

# Harlow Garden Village Estate Conservation Area Management Plan

Adopted December 2013





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# 1 Introduction

## Conservation areas

- 1.1 Conservation areas are parts of our local environment with special architectural or historic qualities. They are created by local planning authorities, in consultation with the local community, to preserve and enhance the specific character of these areas so that they can be enjoyed by people now and future generations.

## Management plan aims

- 1.2 This document provides a management plan for the Harlow Garden Village Estate Conservation Area. It has been prepared alongside a character appraisal to fulfil the local planning authority's statutory duty to review and monitor conservation areas in the District and to produce proposals for their preservation and enhancement.
- 1.3 The purpose of this management plan is to:
- identify issues, challenges and threats affecting the character of the conservation area;
  - highlight opportunities to more effectively manage and preserve the special character and key features of the conservation area;
  - suggest potential enhancement measures which could strengthen and reinforce the character of the conservation area;
  - provide design guidance and principles for areas covered by Article 4 Directions;
  - increase public awareness and involvement in the preservation and enhancement of the area;
  - provide a robust framework for making planning decisions; and
  - review and clearly define the conservation area boundaries, so that they reflect what is considered worthy of preservation.

## Why prepare a management plan?

- 1.4 The designation of a conservation area is not an end in itself. Once designated local planning authorities have a statutory duty to publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas.
- 1.5 In addition to this, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of their heritage assets, including conservation areas.
- 1.6 This management plan sets out the local authority's approach to managing development and change within the Harlow Garden Village Estate Conservation Area. It is based on an appraisal of the character of the conservation area.

## What is the planning status of this document?

- 1.7 The appraisal and management plan are material considerations when determining planning applications within the Harlow Garden Village Estate Conservation Area. They have the status of a supplementary planning guidance and support and amplify the implementation of adopted planning policies with respect to the Harlow Garden Village Estate Conservation Area.

# 1 Introduction

## Background

1.8 This management plan sits alongside the Harlow Garden Village Estate Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Both of these documents aim to provide an effective framework for managing growth and change in this sensitive area.

## Character Appraisal

1.9 The purpose of the character appraisal is to describe the historic development of the area and to draw attention to the conservation area's special architectural, historic and townscape character and special qualities. During the character appraisal process a number of conservation area challenges and issues were highlighted which have been taken forward in this management plan.

## Management Plan

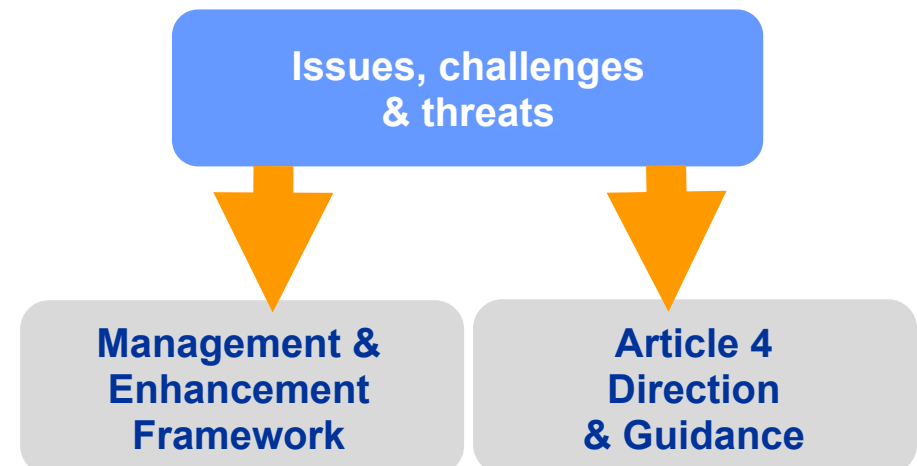
1.10 The management plan is an important output of the character appraisal process. Proposals contained in the management plan are based on the findings of the character appraisal.



## Management plan structure

1.11 The management plan is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 highlights a range of issues, challenges and threats facing the conservation area. These issues were highlighted during the character appraisal of the conservation area and form the basis of the management plan proposals.
- Chapter 3 provides a management and enhancement framework for the conservation area. This sets out a positive strategy for addressing some of the issues, challenges and threats identified and provides a long-term framework through which the special character of the conservation area can be effectively reinforced and strengthened over time.
- Chapter 4 provides design principles and guidelines for Article 4 Direction areas within the conservation area. In these locations normal permitted development rights have been removed for householders. This means that planning permission must be received before undertaking a range of development affecting the character of the front of homes. Guidance provided in this chapter sets out the design standards and principles the local planning authority will expect from development proposals in these sensitive areas.



## 2 Issues, challenges & threats

- 2.1 This section highlights existing and potential conservation issues observed during the character appraisal process. It is focused on the forms of development and activities which affect the front of dwellings and the quality of the public realm. This is because these front facing features of the area have an impact on the character of the area and how it is experienced.

