which connects the two settlements is perhaps the most striking surviving estate feature.

The Conservation Area displays all the signs of being well cared for and maintained. Yet it is also subject to pressures; new development has been strongly resisted in Nettleden but what little has occurred it has not always complemented the 'character' of the Conservation Area. Road calming measures are no doubt necessary to slow the pace of heavy traffic through the hamlet, but inevitably create some street 'clutter'. Equally, the rural unfussiness of the surrounding landscape is threatened by the paraphernalia associated with riding establishments.



**The Nettleden 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 Nettleden'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 (PPS 5). 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]



*Entrance to Church*

## 2 Location and Setting

### Location

The rural settlement of Nettleden is situated in the Borough of Dacorum Borough less than 4 miles north-west of Hemel Hempstead. The principal road through the village links Water End in the Gade valley to Little Gaddesden, two miles to the north-west. The spur off to Great Gaddesden, less than a mile away up Piper's Hill to the north is mirrored by the 'Roman Road to Frithsden, also less than a mile, to the south. The apparent isolation of Nettleden is created by the surrounding topography rather than any real detachment from neighbouring settlements.

### Boundaries

The conservation area assumes a relatively rectangular form, encompassing the core of the valley-bottom settlement, comprising the buildings facing onto the main street, west as far as Pipers Forge and east as far as Nettleden Grange. The southern boundary follows a straight, ancient tree-lined boundary running parallel with the principal road. The northern boundary projects deeper up the valley side to take in the house and grounds of the former Parsonage.

This appraisal has identified three potential areas where the boundary of the Conservation Area might be extended subject to consultation (*see below*).



*Views looking north and south, the village almost hidden from view in the valley*

### Topography and Landscape Setting

Nettleden 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 & 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 Nettleden 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 band relic parkland becomes dominant. Transport routes follow the lie of the land and Nettleden is no exception.



Nettleden 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; Nettleden itself is notable for the density of tree cover within and around the boundaries of the Conservation Area.

## Geology

The bedrock geology is Upper Chalk with a superficial geology of acidic clay-with-flint 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 loamy 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 hint at activity in the area from Palaeolithic times. Nettleden is an Area of Archaeological Significance (32). Developers should refer to Policy 118 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011.



*View up the Nettleden Valley*

### 3 The Historical Development of Nettleden

The village's name echoes its location and simply means "valley of nettles". As in neighbouring Frithsden, it is likely that in the early medieval period, the valley only gradually emerged as a settlement during the medieval period. Evidence of activity in the valley certainly dates back to the C12th, when a pottery kiln was operating some 400 yards to the west of the Church.

This is only first referred to in 1285, when it was part of the endowment of Ashridge Monastery. There was no separate manor for Nettleden, the manors of Ivinghoe, Pitstone, and Missenden simply extended into it. In 1309 a grant of free warren in Nettleden was made to the rector and brethren of Ashridge.

The Church was rebuilt in 1470, when a license was granted to John Hunden, Bishop of Llandaff (and Prior of the Friar Preachers at Kings Langley), to consecrate altars in the church. The settlement appears to have developed around one or two farmsteads, and Church House, as its name implies, probably housed the incumbent. The Church also contains a fine brass memorial to George Cotton, who served

as Vice Chamberlain to Edward VI. On the south wall there is an attractive monument to Edmund Bressy and his family, dated 1612, but it is unclear whether these were families resident in the hamlet itself.

In 1811, at the expense of the Earl of Bridgewater, the chancel and the north wall of the nave were rebuilt, possibly by James Wyatt. This was when even closer links to Ashridge were being formed, and it was about this time that the Bridgewaters decided to sink the original straight medieval route (also locally called the 'Roman Road' or 'Spooky Lane') into a deep cutting with revetted flint retaining walls, running a driveway across, complete with a Tudor style brick and flint bridge, now in poor condition. Constructed at a time of high unemployment, the re-modelling of the new driveway to Ashridge, that now swept to the south of the hamlet, avoided (it was said) the need for the Earl to approach his estate through Nettleden, 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 Nettleden and Frithsden).



*View up the Golden Valley, one of the scenic driveways to the Ashridge Estate*

Use of this new section of driveway has now ceased and traces of it are hard to find, but it is a reminder that the influence of the Estate stretched beyond the confines of the Park itself. The whole landscape around Nettleden was affected by the need to protect views and uninterrupted access to the Estate – hence when approaching the Estate on the Nettleden drive, one turned off the Hemel Hempstead Road at Water End, travelled along the Ladies Mile with borrowed views of Gaddesden Place (Wyatt's first house), crossed the Nettleden Road to enter the outer park and Nettleden Drive and then bypassed the village to the south to cross the Roman Road, sweeping on up through the Golden Valley parkland to the west of the village.

