

Winchmore Hill & Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

Approved February 2015



www.enfield.gov.uk



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prepared by

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Historic environment policy and practice

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Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Area Character Appraisal

SUMMARY OF 2013 REVIEW

The Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas character appraisal was originally adopted and published in 2006. It was reviewed and updated during February and March 2013 by the Drury McPherson Partnership. The appraisal now contains updated and corrected text and new photographs taken in early 2013. The original maps have been amended. The appraisal should be read in conjunction with the revised Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas Management Proposals (in part 2 of this document), which contain management recommendations that flow from the revised appraisal.

There have been no substantial physical changes in the Conservation Area since 2006. A development of 7 new houses on the former King Easter Garden Centre site off Station Road to the south-east of Hoppers Road¹ has had little visible impact on the area. Only one house is easily seen from The Green.

The key objectives of the 2007 management proposals were the Article 4 Direction, which was made in 2008, and the extension of the boundary of Winchmore Hill Green Conservation Area to include part of Station Road, achieved in 2009.

The former builders yard in Wilson Street is a possible development site although there are no current approved plans. The existing buildings on the site make a negative contribution to the character of the area. It is important that any development here is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area.

The most visible issue facing the conservation area is the row of unsympathetic modern shop-fronts facing The Green. In due course, when applications are made to replace or refurbish them, the opportunity to re-instate appropriate traditional designs should be taken.

¹ Too recent at the time of writing to have been plotted on the Ordnance Survey map

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Conservation areas

- 1.1.1 Conservation areas are areas of ‘special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’² and were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. Designation imposes a duty on the Council, in exercising its planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area³. In fulfilling this duty, the Council does not seek to stop all development, but to manage change in a sensitive way, to ensure that those qualities which warranted designation are sustained and reinforced rather than eroded.
- 1.1.2 Conservation area designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and the lopping or felling of trees above a certain size. However, it does not control all forms of development. Some changes to family houses (known as “permitted development”) do not normally require planning permission. These include minor alterations such as the replacement of windows and doors, or the alteration of boundary walls. Where such changes would harm local amenity or the proper planning of the area (for example, by damaging the historic environment), the Council can introduce special controls, known as Article 4 directions, that withdraw particular permitted development rights⁴. The result is that planning permission is required for these changes.

1.2 The purpose of a conservation area appraisal

- 1.2.1 A conservation area character appraisal aims to define the qualities that make an area special. This involves understanding the history and development of the place and analysing its current appearance and character - including describing significant features in the landscape and identifying important buildings and spaces. It also involves recording, where appropriate, intangible qualities such as the sights, sounds and smells that contribute to making the area distinctive, as well as its historic associations with people and events.
- 1.2.2 An appraisal is not a complete audit of every building or feature, but rather aims to give an overall flavour of the area. It provides a benchmark of understanding against which the effects of proposals for change can be assessed, and the future of the area managed. It also identifies problems that detract from the character of the area and potential threats to this character.

² Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 s.69

³ *ibid*, Section 72

⁴ Replacement Appendix D to Department of Environment Circular 9/95 (November 2010), DCLG

1.2.3 This appraisal of the Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas supports Enfield Council's commitment in The Enfield Plan (Core Strategy adopted 2010), and its duty under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and to consult the public about the proposals. The assessment in the appraisal of the contribution made by unlisted buildings and other elements to the character of the Conservation Area is based on the criteria suggested in English Heritage's guidance *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2011), reproduced at the end of this document.

1.3 Conservation in Enfield

- 1.3.1 Since the 1870s, Enfield has developed from a modest market town surrounded by open country and small villages to a pattern of suburbs on the edge of London. This transformation was triggered by the advent of suburban railways and took place in a piecemeal manner, with former villages being developed into local shopping centres and industries being developed along the Lea Valley. Conservation areas in Enfield reflect this pattern of development, including old town and village centres, rural areas centred on the remains of former country estates, examples of the best suburban estates and distinctive industrial sites. Some of the smaller designated areas are concentrated on particular groups of buildings of local importance.
- 1.3.2 Winchmore Hill started life as a small rural village, which was transformed into a smart residential suburb in the early 20th century. Together, Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas encompass the surviving historic settlement, which still retains much of the character of the former village. Winchmore Hill Green was designated as a conservation area in 1968 and extended in 1974. It was extended in 2009 to include part of Station Road. Vicars Moor Lane was designated in 1970.

1.4 Planning policy framework

- 1.4.1 The legal basis for conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. National policy guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012, which *inter alia* requires local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. The Enfield Plan sets out a basic framework of conservation policies (Core Strategy: *Core Policy 31*, Draft Development Management DPD: *Draft DMD 44*) for all areas. This conservation area character appraisal will be used to support the conservation policies that form part of the Core Strategy.

2 APPRAISAL OF SPECIAL INTEREST

2.1 Location and setting

- 2.1.1 Winchmore Hill is situated approximately 1¼ miles (2km) to the south of Enfield town centre. As the name suggests, the settlement occupies the crown of a hill, which forms the tip of ridge extending north east from Southgate. To the south and east, the land falls gradually away towards the River Lea. To the north and west, deep valleys formed by Salmon’s Brook and Houndsden Gutter give dramatic views from Wades Hill to the spire of the church of St Mary Magdalene in Windmill Hill, 1km to the north. The surface geology of the area is heavy clay, with occasional outcrops of plateau gravel.