### Landscape features

- 2.2 Garden hedges, lawns, street trees and grass verges which run between the carriageway and footway are key components of the conservation area's garden village character. In a number of areas, these important street scape elements are under threat due to the need to accommodate vehicle parking and access.

### Parking

- 2.3 The estate was not designed to accommodate current levels of car ownership and use and this has led to development pressure on garden hedges, front lawns and green verges. Accommodating sufficient car parking is a functional necessity for any street and where this issue is not appropriately resolved it has the potential to erode the character of the area.

### Grass verges

- 2.4 The narrow road width along St John's Avenue and Manor Road means that it is not possible for vehicles to be parked on either side of the carriageway adjacent to the kerb whilst allowing two vehicles or a large refuse vehicle to pass down the street.
- 2.5 Consequently, vehicles often park with one wheel overhanging onto the grass verge. This not only covers up these important elements of the streetscape but also damages the quality of the grass verges, resulting in the grass being eroded and verges becoming no more than muddy or dried out strips of soil, depending on the weather. Though originally intended to enhance the character of the area, verges are now untidy and messy features of the street which contribute to the area's rather tired and poorly maintained character.
- 2.6 Grass verges have been removed along much of Manor Road in order to provide street parking and the materials used detract from the character of the area (see photo right). Where these works are undertaken in the future, it will be necessary to use more appropriate and less visually discordant street materials which are in keeping with the conservation area's character.



Photos above showing the impact of vehicle parking on grass verges.

Above left - grass verges reduced to muddy and messy strips due to regular parking.  
Above right - unsympathetic replacement hardstanding along Manor Road

## 2 Issues, challenges & threats

### Garden hedges and lawns

- 2.7 The demand for on-plot parking has also resulted in many dwellings removing garden hedges and lawns in their entirety. This significantly erodes the garden village character of the area which is defined by strong front boundaries and green landscaping.
- 2.8 The result is that large gaps are created along a street frontage which diminishes the homogenous landscape character and visual structure and enclosure hedges provide. This often results in large areas of hard standing and parked cars visually exposed and this has a dominant and negative impact on the character of the street.
- 2.9 Whilst it is acceptable for garden lawns to be paved over to provide parking, it should still be possible to retain a proportion of a garden hedge to the side of an access point. This will help to maintain the presence of hedges as important structural landscape elements. It will also help to screen parked cars from view, preventing them have a visually dominant effect on the character of the street.
- 2.10 There are a number of examples where this balance has been achieved and these precedents demonstrate that on-plot parking can be achieved whilst maintaining these significant landscape features.

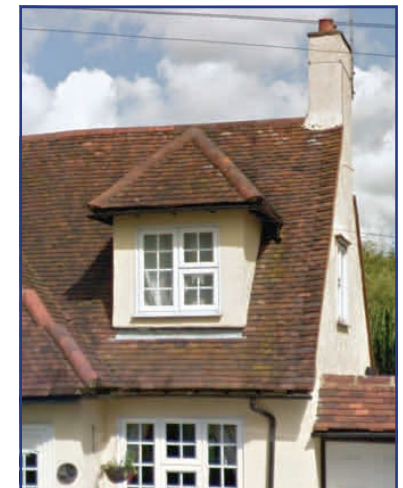


### Front roof extensions

- 2.11 Steep pitched roofs are a highly prominent visual element within housing groups on St John's Avenue, Manor Road and the Hill. Consequently, very large, bulky and unsympathetically designed roof extensions on the front of roof slopes facing the road have the potential to erode the character of the area.
- 2.12 There may be pressure to accommodate additional windows and extensions on front roof slopes, particularly where dwellings are south facing or where rooms on the first floor are single aspect and retained under the front roof slope.
- 2.13 Dwellings at the Hill which do have front dormer extensions demonstrate that this form of development can be accommodated successfully where dormer windows are visually subservient to the roof pitch and other elements of a building façade. However, there are examples in the conservation area of unsympathetic dormer roof extensions which dominate the pitch of a roof (see photo bottom right).



Appropriate dormer window extensions on the Hill which are subservient to and do not alter the character or profile of the roof



Dormer roof extension which visually dominates the pitch of the roof

## 2 Issues, challenges & threats

### Front gable elevations

- 2.14 Projecting front gable elevations and sweeping gables are key features of the area's garden village character and consistent lines of gables play an important role in creating a sense of visual rhythm along housing groups. Roof extensions which alter or submerge the profile of projecting front gables would significantly erode the visual character of the area, which is defined by their prominent and angular presence.
- 2.15 The character of gable fronted homes along the eastern side of St John's Avenue (below & right) would be similarly affected by extensions which alter the profile of front gables, as viewed from the street.