By the beginning of the C19th, the Ashridge estate had acquired most of the holdings in the Nettleden valley and the farmers were all tenants. Forges operated at both ends of the village (at Pipers Forge and Forge Farm.). That at the east end was run by the Gash family for over two hundred years. This forge served the Ashridge estate and in its heyday employed eight men. On many of Ashridge's ironwork gates one can still see the initials "B.W.G". "B" stood for Lord Brownlow and the "W.G" for William Gash, the Nettleden blacksmith.

The parsonage house at Nettleden, the only other substantial building in the Conservation Area, was built in 1856, and, being designed by Lady Marian Alford, again was a product of the Ashridge Estate. It was built for the Rev. George

Spencer Caitley, who served the Church of St. Lawrence from 1857 to 1880. He was a published poet and noted scholar of emblematic art. His wife Mary spent ten years designing and painting new stained glass windows for the whole church. Up until 1895, Nettleden was originally a chapelry in the parish of Pylesthorpe or Pitstone in Buckinghamshire, but was formed into a parish in that year from parts of the parishes of Ivinghoe and Pitstone. At the same time it was transferred from the county of Buckinghamshire to that of Hertfordshire, when it was united with the new parish of Potten End. The new vicarage provided at Potten End released the Nettleden parsonage for secular use. It was inhabited at the turn of the C20th by Mrs. Charlton Lane, a cousin of Lady Brownlow.

Unlike Frithsden, where a public house and school were added but the number of dwellings diminished in the C19th due to estate policy, in Nettleden it appears that the overall form of the settlement has changed little since the medieval period. There has been some expansion in the C20th at the margins, with Rowan and Nettleden Farms both being added at the west end of the village, and Nettleden Grange at the east end. Inevitably the population in the C20th changed to reflect the emerging 'commuter' status of the village; this has left its mark in terms of farm building conversions and a certain gentrification of former labourer's cottages; however, few new buildings have been added, and these mostly lay just outside the boundary of the Conservation Area.



*Nettleden Grange extended the original boundary of the historic settlement eastwards in the C20th – there is still an abrupt boundary with the neighbouring rural landscape*

## 4 Surviving Historical Features within the Conservation Area

### Summary of Historical Features

- Church of St Lawrence
- Church House
- Timber-framed Buildings (e.g. Pipers Forge, and cottages flanking bottom of Piper's Hill)
- Small cottages in terraced form
- Strong, ancient settlement boundaries
- Ashridge Estate influences e.g. the 'Roman Road'. Nettleden House

### Street Pattern and Building Plots

The slightly curving principal road runs along the valley bottom. Pipers Hill heading north and the 'Roman Road' striking south up the valley slopes form almost an oblique cross-roads at the western end of the Conservation Area. The density of settlement increases around these nodal points. Settlement edges are abrupt and the transition from enclosed, treed plots to open countryside is particularly striking.

All buildings within the Conservation Area face onto the principal road, apart from the terrace on the east side at the bottom of the 'Roman Road'.



