



# Contents

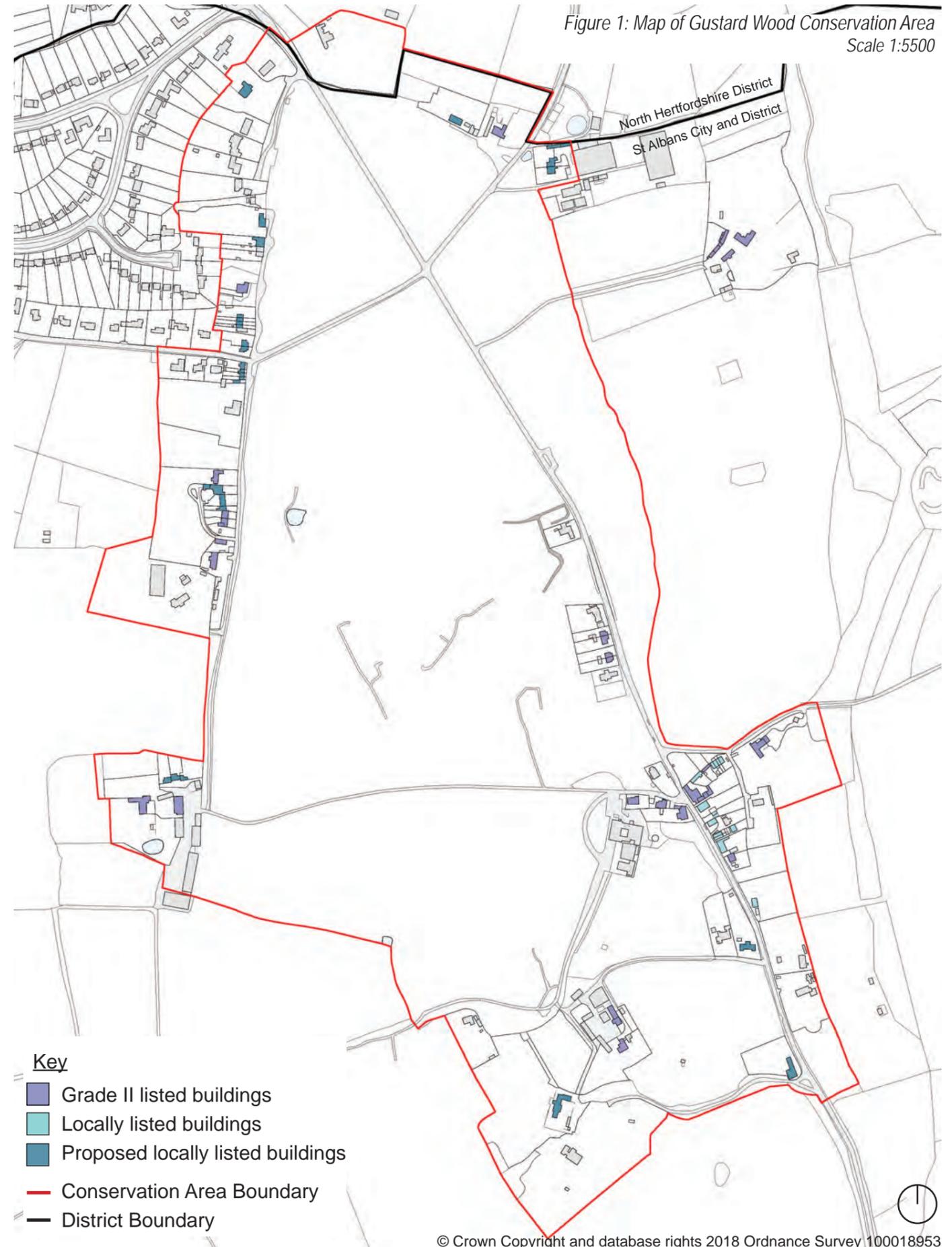
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Designations and the NPPF	3
2.1 Conservation area	3
2.2 Statutory list	3
2.3 Local listing	3
2.4 Metropolitan green belt	3
3.0 Location and setting	4
4.0 Origins and development of the settlement	5
5.0 Architectural character	
5.1 Identity area 1 – Lower Gustard Wood	6
5.2 Identity area 2 – Gustard Wood Common	11
5.3 Identity area 3 – Delaport and Home Farm	17
5.4 Identity area 4 – Blackmore End	19
6.0 Landscape characteristics and trees	21
6.1 Gustard Wood common	21
6.2 Hedgerows	21
6.3 Significant trees and TPOs	21
7.0 Significant views	22
8.0 Enhancement proposals and guidance	24
9.0 Summary	25
Appendices	26
9.1 Listed buildings	26
9.2 Existing locally listed buildings	26
9.3 Proposed locally listed buildings	26
Select bibliography	26

# 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Civic Amenities Act 1967 first empowered local planning authorities to make provision for the preservation and enhancement of areas of architectural and historic interest by designating them as conservation areas. Government policy is now contained in The National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 (NPPG). Gustard Wood Conservation Area was designated in two stages in January 1973 and July 1977.

1.2 Conservation should not be thought of solely as a process of preservation and an impediment to change. The designation of a conservation area represents an opportunity to formulate positive policies to improve and enhance its environmental quality and to ensure the successful integration of any development or redevelopment necessary for its continued success as a living and working community. The St. Albans District City and District Local Plan Review (DLPR) - adopted November 1994 - sets out the general principles which will be observed when dealing with applications for new development and redevelopment.

1.3 The aims of this Conservation Area Character Statement are to show the way in which the form of the conservation area has evolved and to assess its present character; to indicate the principles to be adopted in considering planning applications in the area; and to form a framework within which more detailed proposals may be formulated.



© Crown Copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100018953

## 2.0 Designations

### 2.1 Conservation Area

Gustard Wood Conservation Area was originally designated on 22 January 1973 with the boundary being drawn tight around Lower Gustard Wood only (see figure 2). The boundary was significantly extended on 27 July 1977 to include: Delaport; the Common and golf course; Gustard Wood (road to west of the Common); and the area around the Cross Keys public house to the north. The 1977 extension also included a small area which located across the district boundary line within the North Hertfordshire District, see figure 1.

### 2.2 Statutory List (Listed Buildings)

'Listed buildings' are buildings included on a list of "Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest" compiled by central Government. They are classed as 'designated heritage assets'. Listed buildings within the Conservation Area are given in the Appendix. All parts of the buildings are normally protected under the main listing, this includes outbuildings within the curtilage of the listed building, dependant on certain criteria. Listed buildings should not be confused with 'locally listed buildings', which are designated by the local planning authority (St Albans City and District Council), in consultation with the public, local amenity societies.

### 2.3 Local Listing

The Council considers those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area should be designated 'locally listed'. The NPPF classes locally listed buildings as one type of 'non-designated heritage assets'. Whilst it encourages local authorities to draw up local lists, the NPPF allows for any building the Council considers a 'non-designated heritage asset' to have its significance taken into account in planning decisions, whether or not it is on a local list. At local level, Saved Policy 87 of the DLPR (1994) is relevant. Saved Policy 87 provides protection for buildings the Council considers 'worthy of local listing' at any time, whether or not a formal list has been drawn up.

N.B. Whilst the NPPF has broadened the definition of 'non-designated heritage assets' to comprise: "*buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by local planning authorities as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated*", it does not follow that *all* such assets will be put on the 'local list' by the local planning authority. (For example, St Albans District Council restricts 'local lists' to within Conservation Areas, whereas other Councils look outside conservation areas as well. Other Councils have drawn up no local lists).

Advice on assessing a building's 'significance' is laid out in the NPPF; Historic England's document 'Conservation Principles' (based on an asset's evidential, historical, aesthetic or communal value); and most recently in Historic England's 'Local Heritage Listing – Advice Note 7' published May 2016. This document emphasises the need for public consultation of the local list. It also states that "*the absence of any particular heritage asset from the local list does not necessarily mean that it has no heritage value, simply that it does not currently meet the selection criteria or that it has yet to be identified*".

Within the St Albans District, 'local lists' have been mainly drawn up in conjunction with Conservation Area Character Statements, which are reviewed from time to time.

The original 'local list' for Gustard Wood was surveyed and approved by Hertfordshire County Council in 1975 as part of a Hertfordshire-wide exercise to identify buildings which, whilst not meeting the criteria for statutory listing, nevertheless contribute positively to the

