

Lemsford Draft Character Assessment

Consultation – Frequently Asked

Questions



What is a conservation area?

“Conservation areas exist to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place - in other words, the features that make it unique. Every local authority in England has at least one conservation area and there are around 10,000 in England.”

Source: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/conservation-areas/>

What is conservation area designation?

“**Designation:** is the formal process of the council establishing the conservation area and requires the process to be properly followed otherwise the designation could be challenged.”

“**Appraisal:** Ideally prior to designation the local planning authority should carry out, or have carried out a Conservation Area Appraisal. This might additionally include a photographic survey of all buildings being included at the time of designation.”

Source: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/conservation-areas/>

How is a conservation area designated?

“Conservation Areas can be created where a local planning authority identifies an area of special architectural or historic interest, which deserves careful management to protect that character.”

“An area has to be identified by the local authority as having a definite architectural quality or historic interest to merit designation ([NPPF paragraph 191](#)).

Conservation areas are normally designated by the local planning authority.

However, Historic England can designate conservation areas in London, following consultation with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

The Secretary of State can also designate a conservation area anywhere in England in exceptional circumstances – usually where the area is of more than local interest.”

Source: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/conservation-areas/>

What does it mean for residents and businesses located within a conservation area?

“Although conservation areas mean some extra planning controls and considerations, these exist to protect the historic and architectural elements which make the place special. They are most likely to affect owners who want to work on the outside of their building or any trees on their property.”

“All properties within a conservation area are required to have this recorded as a local Land Charge. Residents and businesses in a conservation area need to know they may need permission from the

Council before making alterations such as cladding, inserting windows, installing satellite dishes and solar panels, adding conservatories or other extensions, laying paving or building walls.”

“Permitted development

Permitted development (PD) rights are slightly different in conservation areas compared to other areas. This means that you need to make planning applications for some forms of development which would not need such applications outside conservation areas. For example:

- Detailed residential changes like two-storey extensions, dormer windows, and stone cladding
- Extensions to retail premises (smaller floorspace increases; appearance should match the existing; limitations to click and collect facilities)
- Industrial and warehouse buildings (smaller floorspace increases)
- Controls on materials for buildings on the site of a school, college, university or hospital
- Limitations on change of use such as retail or agricultural to dwelling house

Demolition

If you live in a conservation area and want to demolish your building, you will need Planning Permission. If the building is listed you will also need [Listed Building Consent](#).

Trees

If you want to cut down, top or lop any but the smallest of trees in a conservation area you must notify your local planning authority six weeks before work begins. The authority will then consider the contribution the tree makes to the character of the area and if necessary create a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect it.”

Sources:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/owning-historic-property/conservation-area/>
<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/conservation-areas/>

What is a local land charge?

Once designated, any properties within the conservation will have this registered against the property as a local land charge. A local land charge is an obligation that goes with owning a particular parcel of land or property. For conservation areas, this is a ‘planning charge’ and is binding on successive owners or occupiers.

Where can I find out more information about conservation areas?

You can find out more information on conservation areas and what designation means on the council website:

<https://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning-applications/planning-considerations-conservation-areas/1>

On the Historic England website:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/conservation-areas/>

And on the planning portal:

<https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/responsibilities/other-permissions-you-may-require/conservation-areas>

For more information on works to trees within a conservation area:

<https://www.welhat.gov.uk/trees-grass-hedges/privately-owned-trees>

What is the consultation about?

We would like to hear the views of residents, the community and all other stakeholders on the Draft Character Assessment. This includes views on whether the area should be designated as a conservation area, and the proposed conservation area boundary.

Who can comment?

The consultation is public and anybody can make a representation. The Council welcomes comments from residents and stakeholders on the proposed consultation documents. Please be aware that all representations are public and will be published for transparency. This is a requirement of the consultation process and the Council are obliged to publish representations, including names supplied.

How and when can I view the consultation documents?

The public consultation runs from **Wednesday 1st February until 5pm on Wednesday 15th March 2023**. We want the consultation to be inclusive, accessible and useable, so there are a range of ways to find out more, get involved and provide comments.

The Draft Lemsford Character Assessment can be viewed online at:

<http://welhat.gov.uk/lemsford-conservation>

You will need to create a login on our Planning Consultation Portal to be able to view the consultation and submit a representation.

Hard copies of the document are also available at the following locations:

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Offices The Campus Welwyn Garden City AL8 6AE	Hatfield Town Council Birchwood Leisure Centre Longmead Hatfield AL10 0AN	Hatfield Library White Lion Square 26-32 Town Centre Hatfield AL10 0LD
Opening Hours: Monday to Thursday 8.45am – 5.15pm Friday 8.45am – 4.45pm Weekends - closed	Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9am - 9pm Saturday 9am – 7pm Sunday 9am – 5pm	Opening Hours: Monday 1pm – 6pm Tuesday/Wednesday 10am – 6pm Thursday/Sunday – closed Friday 10am – 7pm Saturday 10am – 5pm

Opening times may be subject to change, please check with the venue

How do I make a representation?

The quickest and easiest way to respond is via our online consultation portal which can be accessed via the below link.

Online: <http://welhat.gov.uk/lemsford-conservation>

You can email or send your comments in by post using the contact details below.

Email: planningpolicy@welhat.gov.uk

Post: Planning Policy, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6AE

Please be aware we will publish your name and comments online.

Can I make a representation on behalf of a group i.e. a community organisation or specific interest group?

Yes. You can specify which group you are making a representation on behalf of when you create a login. Once you have created a login, click the username at the top right of the page and click 'My Details' where you can provide your group's details as well as the position you hold in that group.

Can I make a representation after the deadline?

Unfortunately, responses received after this deadline cannot be considered.

What happens next?

Once this consultation closes, a report with comments received will be presented to the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council's Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel (CPPP). This report will include a recommendation on whether to designate Lemsford as a conservation area, and any proposed modifications to the Character Assessment, and the conservation area boundary.

If it is decided to designate Lemsford as a conservation area and the Character Assessment is adopted by the council, this will be used in making decisions about planning applications along with other local and national policy documents.

I need help or I have a question that has not been answered here. Who can I contact?

You can contact the Welwyn Hatfield Planning Policy team via email at planningpolicy@welhat.gov.uk or by calling 01707 357532.