*View looking east along main street*

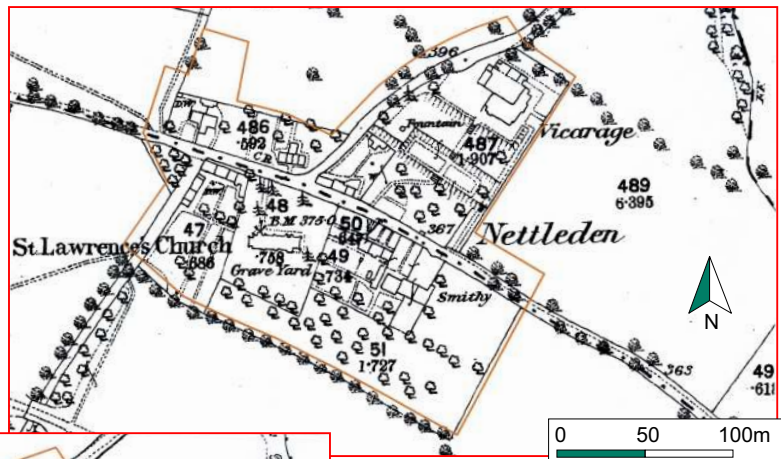


*The Church of St Lawrence*

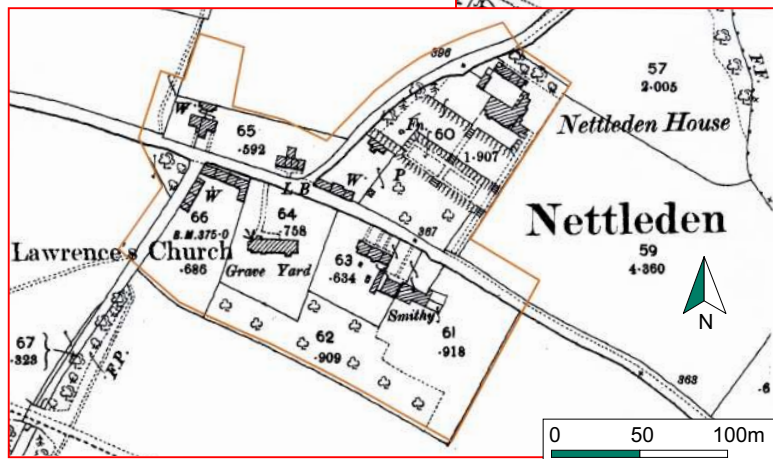
Except for these and the tight cluster at the bottom of Piper's Hill, most houses are set back from the road. The former Vicarage is most noticeably recessed up the hill, to impose a sense of grandeur, its formal gardens spilling down the hill slope to the road. Apart from the exposed terraces set close to the road, most plots are generously sized and have some tree cover, providing a sense of containment.

Maps of Nettleden

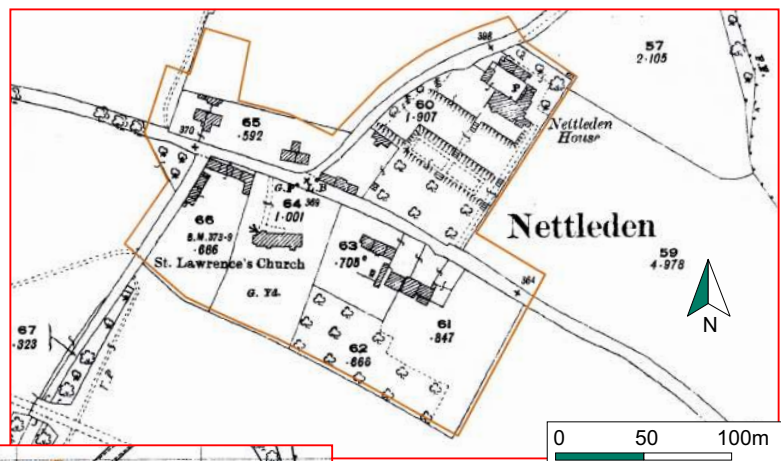
Map 2: 1878 - 1892



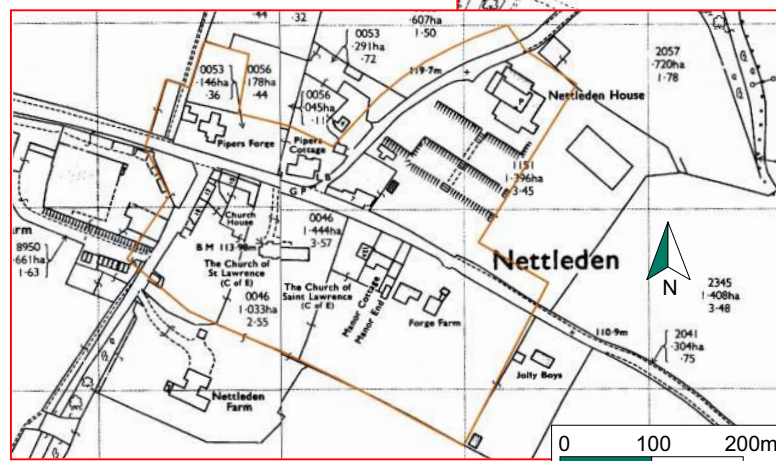
Map 3: 1889 - 1901



Map 4: 1924 - 1926



Map 5: 1962 - 1979



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved.  
Dacorum Borough Council 1000 18935:2007

## 5 The Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

### Analysis

Nettleden Conservation Area is tightly defined as the core of the settlement, centred around the Church. Although one quickly gets a sense of the whole Conservation Area by walking along the principal road, views into the village are surprisingly restricted - the roads leading north and south out of the settlement are heavily tree-lined on the slopes and it is not until they plateau out that one can see across the valley – at which point the settlement is lost to view in the dip.



*Small scale of buildings in the Conservation Area*

The consistent wooded nature of the Conservation Area is a striking feature, frequently giving only partial views of buildings and features. The combination of trees, high hedges and flint walls reinforces the linear layout along the principal road

Most buildings in the Conservation Area are listed. They tend to be small in scale – and even the Church is proportionate in size, with a relatively squat tower. There are no other principal non-residential buildings in the Conservation Area, so all ancillary buildings tend to be subservient to domestic structures.

The valley bottom siting tends to dictate a uniform orientation, with most of the buildings parallel with and facing the roads. Only the Church sits at a slightly oblique angle due to its stricter east-west orientation. The strength of the Conservation Area's character lies in the scale and obvious hierarchy of the buildings. Within this overall unity, the buildings are diverse and the full palette of traditional Chiltern materials – brick (painted and unpainted), flint, timber-weatherboarding, and tiles is encountered (slate is noticeably absent). Nettleden is noteworthy for some fine brick chimneys (e.g. Pipers Forge. Nettleden House and No 7/8) and for its variety and survival of historic windows (e.g. cross-windows at Church House, leaded pane casements at Forge Farm and Yorkshire sliding sashes at 7/8).