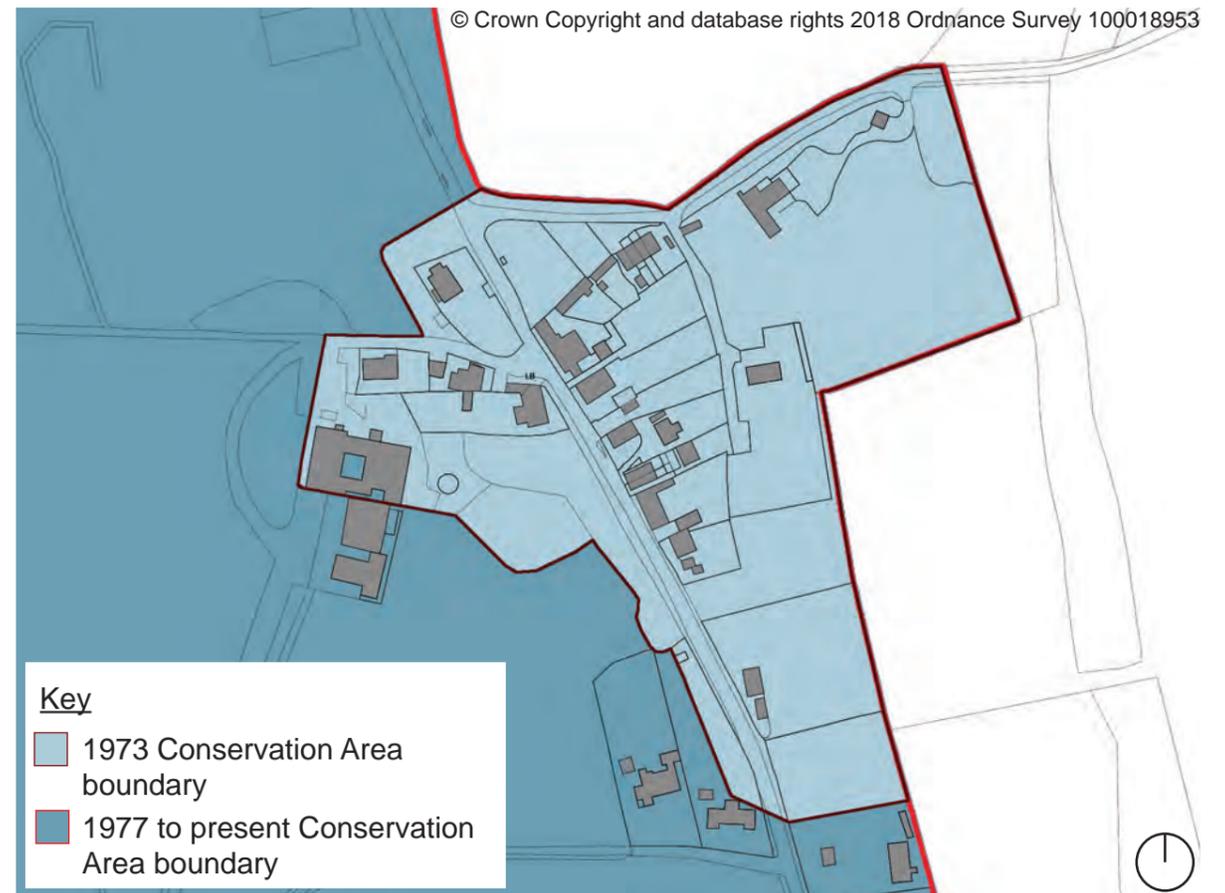


Figure 2: Map of Gustard Wood Conservation Area former, 1973, boundary. The boundary was extended in 1977 to its current size.

character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This survey covered only the original Conservation Area, (limited to the small area known as Lower Gustard Wood). That list has been updated to cover the current wider Conservation Area as part of the preparation of the Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

The existing locally listed buildings are given in the Appendices, along with those added through this Appraisal. It should be noted that any building or structure can be locally listed, e.g. a wall, post box, gate or railing. However, a structure physically attached to; or, within the curtilage, ancillary to, and dated pre 1 July 1948, of a statutory listed building is already protected by virtue of that listing, and would not normally be locally listed in its own right. Exceptions to this may be, for example outbuildings, where 'double' designation may occur. The statutory listing will always override a local listing in this instance.

### 2.4 Metropolitan Green Belt

Gustard Wood is defined as a Green Belt Settlement, in the DLPR because it is set wholly within the Green Belt. As such any new development must meet stringent national planning guidelines designed to protect the Green Belt.

The NPPF envisages only "limited infilling". The NPPF does not offer a definition of "limited infilling". Relevant local policy is Saved Policy 2 – Settlement Strategy - of the DLPR (1994) which states that "development must not detract from the character and setting of ...settlements within the Green Belt".

## 3.0 Location and Setting

3.1 Gustard Wood is a settlement located approximately two miles north of Wheathampstead, on the northern edge of the District. The settlement is generally arranged along two routes – the main B651 Wheathampstead to Kimpton Road (Lamer Lane – pronounced as in ‘hammer’) and the partially unmade lane running north to south down the west side of the Common, known simply as Gustard Wood. Several smaller lanes and tracks runs east to west between these two routes across the common, notably The Slype.

3.2 For the purposes of this character statement, the Conservation Area will be broken down into several distinct identity areas comprising:

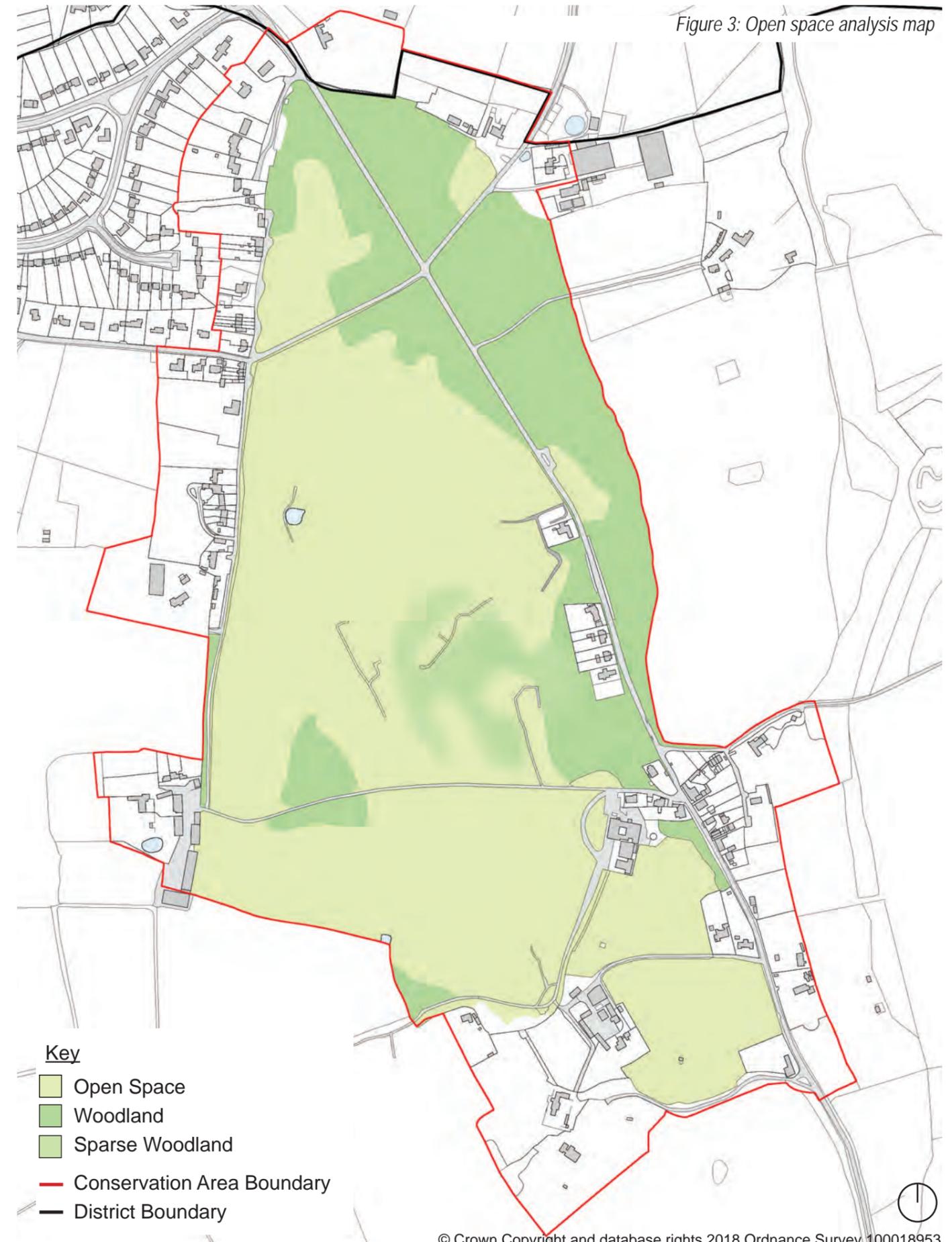
1. Lower Gustard Wood;
2. Gustard Wood Common (The Common plus Gustard Wood road to the west);
3. Delaport and Home Farm;
4. Blackmore End

(Although The Red House falls within North Hertfordshire District it is within Gustard Wood Conservation Area ).

3.3 Gustard Wood is a dispersed settlement centred around Gustard Wood Common. The wider setting of the conservation area is dominated by farmland interspersed with woodland, primarily to the east. The rural nature of Gustard Wood contributes substantially to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Trees and mature hedgerows border the majority of the roads giving them an enclosed character, while open fields and grassland form the conservation areas setting and its core.

The open space identified within the map (opposite) is considered to contribute to the conservation areas special interest. It illustrates and maintains the historic relationship between the settlement, its common and the surrounding agricultural landscape. This historic relationship and the character and appearance of the open space is also considered to contribute to the setting of the undesignated and designated heritage assets within the conservation area.

The map analysis considered open space inside the conservation area boundary and where it formed its immediate context. Open space is defined as common land, farmland, countryside and recreational spaces (including school ground, churchyards and cemeteries). Publicly accessible woodland is included within this definition. Private gardens and private car parks are excluded.