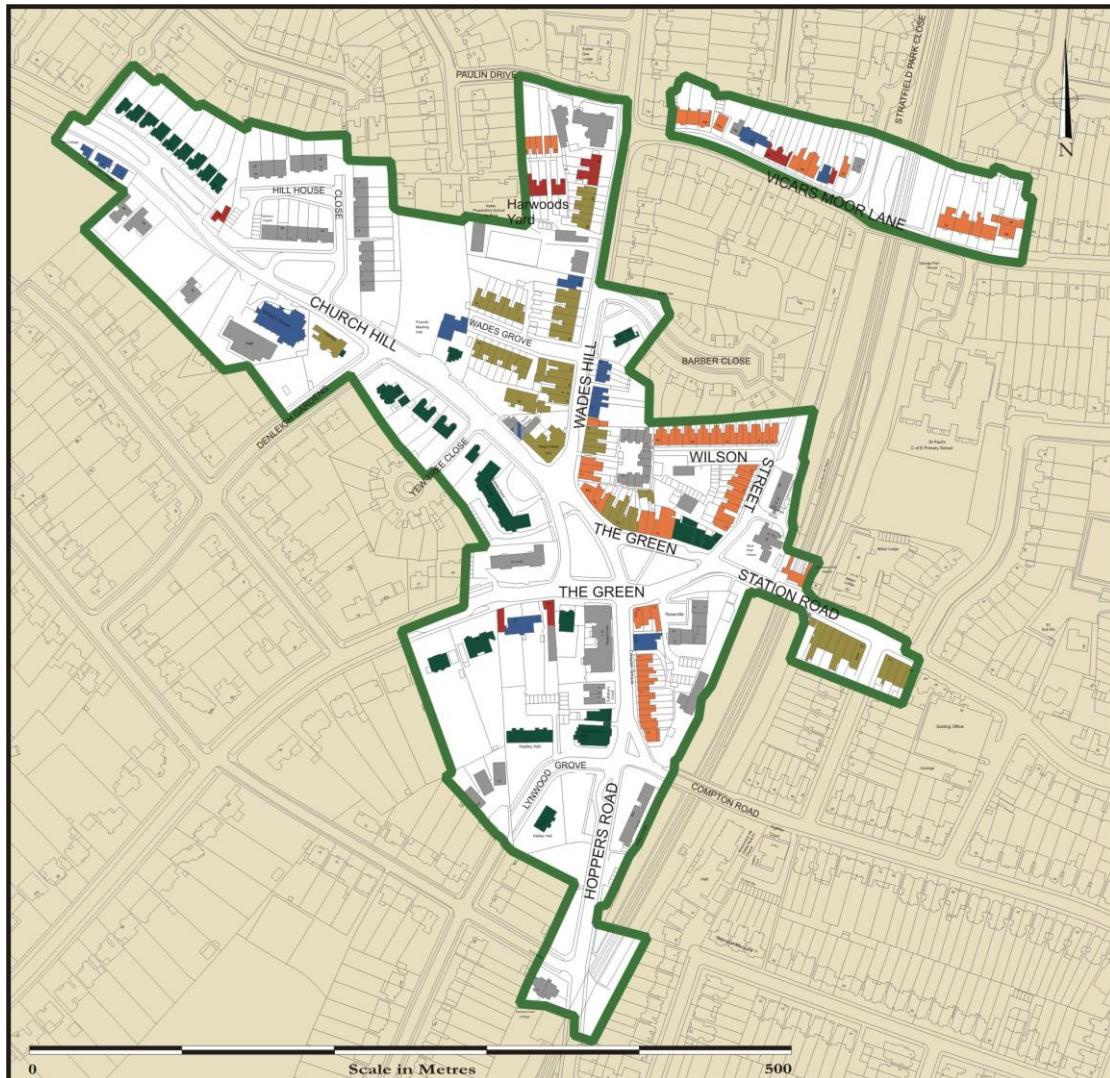
*Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane
Conservation Area Character Appraisal : location map*

— Conservation Area boundary

Figure 1: Location map

- 2.1.2 The Winchmore Hill Green Conservation Area covers the historic village centre, now encircled by an extensive residential suburb except to the west, which borders Grovelands Park. Lack of any visual link between the village and park, however, gives the impression that the designated area is completely surrounded by housing. The Conservation Area also includes the railway bridge and station, and the shopping parades on the south side of Station Road, opposite the station.
- 2.1.3 The Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Area consists of a group of early- to late-19th century properties on the north side of a residential street lying slightly to the north of the village centre and separated from Winchmore Hill Green by a belt of interwar housing.

2.2 Historical development



*Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Area Character Appraisal:
historical development*