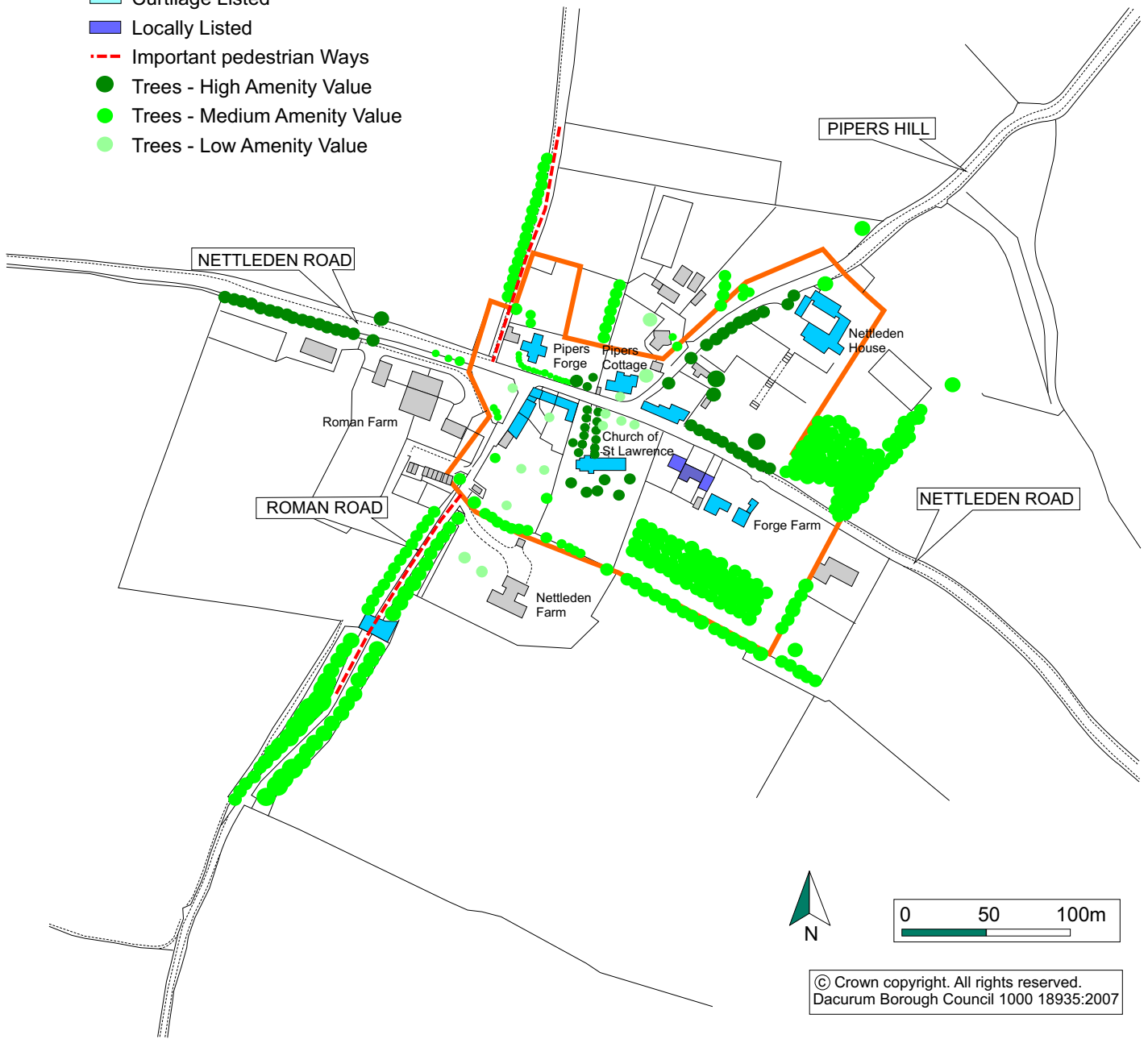
There is a pleasant mix of detached larger dwellings and smaller cottages in terraces. Ancillary buildings have, through conversion in a number of cases, been transformed more extensively than dwellings, but these and a range of smaller outbuildings still play an important role in preserving historic character and defining curtilage.