## 4.0 Origins and development of the settlement

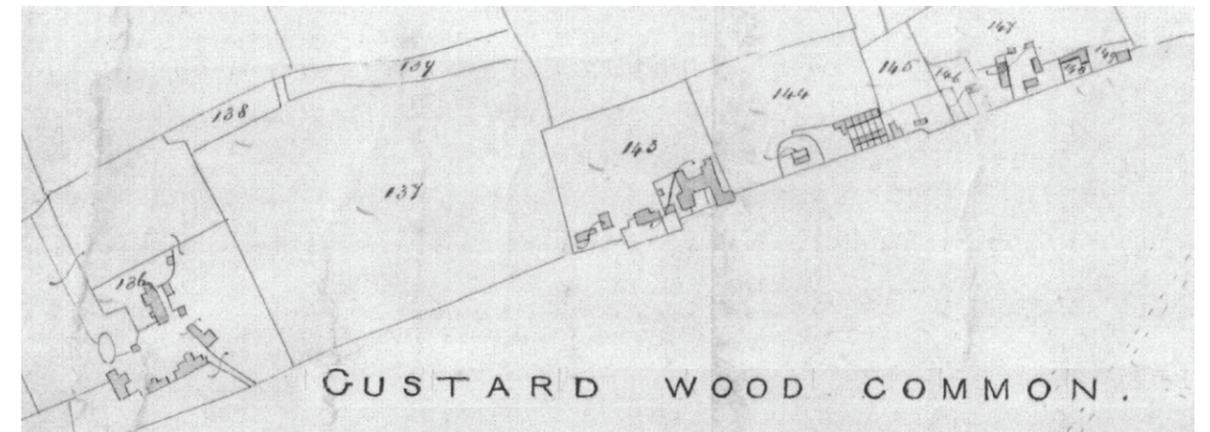
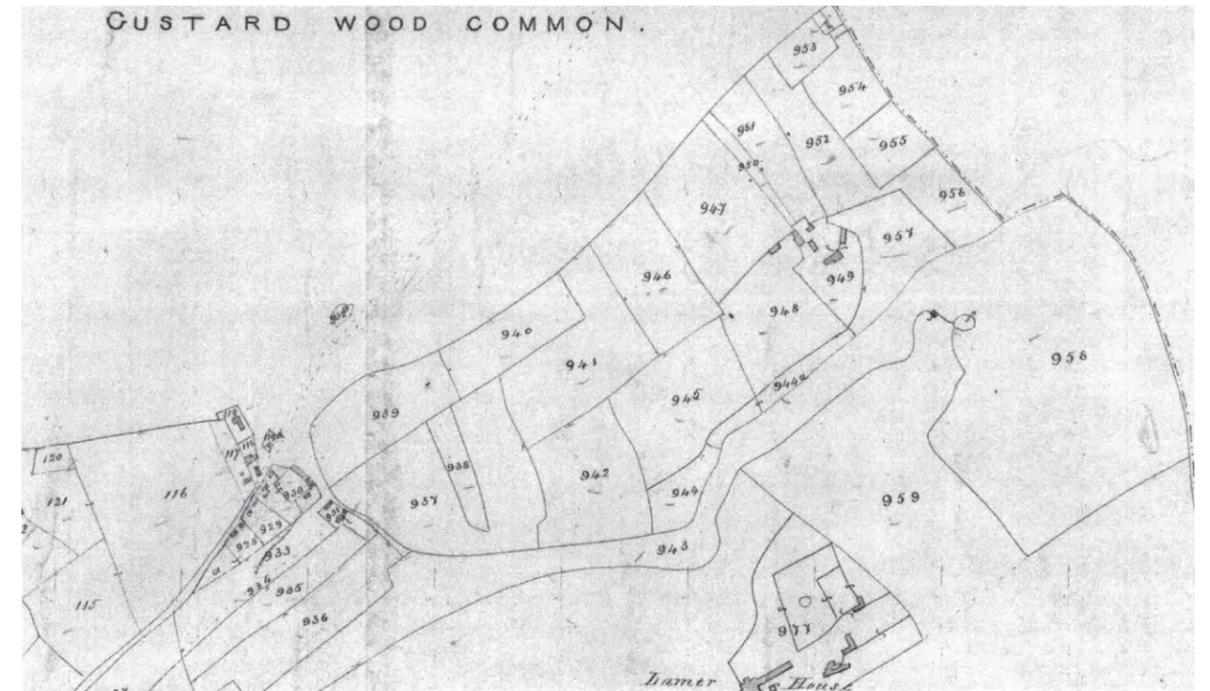
4.1 In 1065 the Parish of Wheathampstead, including Gustard Wood, was granted to The Abbey of Westminster by Edward the Confessor. The Domesday Book (1086) shows that the whole of western Hertfordshire was then forest land. Subsequent to the Domesday survey, largely before the start of the 13th Century, the Abbot of Westminster appears to have parcelled out what was probably forest waste into freehold tenements, each of 120 acres. In time, tenants of these holdings acquired varying degrees of independence and many set up a court-baron and became recognised as holders of sub-manors, with the Abbot still holding rights over the land. From the end of 15th Century, most of the small manors either gradually disintegrated, or incorporated with the larger estates (now mainly known as Lamer, Rothamsted and Annables (or Kinsbournebury). The manorial estates were largely self-sufficient, their income provided by rents from tenancies. The 'home farms' provided food for the manor houses.

4.2 The earliest name recorded in about 1272 is Goshamstedwoode, and later names include Gustamwode and Gustewood. One possible origin is from 'Gorst' – the Old English name for gorse/furze, but also juniper, both of which grow on the Common. The other possible origin is the Old English for 'Goose Homestead Wood'. In the early Middle Ages the area was probably forested wasteland. In the 14th century it was known as Gusthamstedewode and was common land attached to the parish of Wheathampstead. At this time there was at least one pottery kiln on the common (discovered 1892) and it is likely that the hamlet originated as a settlement of potters and brick makers. Brick making probably continued into the 19th century - there are extensive 18th and 19th century clay and chalk pits on Nomansland common. The 19th century cottages were probably occupied by small holders, brickmakers and farm labourers.

4.3 The built form of Lower Gustard Wood is an ancient settlement of originally humble cottages, built on the edge of common land. The origins of the settlement are predominantly agricultural – the cottagers had commoners' rights to graze livestock and gather wood on the Common (owned by the Church), but also supplied their labour to the large farms and estates in the surrounding area. Women often worked at home plaiting straw for the hat industry until around 1870 (when imports killed demand). Most cottages date from the late 17th Century through to the mid 18th Century. The area was established in its current form by the mid 18th Century and this is confirmed by the 1837 Kimpton tithe map, annotated 'Gursted Wood'.

4.4 The manor of Herons took its name from the family Heron or Hayrun, resident here in 1201. Heron's manor was in the Brockett family between 1448 and 1565. In the 18th Century the manor was divided and 'a tenement described as Heron's Farm was, in 1788, in the hands of Viscount Grimston, who had purchased it in 1786'. It was still owned by Lord Verulam in 1894. Traces of a Roman Road have been observed within Heron's Farm farmyard (T Rook). It may be that this road ran from Wheathampstead (pre-Roman hill-fort oppidum) to Baldock and connected Baldock (on the prehistoric Icknield Way), via Wheathampstead to Verulamium. Other archaeology suggests the area could have Prehistoric remains, and, in particular Late Iron Age and Roman remains from sites immediately west of Heron's Farm, outside the Conservation Area (Hertfordshire Historic Environment Records).

4.5 Common and golf course - In 1935 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners sold the Manorial Rights of Gustard Wood Common to the Golf Club for the sum of £500. In this way, the Club became owners of the land, but the public still had the right to 'fresh air and exercise' but not to play ball games or drive vehicles on the Common.



Extracts from the 1837 Kimpton tithe map - courtesy of HALS



1906 - The Old Plough when it was still in use as a public house

# 5.1 Identity Character Area 1: Lower Gustard Wood



## 5.1 Lower Gustard Wood: Architectural Character

The Tithe Map of 1837 shows the settlement pattern of Lower Gustard Wood largely established. Several 17th and 18th Century cottages front onto Lamer Lane, with later 19th Century infill and backland development

### Form of development

These original agricultural worker's cottages were built as a linear development along the east side of Lamer Lane. They were built directly onto the road, with a near continuous frontage and minimal setback. What small setback there is forms a front garden, leaving no space for a footway. Most of the original cottages remain, but where new development has replaced them, the characteristic tight relationship between building line and road has remained. This tight linear relationship with the road is repeated throughout the whole Conservation Area and is an important part of its character. Only at the very southern end are Glebe House and Glebe Cottage (two more recent houses) well set back from the road. These are not considered to contribute to the character of the conservation area.

Cottages in Lower Gustard Wood and throughout the Conservation Area are generally small scale, two storey with pitched roofs. Due to the diminutive scale of the original dwellings, there are several examples where smaller cottages have been knocked together to form larger dwellings e.g. Lamer Hill (17th Century group, now one house, red brick, old clay tile roof), and Holly Cottage (originally two or three cottages). Some have been modernised rather unsympathetically, e.g. with the insertion of large modern windows.

### Building materials

Whilst there is a strong continuity of scale and layout, there is a variety of materials used in the construction. The early cottages were vernacular buildings of then low status, built using the materials at hand - predominantly timber from the adjacent woodland. These original cottages were timber framed construction, some clad in weatherboarding. Later, as was common practice in the 18th Century (both for fashion and fire protection) some were refaced in brick, which would have been made locally on The Common. Examples seen in Lower Gustard Wood include the Old Plough, Whipplestress and Hillside (late 17th Century cottage re-fronted in brick in the 18th Century, now roughcast rendered). Hillside became The Royal Exchange public house in 1835, now reverted to a dwelling. Many of these earlier buildings are now statutorily listed.



The 1880s map of Gustard Wood shows the old line of development around Lamer Lane.



Old Plough, timber framed former public house refronted with characteristic Georgian chequered brickwork with burnt headers.



Whippletrees is a fine example of Georgian brick refronting in local 'soft red' bricks, with 18th Century chimney stack.

## 5.1 Lower Gustard Wood: Architectural Character

Guelders (right) was built largely in 1821/22 by Richard Kilby as a wedding present for his son. The right hand painted timber clad and brick building is earlier – 18th Century. Unusual in the use of the newly fashionable ‘white’ bricks (a reaction against the universal red brick), Guelders makes an imposing stance in views down Lamer Lane, and the quality of materials should be maintained. Further painting of brick, or changing any other external materials, should be avoided. The Victorian post box, on the north elevation of the house, is statutorily listed also by virtue of being attached to the house and is specifically annotated on the 1880s map.

Owens Corner (below) is a striking corner building in the street scene from all angles. Statutorily listed, the left half of the frontage is clad in white painted weatherboarding, but the right half has been re-clad in red brick (Flemish bond) with later canted bays and a Welsh slate roof with clay ridge tiles. It has mainly Georgian sliding sash windows both sides. The rear late 19th Century brick extension is also listed, as are the timber outhouses to the rear, being attached. Retention of original windows/porches and other smaller architectural features is important for both listed and non-listed buildings.