Figure 2: Historical development

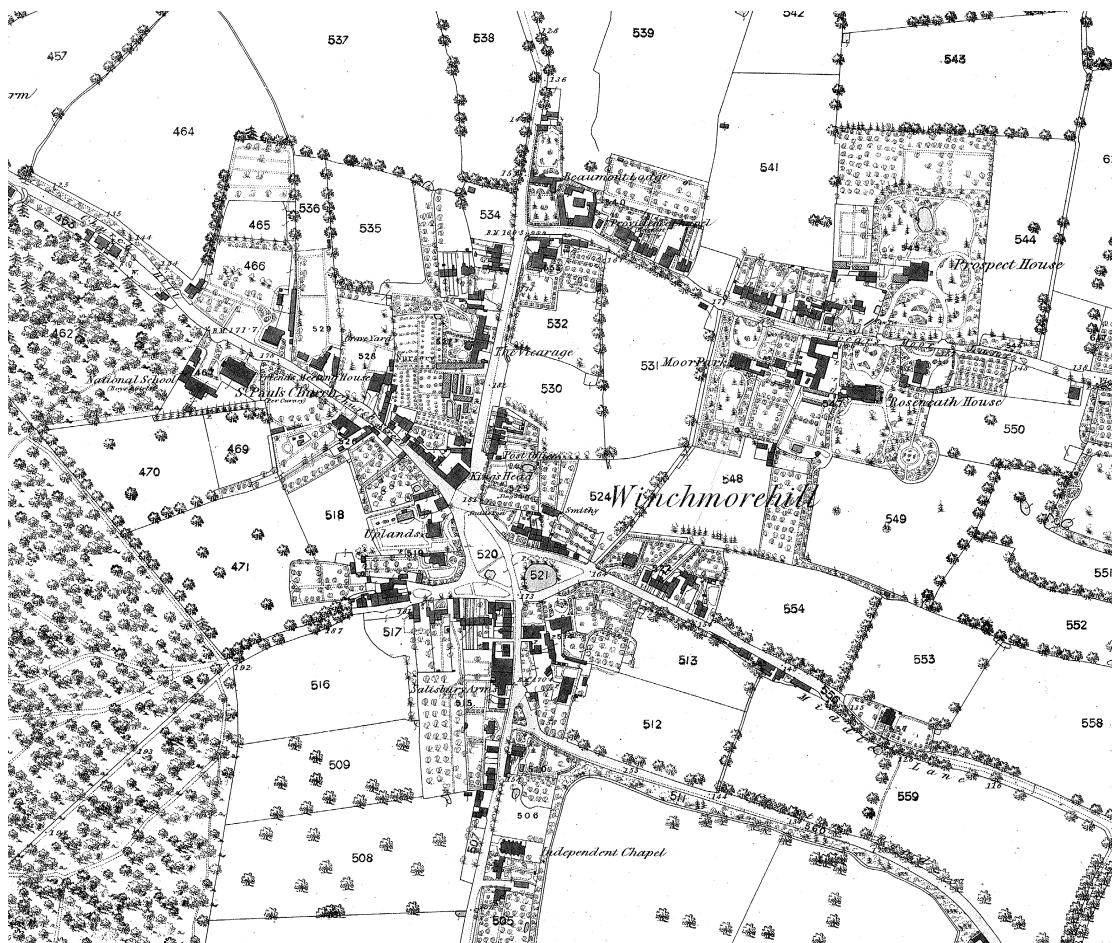
2.2.1 Winchmore Hill had its origins in the medieval period. The first documentary reference to the village is in 1319⁵, though the name may be Saxon, referring to “Winsigs boundary hill”⁶. This was a small settlement, with no church or manor. The growth of the village was probably discouraged by the poorness of the surrounding clay soil, which would not have lent itself to agriculture. It is likely that the villagers relied on

⁵ Baker T. (ed) *Victoria county History of Middlesex V.* (OUP 1976) p.137

⁶ Greater London SMR ref: 080670/00/00

extracting timber and charcoal from the surrounding woods, as much as on farming⁷.

- 2.2.2 Little is known about the village in the 16th and 17th centuries, though it did gain a certain notoriety as the home of Elizabeth Sawyer, the ‘witch of Edmonton’. Sawyer was executed in 1621 after allegedly cursing a neighbour, who mysteriously died shortly afterwards⁸. Also unusual was the community of early Quakers who began meeting in the barn of a sympathetic local landowner, John Oakley, in 1682 and erected their first meeting house in 1687⁹.
- 2.2.3 The earliest surviving buildings in the village, the Old Bakery and Rowan Tree and Woodside houses (formerly a single dwelling), date from the early part of the 18th century. Further buildings from this period, demolished during the 20th century, including a group of cottages on the south side of The Green and the original Kings Head, suggest that a sizeable settlement existed at that time.



- 2.2.4 The village appears to have expanded dramatically in the later part of the 18th and early 19th centuries, when the discovery of Epsom salts gave it a brief reputation as a spa. The 1801 enclosure map shows a dispersed settlement, with a few houses on the green and a scatter of buildings along Wades Hill, Church Hill, Station Road and Vicars Moor Lane¹⁰. Buildings from this period include the Quaker meeting house (rebuilt 1790), Glenwood House (re-faced in the 19th century) and 17-29 Wades Hill, the Church of St Paul (1828), Devon House and Woodside Cottages in Church Hill, and 82-84 and 100-104 Vicars Moor Lane. This dispersed pattern of settlement continued until the mid 19th century, and is shown on the first edition of the 25" OS map of 1867¹¹.
- 2.2.5 Between 1867 and 1896, the centre of the village acquired its current form, with the building of the terraces of shops and houses that now surround The Green and its entrances. Vicars Moor Lane similarly expanded to its present form during this period.
- 2.2.6 The railway station at Winchmore Hill opened in 1871¹². This did not immediately prompt large-scale suburban development, however, due to the unwillingness of local landowners, particularly the Taylor family of Grovelands, to sell their estates for building. Consequently, Winchmore Hill remained an exclusive area, popular with the middle and upper classes.
- 2.2.7 In 1902, the Taylor family finally sold land to developers and the transformation of the Winchmore Hill area from a village into a suburb began in earnest. This process was largely complete by 1935¹³. While the setting of both Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane was radically altered, physical change was initially limited to the rebuilding of the Kings Head in 1899 and the infilling of remaining empty plots around Winchmore Hill Green. Between the First and Second World Wars, groups of suburban semi-detached houses and flats were built in Church Hill and Hoppers Road and the Salisbury Arms public house was rebuilt.
- 2.2.8 Since the Second World War, development has been limited to the construction of blocks of flats on the last remaining patches of open space.