Roofscape profiles



### Building materials, colour and render

- 2.16 Roof tile material and building façade colours and render play an important role in generating the area's cohesive character. This is particularly the case in housing groups on St John's Avenue, Manor Road and the Hill.
- 2.17 A number of dwellings in the housing group on St John's Avenue have undertaken fundamental changes in terms of roof tile materials and façade colours and this has to some extent eroded the character of the group by introducing rather incongruous façade colours, render and roof tile materials.



Above and left Homes renovated with different roof and façade building materials and colours can easily erode the group value and visual character of the group and can appear incongruous next to surrounding dwellings



## 2 Issues, challenges & threats

### Building and landscape maintenance

- 2.18 The maintenance of buildings, in particular roof tiles, and landscape elements such as trees, hedges and verges is an issue which affects the character of the conservation area. This creates a rather tired and run-down feeling which could be quickly addressed where there is an enthusiasm for taking action and where improvements can be funded.
- 2.19 It is acknowledged that a number of dwellings and highway areas are in public sector ownership and maintenance of these areas should be improved in order to enhance the character of the conservation area.
- 2.20 Mature lime trees along St John's Avenue are an integral feature of the conservation area and provide a dense canopy along the street. Trees do however, need to be regularly maintained and from time to time lopped to ensure that they allow sufficient light onto the street and do not present a safety hazard.
- 2.21 A number of tiled roofs in the area are in evident need of maintenance, in some instances roof tiles are stained and need to be cleaned; others roofs appear to be suffering from the impact of wear and tear.

- 2.22 The maintenance of garden hedges is variable across the area, with some garden hedges evidently regularly maintained and of a neat and tidy appearance and others hedges looking overgrown and comparatively shabby in appearance.
- 2.23 The maintenance and appearance of grass verges throughout the conservation area is an issue due to parking on these areas which either dries them out in the summer months or churns up verges into muddy channels during wetter months.

### Wheelie bins

- 2.24 The presence of large wheelie bins can also have a detrimental visual impact on the character of the street scene within the conservation area. This is particularly noticeable where dwellings have removed the entire length of garden hedge. In this respect, garden hedges can provide additional benefits by providing and landscape screening for bins.



## 2 Issues, challenges & threats

### Solar panels

- 2.25 With the increasing cost of energy modern green technologies such as solar photovoltaic and solar thermal panels are likely to be increasingly popular choices for household seeking to reduce their energy bills. The importance of new technologies in terms of household finances, energy efficiency and climate change is acknowledged.
- 2.26 The use of solar panels is encouraged providing there is no detrimental visual impact on individual buildings or on the overall appearance and character of the area. Where planning permission is required, this form of development will be assessed on a case by case basis.
- 2.27 Where panels can be accommodated on south facing roofs which are not visible from the highway there is unlikely to be any detrimental impact on the character of the area. However, where south facing roofs slope directly towards the street, this form of development will need to be undertaken in a sensitive manner, particularly within defined housing groups in which consistent roof slopes and materials make a significant contribution to the cohesive character of the area.