Turning the corner from the strip of houses east of Lamer Lane, is the small green where the resident builder/undertaker of Owens Corner used to lay out the coffins. There are now two groups of protected trees, and the small green should not be encroached upon further for car parking spaces, as this detracts from the appearance of the conservation area.

Timbers (above right) is another example of the prevalent original external material to these timber framed cottages. It also retains its clay tile roof, which would have been the original material for the majority of early cottages. It is important to retain the original roof materials and windows style wherever possible throughout the conservation area.

The lane running parallel behind the Lamer Lane houses accesses more cottages of varying age and style. Caldecote, though recently extended is another fine early (painted) timber clad cottage with both sash windows and casements, with possible 17th Century origins. Some early Westmoreland slate remains amongst the later Welsh on its roof. Other houses down this lane, even if relatively modern, are constructed of dark or red brick, with tiled roofs and well-designed dormers and other features. This restrained palette of materials and good detailing is important on all houses, regardless of age.



*Guelders was built in ‘white’ bricks, a response against the prevalent red brick within the surrounding area*



*The Victorian post box located on Guelders.*



*Owens Corner, located on the corner of Lamer Lane, is seen from many angles within the conservation area*



*Timbers is clad in the once prevalent external material for the local timber framed cottages*

## 5.1 Lower Gustard Wood: Architectural Character



*Soft boundary treatments and planting help soften fencing*



*Lamer Hill Cottage is a recessive new development.*



*The orchard is a reminder of the allotments which previously occupied the site in the early C20.*

This lane itself (top left) is characterised by hedges and trees, with close boarded boundary fencing. Although tucked away, the houses and their boundary and hard surface treatments still affect the appearance of the conservation area. Care should be taken not to replace soft landscaping and timber fencing with harsh brick boundaries and structures. The sylvan character of this lane is an important aspect of the conservation area. Parking areas require soft treatment, e.g. rolled/loose shingle as opposed to block paving.

The increasingly rare orchard at the end of this lane (below left) is a valuable asset to the conservation area and is a reminder of the allotment gardens shown on historic maps between the 1920s and 1960s to the east of the lane, which used to extend down behind Holly Cottage to join Lamer Lane. The allotments were then subdivided into plots and Lamer Hill Cottage bungalow built (middle left) – an example of a modern house in recessive materials which sits well within the landscape.

On the lane running east from Lower Gustard Wood is the house Lamer Hill (17C group, now one house of red brick with peg tile roof). Built to house staff at nearby Lamer House, it originally comprised several diminutive cottages. It is set down within the slight scoop of the valley to be almost unseen when coming down the lane. The roofscape is the most visible aspect. Continuing east out of the Conservation Area, the lane leads up the hill through woodland in the grounds of Lamer House.

Although outside the Conservation Area boundary, no study of Gustard Wood can omit mention of Lamer House's most well-known occupant – Major General Apsley George Benet Cherry-Garrard (JP) (1886-1959). He joined Scott's ill-fated Antarctic expedition in 1910-12. Later, encouraged by his friend and neighbour George Bernard Shaw he wrote 'The Worst Journey in the World' published 1922, chronicling events of the trip. The two characters played a big part in the daily life of Gustard Wood, and they used to joke that the Lamer estate would end up as Lamer Garden City – a reference to the nearby pioneering new 'garden cities' of Welwyn and Letchworth.

Junipers (right) now stands alone on the site of the Gustard Wood National School (now demolished), which catered for children from babies to the age of 7 for boys and 12 for girls. Opened 1875, it was educating 80 children by 1879. The one-roomed school on the Common was surrounded by furze/gorse. Demolished in 1932, the current house, built the same year, is an attractive Arts and Crafts style, of brick and half timbering, with clay tile hipped roof incorporating bonnet hip tiles, and ornamental chimneys. It is highly visible from the public picnic site opposite, where much gorse still grows.



*Junipers was built in the early C20 on the site of the Gustard Wood National School in an arts and crafts style and is in a prominent position*



*The public open space to the east of the common is surrounded by woodland and gorse.*



## 5.1 Lower Gustard Wood: Architectural Character

The new St Peter's Mission Church, built 1910 by local builder and undertaker J.F. Owen of nearby Owens corner, is unique to the village in being flint. The widow of the previous incumbent offered £1000 to build it in 'stone rather than iron' (note the stone plaque on the exterior). The decorative iron railings, some of which have unfortunately been replaced, were also useful to hold grazing sheep, to keep the grass down. The use of stone for the window dressings and bell tower is also unusual for the village. Unfortunately, the original roof has been replaced with concrete tiles which appear overly modern.

Next to the church are two pairs of substantial high quality red brick and slate cottages built by Birley Baxendale (below). As agricultural workers cottages of the time (1860s/70s), these are of exceptional quality, with gauged brick lintels over the windows, dogtooth brick eaves and white painted cast iron lattice panes to the casement windows. Both pairs are now statutorily listed (Dale Cottage and Brogdell Cottage; Tannadice and Number 4 - Brogdale Cottage).

The golf club is a modern timber clad building, overlooking the green. It replaces an earlier modern building. The original clubhouse was built on land donated by Mrs Upton Robbins in 1897 by J.F. Owen of Owens Corner. Some historic barns adjacent The Old Plough have been demolished within the last 25 years (now club parking). Founded and opened in 1892 with first nine holes, by 1923 the course had developed into 18 holes thanks to James Braid, the famous golfer and course designer. Named Mid-Herts Golf Club in 1936, it is one of England's earliest golf courses.

The pressure for parking at the club is quite intense, and should be managed in a manner sensitive to the rural location.



The Grade II Listed Birley Baxendale cottages have fine quality detailing and original features including the cast iron lattice casement windows and brickwork.



St Peter's Mission Church does not have a dominant presence within the conservation area, and is similar in height to the neighbouring cottages



Stone plaque on St Peter's Mission Church in memory of W.Pearce and his widow.



WWI War memorial



St Peter's Mission Church uses stone dressings, uncharacteristic for Gustard Wood

## 5.2 Identity Character Area 2: **Gustard Wood Common**



## 5.2 Gustard Wood Common: Architectural Character

### Form of development

Along the lane simply known as Gustard Wood (which runs north-south along the west edge of the golf course and Common), the form of development is of frontage development facing east onto the Common. The main characteristic is the undeveloped nature of the wedge-shaped Common, west of Lamer Lane and Kimpton Road, the B651. Much of this is golf course, except the open grassland north of The Slype. The frontage development comprises small groups of dwellings along Gustard Wood. The partly built-up frontage of Gustard Wood provides a built western edge to the main open area of the Conservation Area. The spaces between buildings, and groups of buildings, create a visual link between the open area within the Conservation area and the countryside to the west. It is crucial for the character of the Conservation Area that substantial gaps and undeveloped spaces are retained within frontage development, to maintain this link. Gaps in the linear form are particularly noticeable around the Tin Pot former PH (below), No. 18 Gustard Wood, and around 'High Trees'.

The area of Common used as a golf course is discussed in Section 6 'Landscape Characteristics and Trees', but it is interesting to note the historical use of the northern end of the Common for the annual fair – held outside the pubs – The Tin Pot, The Cricketers and The Cross Keys. It declined after WW1, with the golf club taking more control of the grazing land on the Common on which the fair relied.

### Building materials

Gustard Wood stretches from Spinney End at the north, to Herons Farm at the south, and boasts an attractive variety of cottages and larger houses. Many of the cottages are Georgian brick and slate, but the larger houses, many of which are listed, date back as early as the 15th Century. The Tin Pot public house (mentioned in the court rolls in 1665) is timber framed (exposed to the rear) with mid-late 18th Century red brick casing to the front.

The general store which was open in Victorian times up until about 1990 was three doors up, in what is now No. 37 The Old Shop (bottom right). Originally exposed brick, now painted. The Cricketer's public house was next to the shop in what is now Spinney End (top right) and had its own track across the Common from the Kimpton Road up to at least the 1980s.



*Spinney End, formerly the Cricketers Public House, borders the common and used to have its own track to the Kimpton Road. The old shop can be seen adjacent.*



*The former public house the Tin Pot and other cottages line the common. Gaps between plots are important to ensure the common does not become too enclosed.*



*No 37, formerly the old shop, the building is now in residential use*

## 5.2 Gustard Wood Common: Architectural Character

No's 34 and 36 were built as three Edwardian cottages, now made into two (hence no number 35). Named 'Pretoria Cottages', some of the original stringcourse brickwork is still evident to the front of No. 34. Further painting of the brickwork is discouraged (top right).

The row of Georgian cottages, Nos. 27, 28 and 30 (29 and 30 now one cottage) are good examples of classic Georgian brickwork with occasional black vitrified headers. Truly Georgian, these exteriors do not hide earlier timber frames. The shallow pitched Welsh slate roofs and multipaned flush sash windows, with no horns, are typical of the period. Although No. 30 has replaced the two front doors with windows, it is fortunate that the finely detailed flat gauged brick arches have been retained above the openings. Probably built as agricultural workers cottages, the generous plot lengths front and back allowed scope for self sufficiency. As it is not visible in the 1880s map of Gustard Wood No 26 appears to be a later Victorian addition and is typical of its era, retaining its original '2 over 2' sash windows with horns.

Two more houses were built by the local Victorian landowner, Birley Baxendale - the symmetrical pair of brick cottages on the corner of Slype and Gustard Wood (No. 24 'Berrydown' and No. 25) in the 1860s/70s. All Birley's cottages had underground rainwater tanks, to catch the water from the roofs (this was pre-mains water era). Although both extended, Berrydown (below) retains its high quality stone window dressings, brick dentilled eaves, and original front door, which are important features.