2.3 Archaeology

- 2.3.1 Winchmore Hill Archaeological Priority Area (APA) covers an area surrounding a possible Saxon settlement¹⁴. Despite watching briefs in the vicinity of the Friends Meeting House and at Wade Mews in 2001, the only archaeological find of significance in the village was the chance discovery

¹⁰ Copy of enclosure map and schedule of allotment in Robinson, W. *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Edmonton London 1819*

¹¹ 1st edition of the 25" OS map sheet vii.10, 1867

¹² Baker *op. cit.* p.143

¹³ 1935 revision of the 25" OS map sheet vii.10

¹⁴ Greater London HER Ref. MLO10657

of a Mesolithic long bladed stone implement¹⁵. However, with continuous human occupation dating back at least to the medieval period, there is a strong possibility that there are buried remains in the area.

2.4 Identification of character areas

- 2.4.1 Winchmore Hill Green falls into three distinct areas; first, The Green itself and the surrounding urban-style housing in Wades Hill, Hoppers Road and Wilson Street, and Church Hill, which is relatively suburban in appearance.
- 2.4.2 Second, the railway station and bridge and the shopping parades opposite form a small, distinct character area to the east of the railway, but with strong visual links to and from The Green and its setting.
- 2.4.3 Thirdly, due to its entirely residential nature and physical separation from Winchmore Hill Green, the Vicars Moor Lane area has its own distinct character.



Figure 4: Spatial Analysis

2.5 Character Area A: The Green

Spatial analysis

- 2.5.1 The heart of the area is The Green, an irregular triangle of open land on a gently sloping site, where five roads (Hoppers Road, Broad Walk, Church

¹⁵ Baker *op. cit.* p.137

Hill, Wades Hill and Station Road) converge: the central green is bisected north/south by a road also known as The Green. The area is contained to the north by terraced houses, giving it a compact and inward-looking feel. The narrow entrances and its hill-top position restrict views into The Green, heightening the sense of enclosure. Within the central space, the key features are the lawns and trees that form The Green. Apart from the corner turret of the King's Head public house, which dominates the western end, the surrounding buildings provide a general backdrop.

- 2.5.2 North of The Green, Wades Hill is initially urban in nature. At the top of the hill, the narrow road is fronted by tightly packed terraces of shops, beyond which is terraced housing and then a more suburban pattern of semi-detached houses outside the Conservation Area. Terracing is maintained in Wades Grove, a quiet residential cul-de-sac branching off to the west. There is a similar pattern of gradual suburbanisation to the east, where the compact terraces of Wilson Street, and shops of Station Road (outside the Conservation Area) give way to semi-detached houses. To the south, along Hoppers Road, the road widens out and the terraces give way to an untidy triangle of grass. The open ground and falling terrain provides good views of the Salisbury Arms and Compton Terrace, which form an effective gateway into the village centre. To the west, in Broad Walk (outside the Conservation Area) and Church Hill, the compact townscape of The Green abruptly surrenders to suburbia.

Character analysis

The Green

- 2.5.3 The Green retains much of the appearance of a historic village centre, with a mix of shops, restaurants and housing generating a lively atmosphere. The roads are very busy all day, although the traffic appears to be mainly local; there are few heavy vehicles or buses. Pedestrian traffic is consequently light and cyclists are notable by their absence. This gives the area a distinctly rural feel. The neat lawns and mature trees of The Green play a key role in maintaining the ‘village-like’ atmosphere. High quality street furniture, including late 20th century iron railings, a K6 listed telephone kiosk at the eastern end of The Green, replica Victorian-style lamps and bollards, and simple ground surfaces (tarmac roads, large concrete paving slabs on pavements and granite kerbs), while urban in nature, complement the greenery and create a sense of orderliness. This pleasant ambience is disrupted principally by street clutter associated with traffic management, including blue mini-roundabout signs, internally illuminated direction bollards, and numerous controlled parking signs and parking ticket machines.



Figure 5: The Green, looking east



Figure 6: The Green, north side

Most of the buildings surrounding The Green are brick-built, flat-fronted Victorian terraces. While none of these is outstanding individually, as a group they make an important contribution to the area. The continuous building line, and the strong rhythm set up by a repeated pattern of tall sash windows, give a sense of cohesion, while the varied eaves height, mixture of red and yellow brickwork, and variations in the detailing of window surrounds results in a varied and interesting streetscape reflecting the piecemeal development of the area. Numbers 2-8, an inter-war terrace of neo-Georgian shops on the north side of the green, continue this theme, blending in with the earlier buildings. Most of these properties remain in near-original condition externally. However, some have suffered from the loss of original windows, the painting of façades, or the addition of false shutters.