*Ancillary buildings reinforce the historic character of the settlement*

## Map 6: Nettleden Conservation Area: Character Analysis

- Listed Buildings
- Curtilage Listed
- Locally Listed
- - - Important pedestrian Ways
- Trees - High Amenity Value
- Trees - Medium Amenity Value
- Trees - Low Amenity Value



## Summary of Townscape Features

- Medieval valley-bottom origins
- Rich wooded aspect
- Church is pivotal building. Otherwise, low-built, two-storey houses or cottages, some with mostly single storey ancillary buildings
- Buildings close to the 'crossroads' press up close to road, others are set back.
- No dominant houses – Nettleden House is in imposing position but not easily seen
- Mix of timber-framed and brick buildings, with slate or tiled roofs. No thatch.
- Restricted views into properties except where they are close to the road
- Boundary treatments – mixture of flint walls, trees and hedgerows to front of property, trees mostly to outer edge of Conservation Area
- Subtle estate influences



*The village is characterised by the absence of pavements*

## Current Activities and Uses

In the C20th, Nettleden has assumed the characteristics of a commuter village. The village

is not friendly to pedestrians unless they are passing through the west end of the village down The Roman Road (or slice of footpath adjacent to it) and up the footpath alongside Pipers Forge. Nettleden possesses no community hall or meeting place – the focal community building is the Church.



*Trees and hedges are a major landscape feature of the Conservation Area*



## Focal Points, Views and Vistas

The slightly curved profile of the principal road, together with the wooded nature of the secondary roads striking up the valley hillsides, means that there are few focal points or vistas of the Conservation Area. Indeed, an important characteristic of the settlement is that it doesn't reveal itself in a straightforward manner - even within this relatively small Conservation Area, there are surprises as limited views open up at various points – for example from the back of the churchyard, looking both east and west.



*View from churchyard*



*View along street looking west*



*View looking east*



*View down Roman Road towards Pipers Forge*

## Open Spaces, Landscape and Trees

There are no public open spaces in the village – indeed the principal route is not pedestrian-friendly. This does have the advantage of discouraging car clutter.



*Strongly defined front property boundaries and absence of pavements*

Trees and hedgerows are important delineators of boundaries within the Conservation Area, and tend to shield those properties which are set back from the road from view.



*View looking west*

The heavily treed nature of the Conservation Area consists of a good mix of ancient boundary trees, remnant orcharding, formal planting (the Church avenue and Forge Farm front garden) and later, more exotic species, particularly in the landscaped gardens of Nettleden House. Although not an 'open space' the private garden at the corner of Roman and Nettleden Roads forms an important landscaped area at this nodal point.

## Public Realm: Floorscape, Street Lighting and Street Furniture

As there is limited 'public realm' in Nettleden, there are few 'urban' street features. Traffic calming measures inevitably create some signage, kerbing and bollards, but this does serve to delineate the gateways into the village. The unassuming post box on Pipers Hill is the only item of traditional street furniture.



*Churchyard Avenue*



*Signage*



*High enclosure hedging*



*Post box*



*Relict orcharding?*

## 6 The Buildings of the Conservation Area

### Architectural Styles and Detailing

The village buildings have a vernacular scale - no residential property is more than two storeys in height, and indeed houses such as Pipers Cottage are only 1½ storeys in height. Outbuildings on the whole are single storey and help to keep the built form low. Attic dormers, where they appear at all, are modestly proportioned – as for example on Church House – the exception is Pipers Cottage where the dormers light the first, rather than second storey. Simple plain gabled roofs pre-dominate (the noticeable exception is the hipped roof at Forge Farm). Roof lights inevitably break up these uninterrupted roof slopes and should be resisted.

There is considerable variety to be encountered in this very compact Conservation Area, in terms of both date and style. The character of Nettleden 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. Visible infill tends to be brick although timber-framed farmbuildings are often clad with tarred weatherboarding.

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 at Church



*Timber frame, brick (both limewashed and unpainted) clay tile roofing and flint boundary wall*

House. Chalky white, gritty lime mortars are common in early brickwork and only start to be displaced by cement/sand in the C20th.

Nettleden House is a striking example of Victorian brickwork, incorporating red brick diapered with blue brick and examples of the C19th yellow/brown bricks typical of the Bridgewater estate.



*Nettleden House*

In common with the north Chilterns, flint is not abundantly used except in the Church (now rendered) and in prominent boundary walls. The Church also incorporates some puddingstone.



*Flint used in boundary walls*

Clay peg-tile roofs predominate, mostly with gable ends and plain third round ridges (the hipped roof of Forge Farm is an exception). The Old Parsonage uses scalloped tiles; otherwise plain tiles are the norm. Offsets to chimneys are usually tiled.

Bargeboards and fascias, where they appear at all, tend to be restrained; rafter ends are often left exposed. Neither slates nor thatch are encountered in the Conservation Area.

Roofs in Nettleden are for the most part uncluttered by dormers, rooflights or solar panels; their absence contributes to the strong, simple roofscapes which characterize the Conservation Area.

Nettleden is noteworthy for its retention of early timber (and mostly leaded) casements – there are also a few surviving sash windows, particularly of the Yorkshire sliding sash variety.