Birley Baxendale was also responsible for building the new road, The Slype, in 1874. It served to keep the public away from his newly acquired lands to the north, the Blackmore End estate. He also slightly re-routed the main Kimpton Road.

Heading south across The Slype, is another row of Georgian cottages, Nos. 19, 20, 21 and 23. Originally five cottages, Nos. 22 and 23 have joined, and the row is prominent in views down The Slype, continuing the dominant building line. Despite modern front porches, the Georgian symmetry and classic materials remain dominant, similar to Nos. 27 to 30 further up- red brick in Flemish bond (or variant) with shallow pitched Welsh slate roofs, and '8 over 8' multipaned flush sash windows.

Nos. 19, 20 and 21 have particularly fine gauged flat brick arches over their windows. It is likely their rear plots have been cut short by the modern development to the west, but it is considered they make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Retention of frontage hedges and soft landscaping is to be encouraged, as hard urban style front boundaries and front gardens paved over, detract from the rural appearance of the area.



*Once a set of identical cottages, 34-36 Gustard Wood show the cumulative impact of small changes can have on buildings within the conservation area.*



*24-25 Gustard Wood contain underground water tanks, high quality windows and an original door to No 24 which are significant features.*

## 5.2 Gustard Wood Common: Architectural Character

The original No. 18 Gustard Wood was named 'The Firs' in WW2. Certainly the 1880s map shows it surrounded by coniferous trees. Destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt in its current form by the 1960s. Later renamed 'Gustard Wood House', it now makes a striking impression from the golf course. Of dark red brick and clay plain tiles with bonnet hip tiles on a steeply pitched roof, the attractive frontage comprises triple square bays to the ground floor with Edwardian style timber sashes to the ground floor and sympathetically styled crittall windows to the first floor.

The grassland gap between Nos. 17 and 18 is surrounded by trees/semi-mature hedges, and has a traditional timber paddock gate. It was separated from No. 18's garden within the last thirty years. This is seen as an important gap in maintaining the openness of the Green Belt in this location. It is also important for a large gap to be maintained as the space forms part of the setting of the listed building. Likewise, No. 18 (proposed for local listing) is still characterised by a spacious sylvan setting and any future building line should maintain substantial gaps, not compromised by outbuildings.

No. 14 is unusual. The front range of the house, parallel with Gustard Wood, is totally modern, post 1980s. Mock timbered, with modern red brick noggin, it makes a stab at rural vernacular, and the materials are recessive. It replaces a previous building on the same site dated pre 1880 and possibly much earlier. However, attached at right angles to the rear remains a pre 1880s slate roofed building, painted white, with a distinctive brick ridge chimney stack, the roof conjoined with the front range. Visible behind the modern frontage, and previously a dwelling in its own right, it has historical significance as part of the development of the settlement. Hence, for completeness, No. 14 is proposed locally listed, with the caveat that the front range is modern.

Nos. 11 and 13 were once three or more cottages. Probably timber framed houses, again re-fronted in the Georgian period with local red brick, but retaining their clay peg tile roofs and mainly casement windows, which are important features. This row displays architectural value, and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the area.



*The Firs was rebuilt following a fire, though it retains Edwardian style bay windows*



*17 Gustard Wood is Grade II listed and thought to date to the C17 or earlier*



*Grade II listed, 10 Gustard Wood dates to the C17 - early C18*



*11-13 Gustard Wood were formerly 3 timber framed cottages, refronted in the C18*



*No. 17 'Hunters Lodge' is separated from No. 18 by a grassland area, surrounded by trees/semi-mature hedges.*

## 5.2 Gustard Wood Common: Architectural Character



*Soft boundaries, trees and informal roads contribute to the character of the conservation area and maintain views to the surrounding open space beyond*



*High Trees is a mid-C20 house which does not have a large impact on the character of the conservation area due to its position. The lion topped gatepost is the most prominent feature of the site as seen from the road.*



The next group of houses down are all statutorily listed. No. 10 'The Woodman' and No. 8&9 (one house until 1987 when the original No. 8 was extended into a separate dwelling once more, 'Treetops') are listed and complete the short contiguous building line from Hunter's Lodge. The dramatic high roof of No. 10 dominates this cluster of houses in views from the lane. Likely late 17th /early 18th Century timber framed with late 18th Century red brick casing, and a steeply pitched clay peg tile roof, with 18th Century external stack to north end. No. 8&9 is of similar age but with vitrified red brick, dentilled eaves and a machine tile roof.

Still heading south, across the driveway which sweeps behind all these houses (built in the 1960s or 70s) is No. 6, originally built as four cottages in the late 18th Century. Listed, but now unfortunately the brick is covered with textured white paint. Still evident are the dentilled eaves, clay roof tiles and part weatherboarded gable facing the road. Three of the four doors are blocked in. The rear gable has evidence of an earlier back range, now lost, with exposed 16th/17th Century timber framing. The large side extension is post 1987.

The last in this group of listed houses, No. 3 'Rustling End' was originally three timber framed cottages, built in the later 18th Century. Now a red brick frontage, clay tile roof, with two 18th Century ridge chimney stacks.

This cluster of houses from Hunters Lodge to Rustling End, are all well set back from the lane. It is important to maintain soft landscaping as dominant in the front gardens as too much hardstanding and loss of landscaping would cause harm to their setting. Retention of locally distinctive front boundaries such as hedgerows and picket fencing, and timber paddock gates such as at Rustling End, is preferable to open parking spaces.

Set back on a large plot, behind Rustling End's outbuildings, is 'High Trees', which terminates development at this point. A large well-mannered house of red brick and clay tile roof, around mid-20th Century, it is built on previously agricultural land. Although an attractive house, it has no historic significance or communal connections, and is set so far back as to not contribute positively to the appearance of the Conservation Area.



*9 Gustard Wood is also Grade II listed and is subservient to No. 10 adjacent though dates to a similar period.*



*Formerly 4 cottages, 6 Gustard Wood has an interesting history with a timber framed gable to the rear thought to date to the 1500 - 1600s.*

## 5.2 Gustard Wood Common: Architectural Character

As Gustard Wood runs south past 'High Trees' it turns into a rough track, and after about 200m it terminates at Herons Farm, which marks the SE corner of the Conservation Area. Herons farmhouse is timber framed, at least 16th Century, possibly earlier, with a former stair turret at the southern end. It would have been cased in red brick in the 18th Century. It is statutorily listed. It faces east, toward the 17th Century timber framed main barn, also statutorily listed. The barn's east (front) elevation has three 19th Century glazing bar ventilators. Of interest is the letter 'H' picked out in fishtail tiles amongst the other clay pegtiles on this east elevation. Maintaining the double cambered lively appearance of these clay peg tiles is vital to the appearance of the conservation area.

Herons Farm Cottages are three mid-20th Century cottages built in the local vernacular - red brick in Sussex bond, partial timber weatherboarding, white to front, black to rear, machine clay tile roof with bonnet hips, casement windows. Although small extensions have been added, they enclose the farmyard to the north in the form of a symmetrical 'coach house', and form an important visual stop in views across the farmyard from the golf course. Together with the main barn, they form the 'public face' of Herons farmyard. The boundary of the Conservation Area runs along the rear of the Cottages, and recent hedge planting against timber picket fencing is welcomed. Ad hoc fencing and gates should be avoided.

The barn immediately south of the main barn is also timber framed, clay peg tile roof, with weatherboarded exterior. It is curtilage listed, as per the other pre-1948 barns and outbuildings in the farmyard complex. Care should be taken with treatment of openings to curtilage listed structures, to not introduce obviously modern materials where traditional designs and materials would be more sympathetic.

There is more freestanding flint and brick boundary walling within the farmyard which it is important to retain. Hard surfacing within the open farmyard forms part of the appearance of the Conservation Area, and should be in material suited to its rural setting, particularly as it forms the setting of the listed main barn.



*Herons farmhouse is thought to originally date to the early C16 with a potentially earlier core.*



*The cottages form an important part of the farmyard setting of the listed farmhouse and barn and provide a terminus to the view of the farmyard from the common.*



*The main barn at Herons Farm is a C17 Grade II listed timber framed barn with C19 features*



## 5.3 Identity Character Area 3: Delaport and Home Farm



## 5.3 Delaport and Home Farm: Architectural Character

Delaport is an estate of around 135 acres, taking its name from James Delaport who purchased land here in 1663. In the 18th century it was farmed by the Sibley family, then the Upton-Robbins who built Delaport House and the Coach House in 1870-1881. The phenomena of moneyed Victorians creating country estates in Hertfordshire founded the first Delaport House and coach house in formal landscaped grounds, with typical Victorian planting including firs, and a ha-ha fronting agricultural land to the SE, creating the sense of 'nature tamed'. They adopted the existing historic Home Farm as the 'home' farm to provide food to the estate, this farm obviously pre-dating the first of three incarnations of Delaport House.

The main Delaport House fell into disrepair and was demolished and rebuilt in the 1960s, in a curious mansard roofed design, quite different from its previous Victorian grandeur. However, permission was granted and renewed in 2012 for a replacement dwelling of a more sympathetic design, now completed.

Adjacent to Delaport House is Delaport Coach house which was built as part of the development of the estate in the 1870s. The coach house was designed with an attractive symmetrical frontage of decorative yellow gault brick, with contrasting brick string courses, steeply pitched slate roofs, and arched multipaned casement windows.

Historic photographs of the Victorian main house show many features in common with the Coach House. In addition to the features noted above, both buildings used delicately proportioned window openings (glazed/blind respectively) within the apex brickwork, though the main house had grander window proportions with full stone dressings.

The coach house and the former Delaport House were part of the part of the same phenomena of moneyed Victorians creating country estates in Hertfordshire as founded Blackmore End and represented this part of Gustard Woods history and development.