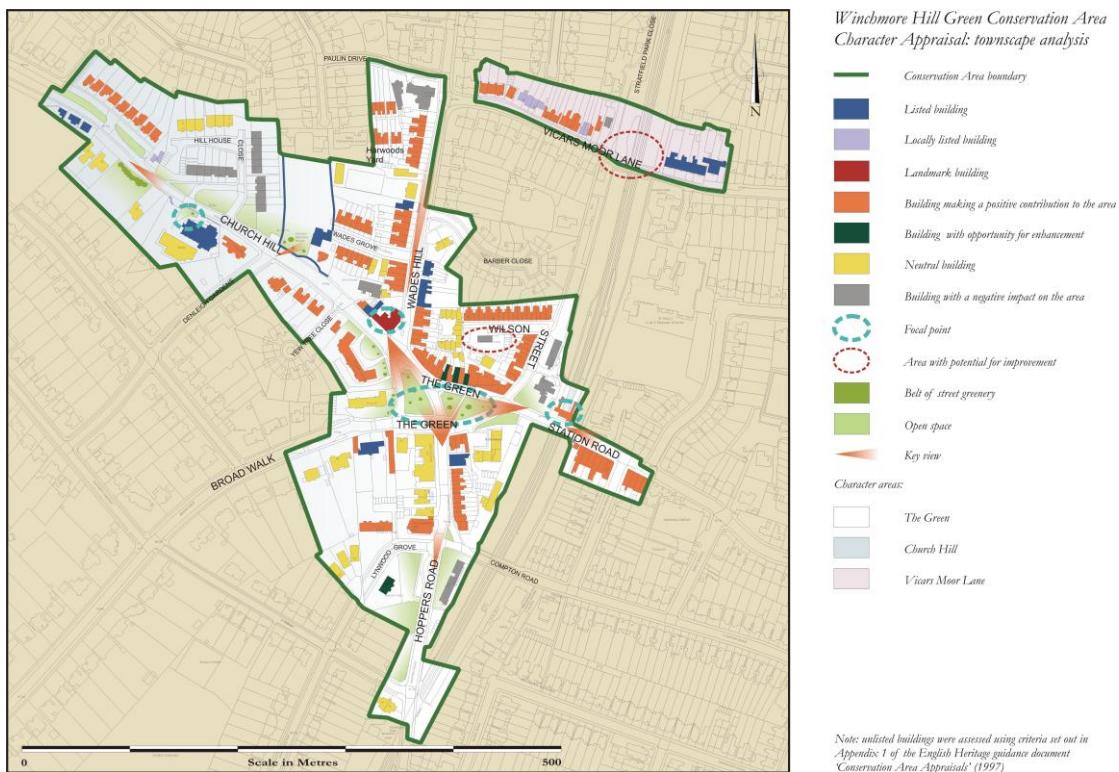


Figure 7: Townscape analysis



Figure 8: The Green; 19th century shops



Figure 9: The Green 19th century shop-front

- 2.5.4 Shopfronts are an important aspect of these buildings. No. 30 has a good late Victorian shopfront, slightly altered by the addition of modern mouldings and another good, double shop-front survives at 32-34, although it is somewhat obscured by a modern roller-blind and miniature conifers in hanging baskets. Several other shopfronts in this group have original elements, mainly pilasters, consoles and fascias. Traditional hanging signs also add variety to the street scene. Unfortunately, insensitive modern signage, particularly over-large, internally illuminated fascias, and bland plate-glass detracts from the quality of many of them.
- 2.5.5 Several buildings stand out. Most prominent is the group composed of The King's Head and Devon House, an exuberant Edwardian public house with an elaborate corner turret playfully paired with a more restrained (and largely rebuilt), later 18th century house in a simple classical style. Less prominent, but more important architecturally, are Rowan Tree House and Woodside House (nos. 35-37 The Green), an early 18th century house with a part-painted, part-rendered front elevation with later architraves, tucked away in the south-western corner of The Green.



Figure 10: The Kings Head PH



Figure 11: Rowan Tree and Woodside Houses

2.5.6 The otherwise consistent building line around The Green is disrupted in places by 20th century buildings. Most of these are utilitarian post war flats and terraces, reticently sited behind front lawns and partially hidden by trees, limiting their adverse impact on the area. More visible, and therefore damaging, is Moor Park House, a bulky red brick block of flats at the extreme eastern tip of The Green. Also prominent is Repton Court, a newly built (1998-9) block of flats on the Corner of Hoppers Road and the Green. This Georgian pastiche makes an effort to fit in with the townscape, but, due to its crude proportions, overly large roof, overtly modern brickwork and a poorly designed corner feature, fails to do so convincingly.

Wades Hill

2.5.7 The character of Wades Hill is initially very similar to that of The Green, being dominated by Victorian and Edwardian shops, some (nos. 3, 5 and 7) with largely original shopfronts. The narrower road and lack of greenery allows these buildings to have more impact. Moving down the hill, shops are replaced by two storey, terraced houses, and the road acquires a quieter atmosphere. The diversity of architectural styles, ranging from late-Georgian to Edwardian, and the combination of two and three storey buildings, gives the street a varied and interesting appearance. A consistent building line and widespread use of yellow stock brick gives some unity to an otherwise disparate group.



Figure 12: 15-21 Wades Hill



Figure 13: 32-39 Wades Hill

- 2.5.8 Of particular interest is the group formed by 15-21 and 23-29 Wades Hill, a charming row of unassuming early 19th century cottages in a mixture of stock brick and weatherboarding, and Glenwood House, a tall, narrow 18th century townhouse. This was formerly part of a pair, but is now awkwardly juxtaposed against lower buildings, making it appear overly tall and skinny. 16-26 Wades Hill, an assertive Edwardian red brick terrace at the top of the hill, with a mansard roof and square bay windows, also makes a strong contribution. At the northern end of the area, an ineptly detailed modern block of flats forms a disappointing gateway. Many buildings suffer from poor quality alterations, particularly the replacement of original sash windows in uPVC and the substitution of concrete tiles for slate roofs. Nos. 50-56, a group of mid 19th century cottages with distinctive hipped roofs, have been particularly damaged by such alterations.
- 2.5.9 Boundaries are important in this street. Small front gardens are common, often bounded by low stock brick walls capped with half round blue bricks. Some of these walls have been removed and replaced with driveways. The resulting large areas of drab paving, with parked cars dominating front elevations, are highly detrimental to the street scene. A gravel track to the west of Wades Hill leads to Harwoods Yard, a collection of mid- and late-19th century estate cottages. Their back-street location gives these simple, bay-fronted stock brick houses a pleasing atmosphere of seclusion.