*Nettleden Conservation Area retains a wide variety of early windows*

Within Nettleden there are also some good examples of iron railings –in the churchyard and also near Piper's Forge

## Medieval to c.1650

Early buildings in Nettleden are timber-framed. Within this small conservation area, there is an example of a former C16th box-framed open hall and jettied cross-wing (7/8), and an example of an early C17th lobby-entry house (Pipers Forge). The framing tends to be in large panels, with brick replacing daub as the most common infill material. Pipers Forge has a small area of herringbone brickwork. Pipers Forge is a good example of an internal brick chimney terminating in complex polygonal conjoined shafts. At Forge Farm, the barn is older than the house, built c1600 in typical west Herts style with stout widely spaced studs.



*7/8 Nettleden*



*Chimney at Pipers Forge*

## 1600-1800

Nettleden Conservation Area contains good examples of C17th and C18th buildings – Church House, with its former 5-bay symmetrical front, is particularly fine. Forge Farm (built c1700 of red brick - the stable on the north side is also apparently 18C) and the Cottages on the corner opposite Roman Farm all bear the stamp of C18th estate rebuilding. Some earlier houses were also rebuilt, extended or had timber-frames encased in brick during this time (Pipers Cottage, for example).



*Pipers Forge*

## 1800-1900

Unlike in adjoining Frithsden, building activity appears to have decreased during this period – the major exception of course being the imposing Parsonage. And whereas in neighbouring settlements, rebuilding occurs and new materials



*The Gothic style extension to 7/8*

such as slate begin to appear, Nettleden retained its earlier stock of buildings and traditional clay tiled roofs. A number of buildings show signs of re-building and extension, the Church for example both in 1811 and again in the second half of the C19th. On a domestic scale, in c1800 a large rear extension was built at Forge Farm, the windows possibly reused from the earlier back wall. Visible surviving elements include the brickwork, studwork, joists in the kitchen and dairy, and the roof. The Gothick style single storey eastern extension at 7/8 with diamond leaded light windows is also particularly prominent at the road edge.



### **1900-Present**

There have been no new builds in the Conservation Area itself, although activity at the edge of its boundaries saw the addition of Nettleden and Roman Farm to the west end and Nettleden Grange to the east. The existing housing stock has been subject to pressures to modernise and extend, such as at 15, 17 and 18 and at Manor Cottage but for the most part Nettleden has retained its traditional character.

*Nos 15, 17 and 18 press hard up against the road*

### **Boundaries**

Several buildings are set hard up against the road. Where they are set back, plots are generally characterized by strong front boundaries, creating discrete enclosures, so that off-road parking is fairly unobtrusive. Flint walls, often combined with hedging are prominent.



*Roman Farm, now converted to housing*



*Forge Farm is a listed building*

## 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 can be carried out. The listed buildings are marked on the Conservation Area map. (And see Appendix 2)

In Nettleden only one building was identified for inclusion, though others may be added in the future, particularly if the Conservation Area boundary is extended. (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.

## 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.



*Manor Cottages, a locally listed building*

## 7 Negative Features and Issues



*Poor road surfacing at junction with Roman Road*

Nettleden is compact and, with little public open space, is well-maintained. Few features detract from the character of the Conservation Area, and new developments have on the whole been sensitively integrated. Some boundary flint walls are in need of maintenance, and road surfaces are poor in places.

### Negative Buildings

Few buildings in the Nettleden Conservation Area detract from its character - although some have been inelegantly extended or converted.



*House which is out of scale with the traditional range of buildings it abuts and with disproportionately large glazing*



*Although on the edge of the Conservation Area, the use of crazy paving in association with the overlarge garage and its uncharacteristic front gable detracts from its character*



## Inappropriate Alterations to Buildings

Over-investment in properties has tended to be more damaging to Nettleden 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 in danger of suffering from an incremental loss of architectural detailing. Some traditional materials and details are being eroded by the use of inappropriate materials and simple exposed brickwork can be spoiled 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.



*The rooflights are prominently sited, and break up the otherwise uninterrupted, plain roofs which are a characteristic feature of the Conservation Area*

## Traffic and Signage

Nettleden is a busy thoroughfare and this detracts from the environmental quality and attractiveness of the area. However, relatively subdued traffic calming measures are in place, there is no controlled parking in the village and signage is also proportionately subdued.



*Satellite dishes are visually intrusive and damage the character of a listed building*

## 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 rural nature of the character area. Just outside the boundaries, the impact of keeping horses should be carefully controlled to avoid unsightly stabling, fencing, maneges etc.



*This swathe of hard landscaping detracts from the rural character of the Conservation Area*

## 1 Introduction

### 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 Nettleden 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 9 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 Nettleden

### 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 Nettleden'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.

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. 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

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 Nettleden 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 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 Nettleden, 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.

### **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 is presently one 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](http://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.