The other two parts of the estate comprise Delaport Lodge on the main Lamer Lane, and what were originally four workers' cottages at the bottom of the track up to Home Farm. Now one dwelling, Nos. 1-2 Delaport Cottages retain close to the original form and appearance of these attractive, simple early 20th Century cottages, and from a visual entry point up to the farm. Delaport Lodge, standing sentry by the roadside, is a very attractive brick single storey dwelling. Despite its modest proportions (as per most Lodge houses), and modern extension, its original materials and detailing match those of the first main Delaport House, with

grand stone window dressings and decorative rows of clay fishscale roof tiles mixed with the plain tiles. It was likely built with the main house.

Notable original features are the three white estate metal gateposts and decorative white metal personal gate at the entry up to Delaport House. These should be retained in situ.

Home Farm to the NE was retained as part of the estate until being sold to George Norbury in 1922. It remained a working 'home' farm (providing food to the estate) until Delaport was sold after the Second World War. The original 16/17th Century Home Farmhouse and the late 17th Century Long Barn are statutory listed buildings. The other outbuildings are of flint or timber weatherboarding, with clay tiles and are curtilage listed. Although this historic farm was the 'home' farm to the estate, it obviously pre-dates the three known incarnations of Delaport House. The farm is no longer a working farm and has been separated from the Delaport estate. The farm complex comprises house, barns and outbuildings of a variety of ages and materials, set around a central rectangular courtyard. Whilst retaining their traditional forms, they are no longer in agricultural use – the listed Long Barn, part of the north-west range, is used as storage and seasonal retail, whilst the timber weatherboarded barns to the south-west have been converted to residential use. All the outbuildings originally associated with the listed farmhouse are curtilage listed by virtue of being within the historic curtilage, and pre-dating 1/7/1948.

The farm complex presents itself as a rural idyll when viewed up the track off Lamer Lane, though some outbuildings could be said to be neutral/negative to the character of the Conservation Area.

Use of the fields north and east of Delaport and Home Farm is for grazing of horses and cattle. This pastoral scene is appreciated from the public highway, and is an important reminder of the original use of the whole Common, for grazing livestock. The resulting changes in flora e.g. buttercups from horse grazing, enrich the appearance of the area.



*Delaport Coach House was an attractive Victorian building and was the only remnant of the once grand, country estate.*



*Delaport Lodge, as viewed from Lamer Lane, marks the entrance to the former Delaport estate. The building has little changed since the 1980s.*



*1-2 Delaport Cottages, micro-renewables need to be carefully considered as they significantly alter the appearance of buildings*



## 5.4 Identity Character Area 4: **Blackmore End**



## 5.4 Blackmore End: Architectural Character

In a sense this identity area comprises four separate identities. Only Blackmore End (Firs Drive in the Conservation Area) can be said to have a coherent pattern of development. The other buildings each have their own story.

### Blackmore End

With the coming of the railway as far as Wheathampstead in 1860, and due to its proximity to London, Hertfordshire became sought after by the moneyed Victorians wishing to create 'country estates'. A London businessman, having built his fortune on Pickfords Removals, Birley Baxendale bought the Porter's End Farm estate in 1865, including what is now Firs Drive. He built his substantial Victorian/Italianate Blackmore End House, or 'Baxendales' by 1869 (later used as a WW1 hospital) just north of the Conservation Area, now Beech Way.

The house and land were sold by auction (at the Peahen in St Albans) in 1926 to a Luton solicitor and builder Mr HC Brown. The house was demolished within 6 months. However, the water tower was kept standing to supply water to the existing houses and Brown's planned new estate, Blackmore End. WW2 found Blackmore End as a patchwork of houses on irregular plots with water still supplied from the old water tower. The new houses were intended for people other than estate workers. Many were purchased by single women whose husbands were lost in the War. Most houses only had names, not numbers,

A few houses were built on what is now Firs Drive. One of these, The Belt, dominating the junction. Constructed between 1926 and 1933 in Arts and Crafts style, The Belt (more recently The Belt and Buckle Cottage) is a good example of the early phase of development of the Blackmore End estate. The original requirement was for one house per acre, to allow for each house to have a pony paddock, for the occupants to live out the rural idyll Brown was trying to create. Unfortunately, this requirement only remained until the owners chose to subdivide their plots. Many of the earliest houses in Firs Drive were lost in the 1960s development forming Firs Drive and The Broadway, but the spacious sylvan settings and larger than average gardens of the modern houses still remain. The Firs now comprises a group of substantial dwellings in a landscape-dominated setting. There is generous spacing between buildings, and views of buildings from Firs Drive are filtered through mature planting.

Much of the original grounds of The Belt were built on. However, The Belt still retains its architectural integrity as the main original house, and is considered to contribute positively to the conservation area.

Bleak House was built circa 1894 by Fred Wright, known as the 'cucumber king' at Covent Garden. It replaced a former thatched medieval wayside chapel, or chantry. A handsome double fronted house, of quality materials, it is now split into two, 'Applethwaite' and 'Bleak House', but still retains its original architectural symmetry. Constructed of local red brick, with typical late Victorian moulded terracotta panelling, decorative eaves, barge boards and ridge tiles. Window dressings are natural stone. It is important to maintain the symmetry and quality of materials of the original house and the original decorative metal railings and gate posts to the frontage,

Fred started the nursery behind the house in 1880-1890 after having the shop on the other side of the Common. Cucumber glasshouses covered one and a third acres, then WW2 saw further expansion. (Fred became infamous in 1898 for asserting commoners rights by grazing sheep on the golf course greens). The expanse of derelict greenhouses and iron water tower still remain just outside the Conservation Area.

The Red House is in Kimpton Parish, under North Hertfordshire District Council's jurisdiction. It is built on land owned by the Bailey Hawkins family of Stagenhoe, for their daughter circa 1921. As the name implies, it is red brick, with red clay tiles, set behind a formal front garden with shingle and a beech/holly hedge fronting Kimpton Road. Although now extended, the original symmetrical frontage still dominates. It provides a positive contribution to the appearance of the Conservation Area.

The listed 17th Century or earlier Cross Keys Public House enjoys a rural setting which should be maintained. There is a danger with public houses that accretions such as smoking shelters and barbeque areas can detract from their setting. The car park material is bare earth and rough gravel, with log edgings, which are suitable for the rural setting. The car parking area should not encroach further onto the Common land, nor be made too formal, e.g. by tarmac and fencing

The adjacent Cherry Tree cottage is an attractive Victorian house of brick and Welsh slate roof, with its original '1 over 1' sash windows with horns. The brick is now white painted roughcast, but its 'hideaway' location means this does not appear too stark.



*Bleak House, now separated into two dwellings, retains its high ornamentation and high quality detailing, including its original boundary treatments*



*The Red House positively contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area.*



*The Cross Keys is grade II listed and is situated in a prominent position*

## 6.0 Landscape Character and Trees

6.1 Gustard Wood Common has long been noted for its open heathland landscape with heather and even scarcer juniper. In the early 1900s there were large numbers of juniper bushes and trees round the Common. Locals reputedly said they were the only juniper trees south of Scotland. Most had gone by the 1950s. The Common is one of only about a dozen sites left in Hertfordshire which support both lowland heathland and acid grassland habitats, due to the nutrient-poor soil conditions. There has been an 80-90% decline nationwide in these two habitats over the past 100 years, with a 97% loss of heathland in Hertfordshire since 1940. The historic exercising of commoners' grazing rights used to maintain the open, nutrient-poor conditions required for this habitat.

The majority of the Common is now owned and managed by the Mid-Herts Golf Club, originally established in 1982. The northernmost section of the Common, north of The Slype, is left to heathy grassland and scattered scrub, managed with a 'light touch' by the golf club.

The club do not own the strip of land east of Lamer Lane (B651) which is recent woodland (maximum 50 years old) and dense scrub. This is of low ecological interest and if left unchecked will result in the loss of the more important landscape. This is managed by a voluntary group in conjunction with Wheathampstead Parish Council.

In 1994, following a notable decline in the important characteristic areas of heather and open heathland/grassland, the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) undertook an ecological survey and management report for the whole Common. It was found the ecological interest had declined over the last 40 years due both to encroachment of scrub woodland and general management techniques of the golf course. The HMWT worked closely with the club to implement the report's recommendations, and, by the late 1990s, positive regeneration of heather and other heathland plants e.g. gorse and spotted orchids had taken place on the Slype and the roughs of the golf course, and plans to clear and thin the encroaching woodland and stymie scrub invasion were in place. It will take decades to reclaim the scarce habitat of the Common, but it is vital work since only approximately 20 hectares of open, dry and wet heathland are left in Hertfordshire.

An updated ecological report by the HMWT, commissioned by the golf club, has been completed, and a management plan produced as a result to cover the next five years - "Mid-Herts Golf Course nature conservation management plan 2015-2020".

The club also appeared on the BBC's 'Countryfile' in January



2016, to advertise the continued close working relationship with the HMWT, and their plan to continue developing the course into a mosaic of heathland, acid grassland and secondary woodland.

The O.S. map of 1884 shows the whole Common was largely tree-less, with only scattered areas of scrub. The golf club's recently adopted management plan (available to view on their website) includes felling to thin out the secondary woodland. A series of HMWT- lead talk and walks around the course with members has been aimed at all users gaining a deeper understanding of the aims of the plan.

### 6.2 Hedgerows

Most of the lanes throughout the Conservation Area are characterised by native hedgerows such as holly and hawthorn. These form a very important part of the character of the Conservation Area and should be retained or replanted where lost. Examples are:

- The track running north from Heron's Farm is bounded on the west side by a hedgerow containing ancient trees (likely remains of ancient woodland pre 1600s). The presence of Yellow Archangel and other wild flowers are evidence of ancient woodland.
- The hawthorn hedge running along The Slype to the northern edge of the golf course.
- The beech/holly hedge in front of the Red House.
- The hawthorn/holly hedge leading out into Lamer Wood past Lamer Hill in Lower Gustard Wood, photos below;

### 6.3 Significant Trees and TPOs

There are several group and individual TPOs within the Conservation Area – ranging from two groups of silver birch in Lower Gustard Wood to individual oak and larch trees in front of 'Oakdell' on Firs Drive, and a group of larch, oak, lime and horse chestnut fronting Lamer Lane by 'The Larches'. This would have originally been in the garden of 'The Belt'. Others are in 'Oakdell's' rear garden and North-West of Delaport Home Farm.