Figure 14: 50-56 Wades Hill



Figure 15: 16-26 Wades Hill

Wilson Street

2.5.10 Wilson Street, a cul-de-sac lying, to the north east of The Green, contrasts sharply with the bustle of the centre. The principal attractions of the street are two rows of two-storey, late Victorian terraces in an unspoilt, quiet setting. The first consists of yellow brick, bay-fronted houses, with slate roofs and tiny front gardens bounded by low brick walls or picket fences. Around the corner, the terraces are of red brick, fronting directly onto the road and enriched with elaborate cast iron porches. A limited number of replacement doors and windows detracts from the uniform appearance of the houses, particularly where the sizes of window openings have been changed. The shabby yard on the south side of the street, and the overpowering bulk of Moor Park House to the east, also detract from the appearance of the area.



Figure 16: Wilson Street, porch details



Figure 17: Wilson Street, general view westwards

Hoppers Road

2.5.11 On Hoppers Road, the southern entrance into The Green, buildings again define the character of the area. The most important are the handsome Neo-Jacobean style Salisbury Arms public house and the chunky mansard roofed Compton Terrace, a two storey Victorian terrace stepping up the hill: this is sadly marred by the widespread and varied modern replacement, which destroy its unity. The positive contribution made by these buildings is enhanced by their setting in an open grassed area and a single mature chestnut tree. A bulky block of flats known as Holly Lodge on the east side and the functional close-boarded fences of the back gardens of Downes Court to the west detract slightly from the appearance of this area. Nearer The Green, the whitewashed gable and delicately detailed early-mid 19th century shopfront of the Old Bakery stand out.



Figure 18: The Salisbury Arms PH



Figure 19: Hoppers Road looking north

2.6 Character Area B: Station Road

Spatial analysis

2.6.1 Station Road drops away eastwards from the railway bridge, so that the distant prospect south-eastwards is part of the character of the street. There are also views westward, uphill to The Green. The railway bridge allows views out north and south, so there is very little sense of enclosure here, especially as the road is busy with traffic. On the north side of the road, only the single storey railway station is included in the Conservation Area; otherwise, the buildings on this side are of no architectural interest and do not address the street – there is a nondescript 1960s/70s three storey block and the side elevation of an inter-war house. The two 4 storey shopping parades on the south side therefore dominate the street.



Figure 20: Station Road, view to east



Figure 21: Station Road, view to west

Character analysis

- 2.6.2 The railway station is a simple, single storey gabled building built in 1871, which retains its timber canopy and bargeboards but the utilitarian modern entrance doorway detracts from its appearance. Its immediate setting does not do it justice, with inappropriate high steel security fencing to each side and a poorly maintained private forecourt to the left. Opposite, two charming single storey decoratively-gabled ‘sheds’ accommodate shops which complement the Victorian character of the station. Together, they create a homely scene tucked in next to the bridge.
- 2.6.3 They are in strong contrast to the rest of the south side of Station Road, which has two tall confident Edwardian groups of three storeys, with shops at the ground floor, in red brick with abundant decorated pediments and turrets. The group of buildings nearest to the bridge has suffered from alterations to windows on the first and second floors, (Barclays Bank on the corner has the only intact fenestration), but the neighbouring group is largely intact above the shopfronts. One shop-front, no. 63, is original below the modern fascia.



Figure 22: Station Road, small shops adjacent to bridge



Figure 23: Railway Station



Figure 24: Station Road, Victorian shops

2.6.4 Trees are very important in the street scene here; lining the railway, they frame the views between The Green and Station Road and form a backdrop to the little shops.

2.7 Character area C: Church Hill

Spatial analysis

2.7.1 Church Hill is much wider than the roads around and across The Green and its gently curving nature is more informal than other roads in the Conservation Area. The buildings lining it are also arranged less rigidly. Most are large detached houses, or blocks of flats, irregularly set in sizeable, well-planted front gardens. Approaching from the west, Woodside Cottages provide a strong gateway, their proximity to the road and distinctive, white painted weatherboarding in strong contrast to the preceding suburban housing. A belt of trees on the opposite side of the road gives these buildings an apparently rural setting, masking the ranks of interwar semis beyond. Moving east, the next important landmark, St Paul's church, dominates the central part of the road due to its position on rising ground. At the eastern end of the road, near the junction with The Green, the repetitive rhythm formed by the projecting bays of 62-70 Church Hill and Uplands Court is a striking feature.



Figure 25: Church Hill looking west



Figure 26: Church Hill, looking east

Character analysis

2.7.2 The dominant characteristic of this area is its variety, with the range of architectural styles forming an engaging and constantly changing street scene. Architectural highlights include the vernacular Woodside Cottages; the restrained classical façade of the Friends Meeting House; the sombre and imposing gothic of St Paul's Church; the informal, asymmetrical red brick vicarage; and the assertive and angular 1930s buildings at 62-70 Church Hill and Uplands Court. The stylistic variety is reinforced by the eclectic mix of materials used, a rich combination of red and yellow brick, render and weatherboarding. The detailing of the buildings is also universally of high quality, and ranges from delicate perpendicular style stone tracery in St Paul's church, to striking brick soldier courses and Crittal windows in Uplands Court. Well-planted front gardens, often with mature trees and bounded by a variety of close-boarded fencing and low stock brick walls, smooth the transition between buildings of contrasting styles and give the area a leafy, suburban feel that is almost rural to the west of the church.