## 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:

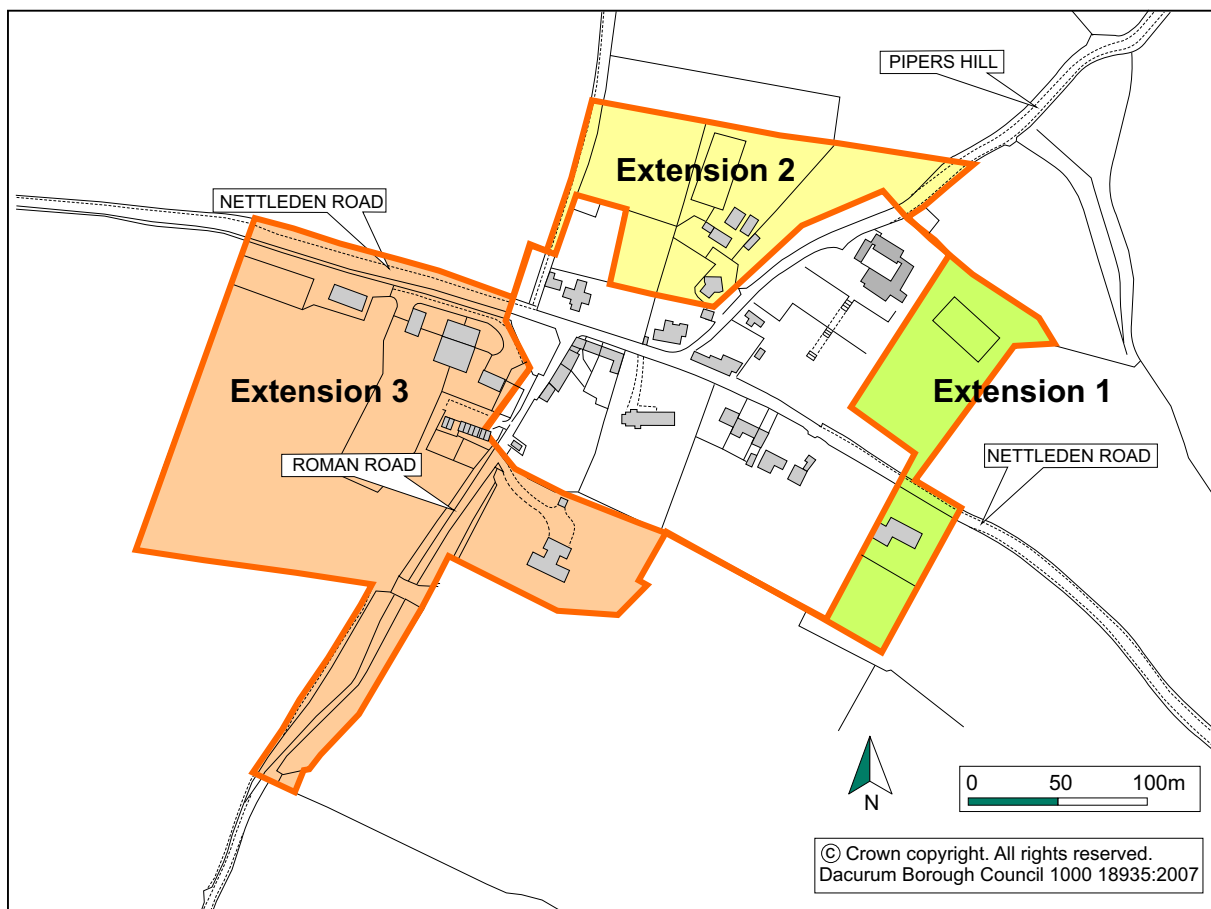
### Extension 1: Area to east of Nettleden Conservation Area

To incorporate the garden grounds and planting to the east of the Old Parsonage to the north side of Nettleden Road and Nettleden Grange formerly Jolly Boys) to the south

**Reason:** This extension was proposed (but not formally implemented) when the Conservation Area boundaries were reviewed by Hertfordshire County Council in 1978. By including C20th development, the extension will reinforce the eastern boundary of the Conservation area, particularly the abrupt change from built settlement to open farm land, protect views into



## Map 7: Proposed extensions to Conservation Area



and out of the Conservation Area, and protect the listed curtilage of the Old Parsonage



*Nettleden Grange and its curtilage forms part of Extension 1*

### **Extension 2: Area to west of Pipers Hill**

To incorporate the additional built area and land on the west side of Pipers Hill

**Reason:** This extension was proposed (but not formally implemented) when the Conservation Area boundaries were reviewed by Hertfordshire County Council in 1978. The justification for designation is to ensure the Conservation area includes all C20th built development and curtilages, to protect views looking south and to protect the settings of Pipers Forge and Pipers Cottage. The C20th development is quirky in nature and somewhat more massive in scale, though not entirely out of keeping with the character of the historic core of the village – some later changes such as the introduction of crazy paving do detract from it.