However, all trees within a Conservation Area above a certain size have automatic protection, whether or not they are covered by a TPO, and permission must be sought from the Trees and Woodlands section of St Albans City and District Council before the lopping, topping, pruning or felling of any trees other than fruit trees. Permission for tree works within the North Hertfordshire District must be sought from the North Hertfordshire District Council.

## 7.0 Significant Views

Gustard Wood is characterised by the relationship between the settlements with central common and surrounding rural landscape. The significant views, discussed in detail below, illustrate aspects of the character and appearance of Gustard Wood which are considered to be of special architectural and historic interest. Views can be static or dynamic, and of certain specific features or of wider town or landscapes. Due to its rural nature, and pattern of settlement, many of the views in Gustard Wood are panoramic. The map to the right is annotated to describe the type of view and its location.



**View 1: Wheathampstead**

Wheathampstead is visible from the elevated position of the common and demonstrates the differences in the pattern of development. Wheathampstead has expanded significantly more in the C20 than Gustard Wood. The open, agricultural land between the two settlements plays an important role in maintaining the rural character of Gustard Wood.



**View 2: Home Farm**

The only view of Home Farm from the street, the view towards the farmyard demonstrates the historic role agricultural land has played in dispersing the pattern of settlement in Gustard Wood. The land in this area remains in use as pasture, the original use of the whole Common. The changes in flora this use encourages enriches the appearance of this part of the conservation area.

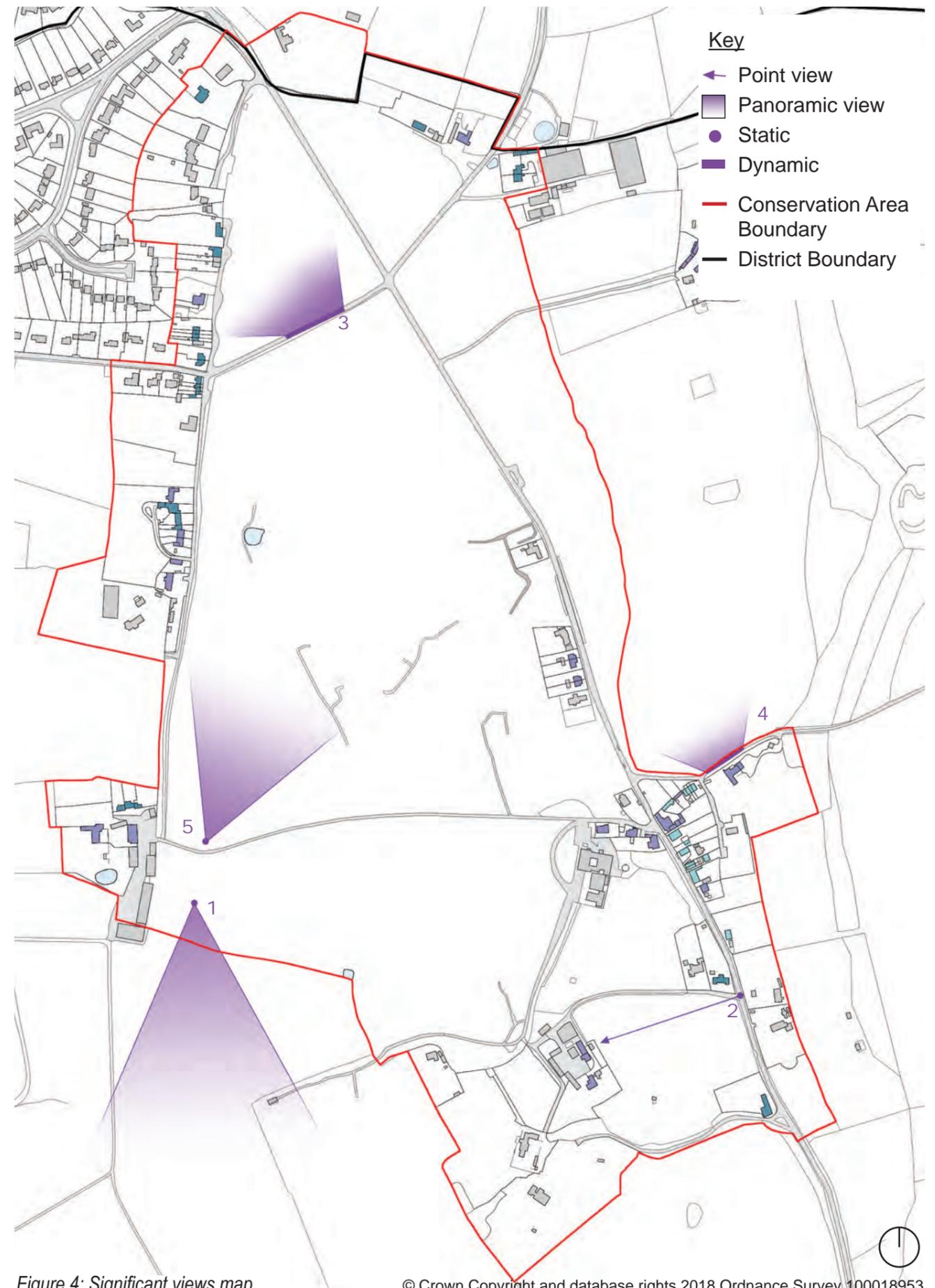


Figure 4: Significant views map

© Crown Copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100018953

## 7.0 Significant Views



**View 3: The Common (north)**

The dynamic view of this part of the common opens out and closes up with the varying hedge line, allowing views beyond to the vernacular buildings lining its edge. This view of the common demonstrates the pattern of dispersed settlement which is fundamental to the character of the conservation area. This area, the north part of the common is dominated by heathy grassland and scattered scrub.



**View 4: George Bernard Shaw's field**

This dynamic view illustrates the setting of the conservation area. The conservation area is bounded by glimpses of open space, terminating in woodland. This rural setting creates the almost isolated feel to the conservation area. This field is locally known as George Bernard Shaw's picnic spot and ancient woodland bounds the field to the right.



**View 5: The Common (south)**

This view illustrates the scale of the common. Due to the hedgerow and tree borders, the pattern of settlement at the common's border is not always visible, giving the area a secluded appearance. The southern part of the common has been in use as a golf course since 1935, which has significantly changed its character in comparison to the heathy grassland as seen in view 3 (see above).

## 8.0 Enhancement Proposals and Guidance

8.1 Many of the unlisted dwellings in Gustard Wood are good examples of 17th Century and possibly earlier dwellings, often refaced with local brick in the 18th Century. They represent modest, vernacular buildings in a rural area, whose function was to house the agricultural working population. It is important to the integrity of Gustard Wood that individual dwellings and associated outbuildings are not lost. Such vernacular, apparently 'low status' buildings are at risk and will become increasingly rare if they are neglected and their modest character is not appreciated. It is the Council's aim to continue to protect buildings it considers contribute positively to the Conservation Area by formal addition to the 'local list'.

8.2 Equally, there are examples of higher status landmark buildings which form an important part of the character of the Conservation Area, e.g., St Peter's Church. Loss of these would be an irrevocable detrimental step and have a negative effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Such buildings need clear protection from demolition through local listing.

8.3 Gaps in the linear built form are often important as visual breaks, allowing the landscape to dominate, and giving the characteristic rural setting which epitomises Gustard Wood as a settlement. Care should be taken not to infill all gaps with dwellings or outbuildings, but rather maintain the space between buildings necessary to retain the rural character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The balance of buildings to landscape is a key feature of the Conservation Area, and should be maintained.

8.4 The Council's aim is for retention and re-introduction of traditional materials and techniques for repair. It is important to use lime mortar and render for repairing traditionally constructed buildings rather than the more commonplace cementitious alternative. Lime is softer than the local brick and acts in a sacrificial manner in the very long term to ensure the brick and masonry are protected from decay. Repointing can be easily done and it is encouraged to re-point in a traditional manner - flat and slightly recessed behind the brick edges. Similarly, the use of lime render externally and lime plaster internally on historic buildings is crucial to ensure the building functions as originally intended. Use of cement or gypsum based plaster and render traps moisture in the building fabric which can lead to damp problems.

Many cottages and larger houses retain their attractive original brickwork which should not be painted over, as original brickwork is an important part of the character of the Conservation Area. The bricks for many earlier dwellings were made locally on The Common, and are 'soft reds',



*Compilation of traditional building materials, boundary treatments and windows located throughout the conservation area*

which have an attractive orange hue. The darker, brown/purple bricks, known as 'Luton Greys' are also a distinctive local brick. Painting of listed buildings requires Listed Building Consent.

Use of uPVC doors and windows should be avoided and are not sympathetic replacements for traditional painted door and windows – they lack the fine detailed mouldings and cannot be repaired, only replaced. The traditional appearance of windows and doors are important to keeping the character of the area. The loss of original historic glass is a loss of part of the character of the building. Changing the overall shape of the windows loses an important part of the building's character and often entails patching of brickwork which is then unfortunately painted to conceal the changes.

8.5 The latest Historic England Advice Note 1 stresses the importance of all departments within a local authority working corporately to ensure that development decisions respect the historic context. This should apply to the District and County Councils equally. Although it is the Hertfordshire County Council's responsibility to provide appropriate traffic measures and associated signage and street furniture, traffic management measures on Lamer Lane as it passes through Lower Gustard Wood have a significant visual impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Any future measures *carried out* should be undertaken in a sensitive manner, using local, rural materials. Associated signage and hard surfacing areas should be minimised, with kerbing, edging and surfacing in sympathetic materials. Standard concrete products are not suitable for this area. Granite or sandstone kerbing and timber posts are appropriate.