]



Figure 27: Church Hill, 1 Woodside Cottages



Figure 28: Friends Meeting House

2.7.3 A group of 1930s semi-detached houses, which are reasonably attractive in their own right, but rather out of keeping with the rest of the road, are hidden behind a band of trees, which largely minimises their impact on the area. The only negative aspects are the 1970s development in Hill House Close and the former school building. The concrete framed terraces of Hill House Close are not weathering well, and their bulk and stark form is at odds with the church opposite. The former school building, now a nursery, has been disfigured by a poorly designed conservatory and an intrusive, badly landscaped car park. Most of 62-70 Church Hill are suffering from poor quality replacement windows and doors, which detracts from the buildings' highly distinctive appearance.



Figure 29: 62-70 Church Hill



Figure 30: The Vicarage

2.8 Character area D: Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Area

Spatial analysis

2.8.1 Vicars Moor Lane has little visual or physical relationship to the centre of Winchmore Hill Green. The gently curving lane is lined on both sides with houses, those on the south, being on slightly higher ground, overlooking those on the north. The Kings Cross-Stevenage railway line divides the area into two halves.



Figure 31: Vicars Moor Lane looking west



Figure 32: 70-76 Vicars Moor Lane

Character analysis

2.8.2 The north side of the lane is of value in that it retains much of the character of a 19th century street. Most of the buildings are of yellow stock brick, with tall sash windows and slate roofs giving the area an overall cohesion. Inconsistent building lines and undulating eaves heights, coupled with a wide variety of architectural details, including deep bracketed eaves, bay windows, stone window lintels, and the occasional red brick or rendered building, result in an interesting and constantly changing streetscape. Porches are particularly diverse, ranging from formal Tuscan porticos to vernacular examples with mono-pitched tiled roofs.



Figure 33: Vicars Moor Lane (left) 106a; (right) 106, doorcase detail



Figure 34: 102-104 Vicars Moor Lane 102-104

2.8.3 Apart from the modern intrusion of 1 Stratfield Park, all the buildings in the Conservation Area are of architectural merit. A particularly strong contribution to the character of the area is made by the (statutorily listed) nos. 68-76, a formal group dating from 1871 in an archaic Regency style. The grand five bay frontage, broad eaves and unusually squat first floor windows of nos. 102-104 (locally listed), and no. 106a, a red brick gothic former chapel, are also prominent in the streetscape. Nos 108-112, an imposing three storey Victorian block with heavy baroque detailing, marks a change in tempo from the surrounding 1930s housing when entering the area from the west. Most of the properties are in good condition, retaining their original external features. Several are enhanced by small front gardens, many of which are laid to grass and bounded by a mixture of picket fences and low brick walls.



Figure 35: 106-110 Vicars Moor Lane



Figure 36: Vicars Moor Lane, railway bridge

- 2.8.4 The tranquil atmosphere of the area, which has little traffic and few pedestrians, reinforces the sense of stepping back in time to the 19th century. The tarmac roads, concrete paved footpaths, granite curbs and simple and sparse street furniture are unremarkable, but generally in keeping with the character of the area.
- 2.8.5 The south side of the road, which consists of ranks of interwar housing and bulky blocks of post war flats, is completely lacking in historic atmosphere. The numerous parked cars, intrusive blank brick walls surrounding the railway line and modern housing of an insipid, faux-traditional design in Stratfield Park Close also detract from the character of the area.

2.9 The public realm

- 2.9.1 The public realm is an important element of the two Conservation Areas. It can be summarised as follows:

- *Roads and footways* – An urban palette of materials is used throughout the two Conservation Areas. Tarmac is used for road surfacing, kerbs are of granite, footways are generally of concrete slabs .
- *Signage and road markings* – Apart from the green, where there is a plethora of blue mini-roundabout signs, traffic signage is relatively sparse for an urban area. Parking controls have added to street signage and street furniture in recent years.
- *Street furniture* – Around the green this is traditional in nature, with unusual late 20th century iron railings, reproduction street lamps and traditional-style bollards. A K6 telephone box at the east end of The Green is statutory listed. Internally illuminated bollards and utilitarian black litter bins are less sympathetic. Elsewhere, street furniture is generally simple and utilitarian, consisting mainly of concrete and steel lamp standards.
- *Street greenery* – This is concentrated on The Green, where it consists of neatly trimmed grass and mature trees, mainly beech. It is also an important factor in Church Hill, where a belt of large horse chestnuts has a strong presence at the western entrance to the area, and the verge in front of Hill House Close, Church Hill, which is planted with limes and yews. Mature trees in private gardens also make an important contribution to the character of this road. There is little street greenery elsewhere.

