

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Civic Amenities Act 1967 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. Sandridge Conservation Area was originally designated in 1969. It was extended in 1977 and again in 1986.

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 Local Plan Review (adopted November 1994) sets out the general principles which will be observed when dealing with applications for new development and redevelopment, (Policy 85).

1.3 The aims of this 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.

2.0 Historical Background

2.1 Sandridge is situated on the chalky, western upland area of Hertfordshire on an area of higher ground between the Ver and Lea valleys. In Sandridge the underlying chalk is covered by local deposits of sand and clay. The village itself lies in a shallow depression or dry valley and the surrounding land rises gently away on all sides. Until recently the village was subject to periodic flooding.

2.2 The present day village of Sandridge dates back to at least Saxon times, although settlement here is much older and is mentioned in charters from the eighth century. A Roman Road between Verulamium and Welwyn passes close by and continues northwards as Coleman Green Lane crossing the Lea at Water End. Nearby is the Iron Age earthwork known as Beech Bottom. The main encampment or *oppidum* of the Catuvellanau was at Wheathampstead but subsequently moved to Verulamium.

2.3 The parish church of St. Leonard is situated on a low hill away from the main road. The unusual chancel arch contains Roman bricks which may have been found locally, perhaps coming from some farmstead located close to the Roman town of Verulamium. St. Leonard's Church was consecrated in the twelfth Century and belonged to the Abbey of St. Albans.

2.4 Settlement grew up around the church either in Church End or along the High Street. The village contains a number of timber-framed buildings mainly of sixteenth and seventeenth century date. The oldest and most important house is Pound Farm which probably dates from the late fifteenth century.

2.5 The population of the parish of Sandridge grew rapidly between 1800 and 1900. Most of the cottages in the High Street date from this period. After the war further expansion took place to the north and east. Langley Grove was developed in the 1950's and Lyndon Mead in the 1960's. Recently development has been confined to smaller infilling schemes, such as the old chemical

works site. Sandridge is defined as a Green Belt Settlement in the Local Plan and further expansion of the village beyond its present boundaries is unlikely because of its inclusion in the Green Belt.

3.0 Archaeological Interest

3.1 Despite being located in an area of considerable archaeological interest there are no significant visible monuments within the conservation area. However, the whole of the central area, believed to be the extent of the Saxon and Medieval village, is subject to a recording condition (A.S.R.19).

4.0 Industrial History

4.1 Most local industries were associated with agriculture and have left little impact. Pound Farm in the centre of the village is a working farm and contributes much to the rural character of the village. The site of the local abattoir survives and has been converted to other uses. Five public houses and several shops were previously located in the High Street but now there are only three public houses surviving, a village shop and a petrol station.

5.0 Essential Characteristics

5.1 The initial conservation area boundary comprised the presumed extent of the Saxon and Medieval village. It was extended northwards in 1977 to include 1 and 2 High Street, and again in 1986 to include Spencer Place and the Lyndon Eventide Home. The settlement grew up alongside the main road between St. Albans and Wheathampstead, which became the High Street, with an additional cluster of cottages around the Church. To the west a country lane leads off to Sandridgebury which can be glimpsed up on the hill. To the east House Lane runs into open countryside but has been more extensively developed on its northern side. The village remained small until the 1930's when two Rural District Council Housing developments were commenced. Further development has taken place since the War to the north-east. The western side of the village, has escaped recent development and buildings on this side of the High Street back onto open farmland and the recreation ground.

6.0 Architectural Character and Quality of Buildings

6.1 The majority of the listed buildings are clustered around Church End and probably formed the core of the original settlement. Most of these were originally timber-framed but little or no framing is now visible. All have now been refaced in stucco or refronted in brick. Later development in the High Street took the form of short terraces of cottages faced in brick.

6.2 Most buildings are two storeys in height. Development along the main road comprised a variety of different building forms, detached, pairs or short terraces. Mainly they have hipped roofs parallel with the road although some of the later nineteenth century houses have gables and decorative barge boards. Most recent buildings, such as Hopkins Crescent with its linked pairs and broken roofline, blend in well with the surviving older buildings.

10.0 Summary

10.1 It is the Council's policy to encourage the retention of those features that make the conservation area special; including historic buildings, trees, hedges, walls, fences etc. In addition the Council demands a high standard of design and materials for any new development in the conservation area.

10.2 If further advice or guidance is required please contact the Planning and Heritage Department, St. Albans City and District Council Offices, PO Box 2, Civic Centre, St. Albans, Herts. AL3 3JE.

Tel. St. Albans (01727 866100).

STATUTORY LISTED BUILDINGS

CHURCH END

Church of St. Leonard, Lych Gate (and wing walls) to St. Leonard's Church, 1, 2 and 3, 4, 5, and 6, Queen's Head P.H., 9, 10, and 11

HIGH STREET (West Side)

5, 9, Pound Farmhouse, Barn to south of Pound Farmhouse, Darby's Stores and 25

HIGH STREET (East Side)

20, 22, Rose and Crown P.H.

LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS

CHURCH END

19, 20, 21, 22,

HIGH STREET (West Side)

1, 3, 11, 15, 17, 23, The Green Man, P.H., Village Hall

HIGH STREET (East Side)

2, (Lyndon Eventide Home), Beech Leaf Cottage2a, 4, 16, 18, 34, 36, 40, 42, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 70, 72, 74, 84, 88, 90, 92, 94, 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112.

HOPKINS CRESCENT

1-20 (cont.)

SPENCER PLACE

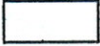



1-18 (cont.)

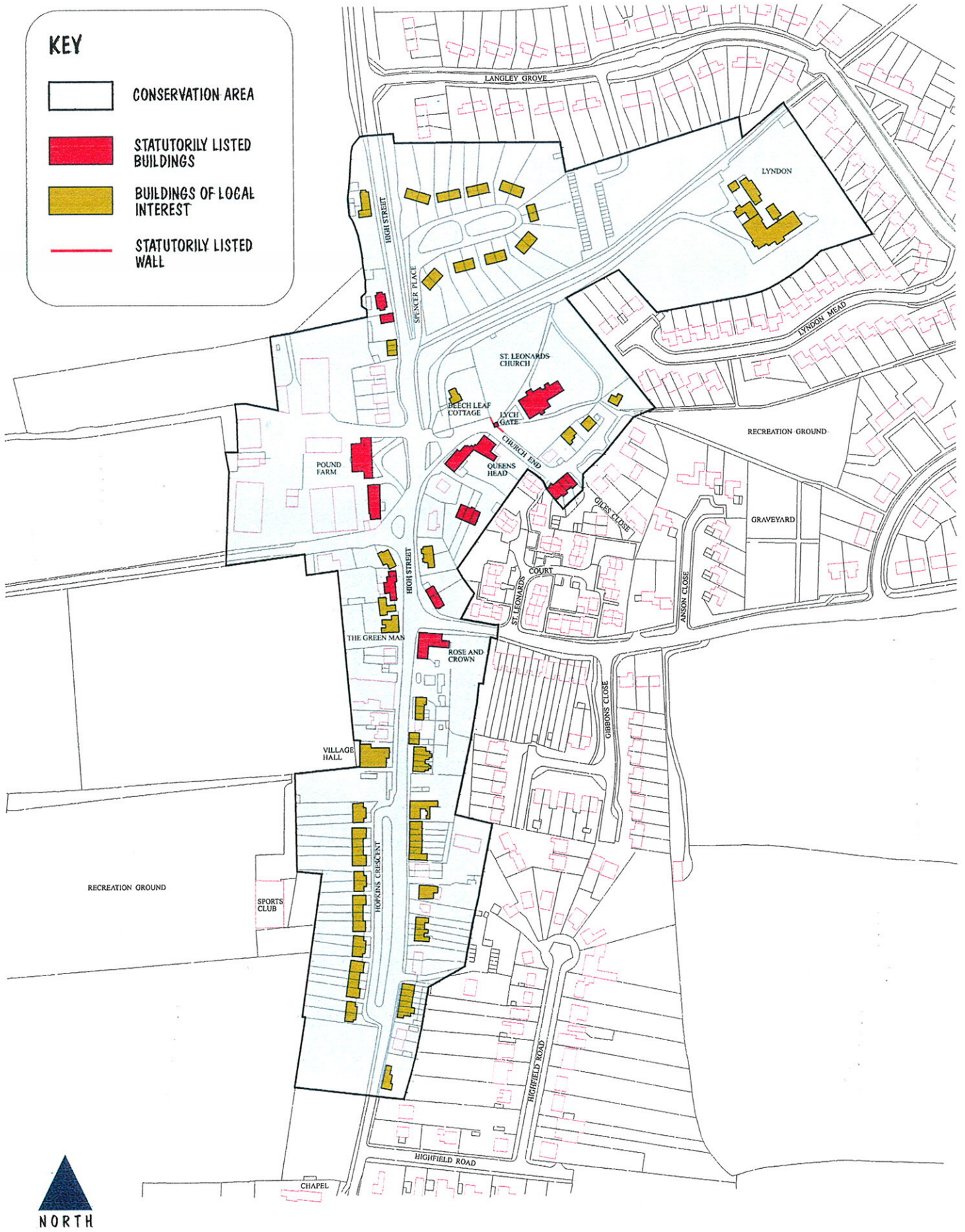
OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Department of the Environment and Department of National Heritage
Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment

St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994

KEY

-  CONSERVATION AREA
-  STATUTORILY LISTED BUILDINGS
-  BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST
-  STATUTORILY LISTED WALL



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TITLE: SANDRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA

DRAWN: MJM

DATE: JANUARY 2000

SCALE: Not to Scale