Throughout the settlement, the majority of the highways have no hard edges, except at junctions or pavement edges or around traffic calming measures. It is important to avoid introduction of highway kerbing wherever possible, to maintain the rural character.

8.6 There are some areas where signage and street furniture has accumulated over time, appearing unnecessarily cluttered, namely:- The SE corner of The Slype/Gustard Wood junction; the corner of Lamer Lane/entrance to the Golf Club; in the 'Old 16th Green' car park, and on the approach to the Lamer Lane junction with The Slype. Removal of unnecessary signage and street furniture or replacement with more traditional materials would be welcomed e.g. replacement of concrete bollards with timber in the 'Old 16th Green' car park (no longer part of the golf course).

The historic 'gas lantern' style lampposts in Lower Gustard Wood appear sympathetic and should not be replaced with a modern design.

## 8.0 Enhancement Proposals and Guidance

8.7 Boundary treatments are an important part of Gustard Wood. Retention of original boundary walls, fences and railings is always desirable e.g.: the attractive knapped flint and brick walls in front of the cottages next to St Peter's Church; the remaining original metal gates and railings around the Church should be retained, and new ones made to match as closely as possible, preferably purpose made. The timber paddock fencing leading up to Home Farm is a good example of appropriate rural fencing. Picket fencing, timber paddock gates and traditional metal estate fencing and gates are seen throughout the settlement. Modern ostentatious domestic metal entrance gates should be avoided, as should modern galvanised steel paddock gates.

8.8 Hedgerows and trees form a very important part of the character of the Conservation Area and should be retained or replanted where lost. Most of the lanes throughout the Conservation Area are characterised by native hedgerows such as holly and hawthorn.

Small changes can make a cumulative difference and should be treated sympathetically, e.g. the small electricity substation on Firs Drive has a new fence with a non-native laurel hedge recently planted. A more appropriate local species would have been a better choice.

All trees within a Conservation Area have automatic protection, and permission must be sought from the Trees and Woodlands section of St Albans City and District Council before the lopping, topping, pruning or felling of any trees other than fruit trees. More information about 'Trees in Conservation Areas' can be found on the Council's website under Planning/Trees and Woodlands. Permission for tree works within the North Hertfordshire District must be sought from the North Hertfordshire District Council.

8.9 The Common – the use of land within a Conservation Area is just as important in determining its character, as the visual appearance of development. The use of a large part of The Common for recreational golf of course largely dictates its character and appearance. However, the northernmost part - north of The Slype - is unenclosed grassland, with a small area of heather, available for public enjoyment, with currently a 'light touch' maintenance regime by the golf club. This continued use, and lack of hedges or other means of enclosure is welcomed as part of the adopted current management plan for the golf club, and allows a very important and attractive view across from The Slype to the houses on Gustard Wood. The golf club management plan includes continued maintenance of this open grassland, whilst thinning some of the woodland to the east, and around the remaining heather.

## 9.0 Summary

9.1 It is the Council's aim to encourage retention of those features which make the Conservation Area special – not just historic buildings and their architectural features, but their settings and boundary features – historic walls, metal estate fencing, picket fencing, and hedges. Every effort should be made to maintain important landscape features and the existing balance of buildings and landscape.

9.2 The proposals for ecological enhancement of The Common, contained within the golf club management plan, now adopted, are welcomed. New development should not conflict with achieving these aims.

## 10.0 Appendices

### STATUTORY LISTED BUILDINGS

#### Grade II

The following buildings were statutorily listed, all Grade II, in 1984. The list descriptions can be found on [www.historicengland.org.uk](http://www.historicengland.org.uk). Names and spellings are as per the list descriptions:

- 'Hillside' Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'Owens Corner' Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'Lamer Hill Gate' Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood, now 'Lamer Hill'
- 'The Dell' Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'Guelders' Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'Whippletrees' Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'The Old Plough Public House' Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'Dale Cottage and Brogdell Cottage; Tonnadice and Number 4 (Brogdell)' Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'Home Farmhouse' off Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'Barn 20metres North of Farmhouse at Home Farm' off Lamer Lane, Lower Gustard Wood
- 'Cross Keys Public House' Ballslough Hill
- 'The Tin Pot Public House' Gustard Wood
- 'No. 17' Gustard Wood
- 'No. 10' Gustard Wood, now 'The Woodman'
- 'Nos. 8 and 9' Gustard Wood
- 'No. 6' Gustard Wood
- 'No. 3 Rustling End' Gustard Wood
- 'Herons Farmhouse' Gustardwood Common (west side)
- 'Main barn at Herons Farm' Gustardwood Common (west side)

### LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS

#### Existing

The following buildings were included as locally listed within the original Conservation Area which was limited to Lower Gustard Wood:

- 'Timber Cottage' Lamer Lane - 18th C timber framed cottage clad in weather boarding.
- 'Nos. 1,2,3 and 4 Moss Cottages' Lamer Lane – mid 19th C red brick and slate cottages.
- 'Westwood Cottage' Lamer Lane – early 19th C weather boarded/rendered with slate roof.

- 'The Homestead' Lamer Lane – 18th C exterior to earlier structure. Red chequered brick.
- 'Nos. 1 and 2 Linden Cottages' Lamer Lane – 19th C red brick and slate.
- 'Oak Cottage' Lamer Lane – 18th C brick painted white, extended to south, old tiled roof.
- 'Holly Cottage' Lamer Lane – 18th C exterior to earlier structures, render with slate roof.
- 'Caldecote Cottage' Lamer Lane – 17th/19th C, rendered GF, boarded 1st F with slate roof.

#### Properties proposed to be Locally Listed as part of the 2019 review of the Conservation Area

The following buildings are within the wider extended Conservation Area, and are considered worthy of local listing:

- St Peter's Church, Lamer Lane
- 'Junipers', Lamer Lane
- Delaport Lodge, Lamer Lane
- Nos. 1-2 Delaport Cottages, Lamer Lane
- Nos. 1,2,3 Heron's Farm Cottages
- Nos. 11,12-13,14 Gustard Wood
- No. 18 Gustard Wood, 'Gustard Wood House'
- Flint and brick building outbuilding fronting driveway of No. 18 Gustard Wood
- Nos. 19,20,21,22-23 Gustard Wood
- Nos. 24 and 25 Gustard Wood
- Nos. 27,28, 29-30 Gustard Wood
- No. 37 Gustard Wood 'The Old Shop' (former general stores)
- No. 38 Gustard Wood 'Spinney End' (former Cricketer's PH)
- 'The Belt', Firs Drive
- 'Cherry Tree Cottage', off Ballslough Hill
- 'Applethwaite' and 'Bleak House', off Ballslough Hill

(Where two properties have been joined together, the address is shown in the format e.g. 'Nos. 2-3', with the commonly used number/s in bold)

### SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record database (MHT9540).
2. 'A History of the County of Hertford: Volume 2' originally published by Victoria County History, London 1908.
3. 'The Place Names of Hertfordshire' JEB Gover, Allen Mawer & FM Stenton English Place-name Society Vol. 15 Cambridge University Press 1938, reprinted 1970.
4. 'Tales from Old Wheathampstead and Gustard Wood, 1900- Portrait of a community' Letters from Bert Russell to Amy Coburn. Wheathampstead Local History Group 2007.
5. 'The Story of Bride Hall' by Marion Hill published by Phillimore and Co. Ltd 2006.
6. 'A History of Hertfordshire' by Tony Rook published by Phillimore and Co. Ltd 1997.
7. 'A Life of Apsley Cherry-Garrard' by Sara Wheeler published by Jonathan Cape 2001.
8. 'Hertfordshire' by Victoria Glendinning published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1989.
9. Website '[www.wheathampstead.net/history](http://www.wheathampstead.net/history)' – 'Talking to the old inhabitants of Wheathampstead in 1956'.
10. Website '[www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk](http://www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk)' Timeline
11. Website Laurie Seymour 'Some Wheathampstead Houses – a History' online.
12. 'Delightful and Bracing' – Blackmore End & Porter's End, The Legacy of the Baxendales' by Peter Hale, for the Kimpton History Group 2004.
13. 'Brick Building In Britain' by R.W. Brunskill published by Victor Gollancz Ltd 1990.
14. 1994 report 'Mid-Herts Golf Club – Gustardwood Common Ecology Study – prepared by Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, July 1994'
15. Mid-Herts Golf Club website including 'Mid-Herts Golf Course Nature Conservation Management Plan 2015-2020'.

Thanks to Wheathampstead Parish Council and Pippa Legg.

## **STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT**

Public consultation on this document took place between the 15th July 2019 and 26th August 2019. Consultation responses were considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the final Gustard Wood Conservation Area Character Statement which was adopted on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020

This document should be read together with saved Policy of 85, 86 and 87 of the St Albans City and District Local Plan Review 1994. It has been produced as part of DPR Project 9: Policy Statements - Conservation Areas and includes locally listed buildings

### **For more information please contact the Council at:**

Design and Conservation  
St Albans City and District Council  
St Peter's Street  
St Albans  
AL1 3JE

**Telephone:**  
01727 866100

**Email:**  
[Design.conservations@stalbens.gov.uk](mailto:Design.conservations@stalbens.gov.uk)

**Website:**  
<http://www.stalbens.gov.uk>

If you require this information in another format e.g. in large print, Braille, audio or in another language other than English, please contact the Equalities Officer on 01727 814602 or email [equalities@stalbens.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@stalbens.gov.uk)

Part of the Gustard Wood Conservation Area lies across the district boundary, within the North Hertfordshire District. If you have any enquires regarding this area, please contact North Hertfordshire District Council.