3 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

- 3.1.1 The key factors that give the Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas their special interest can be summarised as follows:

- *The retention of the atmosphere of a historic ‘village centre’* – This is attributable mainly to the strong and distinctive plan form focused on a central green and the roads radiating from it. The varied scale and massing of buildings and prominent street and private greenery also make an important contribution to the creation of an informal townscape.
- *The ‘time depth’ apparent in the area* – The gradual development of the village, and its transformation from isolated settlement to the centre of a thriving suburb can be seen in its buildings, which date from c.1700 onwards and reflect the evolving character of the area from rural to urban.
- *The concentration of high quality buildings* – The two Conservation Areas contain large numbers of historic buildings dating from the 18th and early 19th centuries, mainly in the classical style, many of which are prominent in the street scene. These are augmented by good examples of mid 19th to mid 20th century domestic and commercial buildings in a range of architectural styles from Gothic to art deco. Together these make a major contribution to the attractive and interesting streetscape.
- *The condition of most buildings* – The majority of buildings retain their original external appearance, including important architectural details such as windows and doors.
- *The abundance of greenery* – This is particularly important on The Green, where lawns and mature trees are the dominant feature. It is also significant in Church Hill, where well-planted front gardens enhance the setting of many buildings, giving the road a semi-rural air and screening some of the less appropriate houses.
- *Appropriate street furniture* – generally, street furniture and floorscapes are low key. However, around The Green, interesting items, such as the railings and a K6 telephone kiosk and reproduction lamp standards, make an important contribution to the area’s ‘village-like’ appearance.
- *The sense of calm* – Whilst heavy, albeit largely local and domestic, traffic means that the green itself is no longer noticeably quiet, the secondary roads and particularly Vicars Moor Lane, remain relatively tranquil.

4 SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 4.1 The conservation area is generally in good condition and well-maintained. The loss of architectural details is largely historic, and it is far less common than it was prior to the Article 4 Direction, although there still appear to be occasional breaches of planning control. There are no major issues affecting the area, but at a lower level there is continued pressure for unsympathetic change in several areas:
- *Loss of original details* – Most properties retain a large proportion of their original architectural details and remain attractive buildings. However, several have suffered inappropriate alterations, commonly the

replacement of timber windows in uPVC, the replacement of slates or clay tiles on roofs with concrete tiles, the addition of false shutters, or the painting of brick façades. Whilst this does not negate these buildings' contribution to the area, to an extent it damages their appearance and is evidence of a gradual erosion of character through cumulative change.

- *Increased car parking* – On Wades Hill, the pressure for off street car parking has already led to some front gardens being converted into hard-standing for cars. This generally results in the loss of the characteristic boundary walls and the creation of cramped forecourts that allow parked vehicles to dominate the buildings behind.
- *Loss of original shopfronts* – Around The Green, most of the original shopfronts have been replaced by crude modern units, to the detriment of the appearance of both the buildings and the area in general.
- *Need for the care and management of street greenery* – As the distinctive character of The Green and the western end of Church Hill depends so greatly on the presence of significant street greenery, this needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the lifespan of existing trees is maximised and that planned replacement takes place when specimens reach the end of their lives. The Council has undertaken a survey of highway tree stock and has a Borough-wide tree management strategy, which takes into account the important contribution made by specific species to the character and appearance of individual areas.
- *The need for appropriate highway maintenance* – At present, the two Conservation Areas benefit from appropriate surfacing on highways and footpaths, sympathetic signage and a lack of street clutter. This combination of factors makes an important contribution to the appearance of the area and it is vital, therefore, that the future management and maintenance of the public realm takes into account its special character.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND CONTACT DETAILS

5.1 Bibliography

The following reference works were used in the preparation of this appraisal:

Baker T (ed.) *Victoria County History of Middlesex V.* (OUP 1976)

Dalling G *Southgate and Edmonton Past* (Historical Publications 1996)

Pevsner N & Cherry B *The Buildings of England, London 4: North*, (Penguin, London 1998)

Southgate District Civic Trust *The Green, Winchmore Hill Conservation Area* brief appraisal,

Reference is also made to the following legislation and national and local policy guidance:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
Replacement Appendix D to Department of Environment Circular 9/95
(November 2010)
English Heritage PPS 5 Practice Guide (2010)
English Heritage *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation Appraisal and Management* (2011)
The Enfield Plan: Core Strategy (adopted 2010)
The Enfield Plan: Draft Development Management Document (2012)
The Enfield Plan (Evidence Base): *Areas of Archaeological Importance Review*, English Heritage/GLAAS, 2012
Enfield Unitary Development Plan (1994) (saved policies current until DMD is adopted)

5.2 Contact details:

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6 APPENDICES

6.1 Listed buildings

Church of St Paul, Church Hill	(Grade II)
Devon House, Church Hill	(Grade II)
Friends Meeting House, Church Hill	(Grade II)
Graveyard Walls, Friends Meeting House, Church Hill	(Grade II)
The Cottage, Woodside Cottages, Church Hill	(Grade II)
1 Woodside Cottages, Church Hill	(Grade II)
The Old School House, Church Hill	(Grade II)
55 Church Hill (Stonehall Lodge)	(Locally listed)
Walls to the north of the Church of St Paul	(Locally listed)
212 Hoppers Road (The Old Bakery)	(Grade II)
35 (Rowan Tree House) & 37 (Woodside House) The Green	(Grade II)
K6 Telephone Kiosk, The Green	(Grade II)
17-21 Wades Hill	(Grade II)
23-29 Wades Hill	(Grade II)
Glenwood House, Wades Hill	(Grade II)
Walls in front of Glenwood House, Wades Hill	(Locally listed)
66, 66a, 68 & 68a Vicars Moor Lane	(Grade II)

70-76 (evens) Vicars Moor Lane	(Grade II)
82-84 (evens) Vicars Moor Lane	(Locally listed)
100-106 (evens) Vicars Moor Lane	(Locally listed)

6.2 Criteria for assessing unlisted elements

(From English Heritage's guidance *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2011))

'Check list to identify elements in a conservation area which may contribute to the special interest.

A positive response to one or more of the following may indicate that a particular element within a conservation area makes a positive contribution provided that its historic form and values have not been eroded.

- Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Is it associated with a designed landscape e.g. a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic association with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?'

Appraisal review undertaken by Michael Copeman; maps prepared by Richard Peats