### **Extension 3: Roman Road, Roman Farm and Nettleden Farm**

To incorporate Roman Farm, Nettleden Farm, and the lower portion of Roman Road that includes the Bridge and revetments.



*Extension 2 incorporates C20th development to the west of Pipers Hill*

**Reason:** This extension was proposed (but not formally implemented) when the Conservation area boundaries were reviewed by Hertfordshire County Council in 1978. The justification for designation is to protect and strengthen the western boundary of the Conservation Area by including the additional C20th expansion of the village to protect views over and along the Golden Valley and to ensure the listed Bridge and the sunken section of Roman Road is integrated in its setting into the Conservation Area.

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



*The bridge over Roman Road with the revetments to the cutting*

## 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](http://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 Nettleden are well maintained, but the condition of the Roman Road gives considerable cause for concern. 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



*Further conversion of ancillary buildings in Nettleden should be avoided*



*New development that is quirky but respects the local scale and character of the Conservation Area*

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. 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 Nettleden 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.

## 2 Monitoring and Review

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

### 2.1 Public Consultation

The appraisal and management plan has been subject to a period of six-week public consultation commencing on ... 2010. 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.

### 2.2 Boundary Review

The appraisal identified that the existing boundary should be extended in three places.

**Recommended Action:** The Council will periodically review the boundary of the conservation area in accordance with Best Practice and guidance on the management of the historic environment.

### 2.3 Buildings at Risk

Generally, the buildings in Nettleden are well maintained and there were no obvious "Building at Risk" at the time of survey (October 2010) within the Conservation Area – however, the condition of the listed bridge spanning Roman Road and currently just outside the Conservation Area is cause for concern. 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 also has powers to secure the preservation of unlisted buildings in the conservation area by using Urgent Works Notices in a similar way to listed buildings (Section 54), although in this case, the Secretary

of State's permission is required. 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.

**Recommended Action:** The Council will seek to monitor the condition of all listed buildings, report findings and advise action, as necessary. Where the condition of a building gives cause for concern, appropriate steps will be taken to secure the future of the building, including the use of statutory powers. The Council will monitor the condition of other unlisted buildings as resources permit. as resources permit.

### 2.4 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.



*7/8 and the road to Great Gaddesden*

## Further Reading and Sources of Information

### Further Reading:

Hastie, S. Berkhamsted Valley (CHECK)  
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).

### 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.s_Hlt182735644p_Hlt182735644ab.org.uk)

The Georgian Group  
6 Fitzroy Square  
London W1T 5DX  
Tel: 087 1750 2936  
[www.georgiangroup.org.uk](http://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](http://www.victorian-society._Hlt216068075o_Hlt216068075rg.uk)

The Twentieth Century Society  
70 Cowcross Street  
London EC1M 6EJ  
Tel: 020 7250 3857  
[www.c20society.org.uk](http://www.c20society.org.uk)

## Appendix 1 : Listed Buildings in Nettleden Conservation Area

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

**Church of St Lawrence.** Grade II\*.

**Church House.** C.1700, formerly symmetrical 5 bay front. Very unspoilt. Cross-windows.

**Nos 15, 17 (Pigtle) and 18.** 4 cottages built as 2 blocks of Ashridge Estate houses, now 3. Yorkshire sliding casements.

**Pipers Forge.** C17 with C18 alterations. Some herringbone brickwork, and imposing central chimney.

**Pipers Cottage.** C16, 1½ storeys.

**Nettleden House.** Former parsonage, 1856 by Lady Alford and son.

**No 7.** Former open-hall house with cross-wing jettied on both sides.

**Forge Farm, 9.** Early C18th, raised to two storeys. From 1756 the house was occupied by the Gash family, who were the village blacksmiths until at least 1933 and bought the house from the Ashridge Estate in 1932.

**Barn and Stable attached at No. 9 (Forge Farm).**

**Currently outwith the Conservation Area:  
Bridge over Road & Revetments to Cutting**



*Pipers Cottage is a listed building*

## Appendix 2: Locally Listed Buildings in Nettleden Conservation Area

**Manor Cottage**

## Appendix 3: Historic Environment Record: Herts County Council

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

### ID

1375 Medieval Pottery Kiln

1812 Nettleden Village

1830 Supposed Shrunken Medieval Village  
(NB – neither of these entries are based on any archaeological evidence)

4372 Church of St Lawrence

5321 Lamp Box, Nettleden

12833 Forge Farm, Nettleden

15162 Timber Buildings at Forge Farm,  
Nettleden

15320 Pigtile Cottage, Nettleden (NB should be  
Pigtle)

15321 Roman Farm, Nettleden

**(See [www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk))**

## Appendix 4: Nettleden Conservation Area - updated boundary 2011

Map 8: Revised Conservation Area boundary