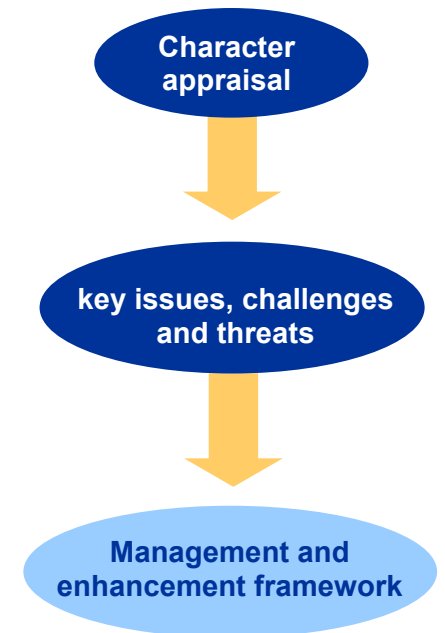
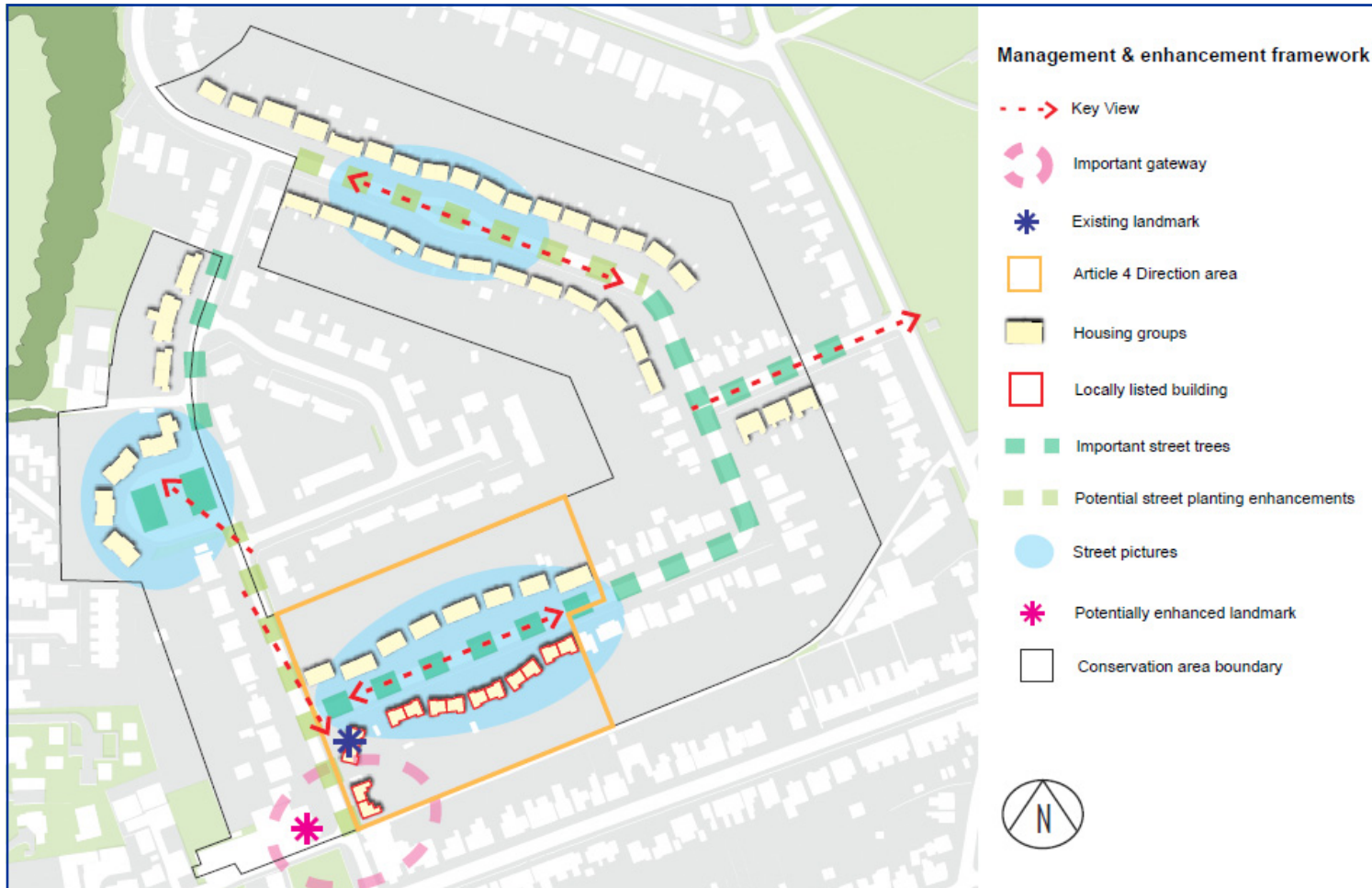
South facing roof slopes fronting the street are likely to be attractive for this form of development

### 3 Management and enhancement framework

#### Introduction

3.1 This management and enhancement framework aims to provide a positive long-term strategy for guiding development and change in the conservation area over a 20 year period. It has been informed by the conservation area character appraisal and seeks to address the main issues, challenges and threats facing the area which were highlighted in the previous chapter.

3.2 The management and enhancement framework will be reviewed and potentially amended over time to ensure that it reflects the conservation issues facing the area. It will be implemented alongside other planning policies and guidance such as the NPPF, Harlow Local Plan and the Harlow Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.



### 3 Management and enhancement framework

#### Housing groups

- 3.3 The defined housing groups and their unifying features form the backbone of the conservation area's character. Where important shared architectural and landscape features are removed and replaced with unsympathetic visual elements, the group value of the housing group and the character of the conservation area as a whole is likely to be gradually eroded.
- 3.4 The character appraisal highlights each individual housing group and draws attention to the significant features. Planning applications which would result in harm, remove or significantly diminish significant architectural features in the conservation area will be likely to be resisted. The wholesale removal of significant landscape features such as hedges and trees of townscape value will also be resisted. Works to hedges and trees will need to be sympathetic to the special landscape character of housing groups.
- 3.5 Outside of the Article 4 Direction area a number of small-scale forms of householder development can be undertaken through permitted development rights without planning permission. Where planning permission is not required householders are encouraged to take note of the appraisal and its recommendations.



Image left: How unsympathetic changes to the front of a homes can diminish the character of the area.

#### Views, landmarks and street pictures

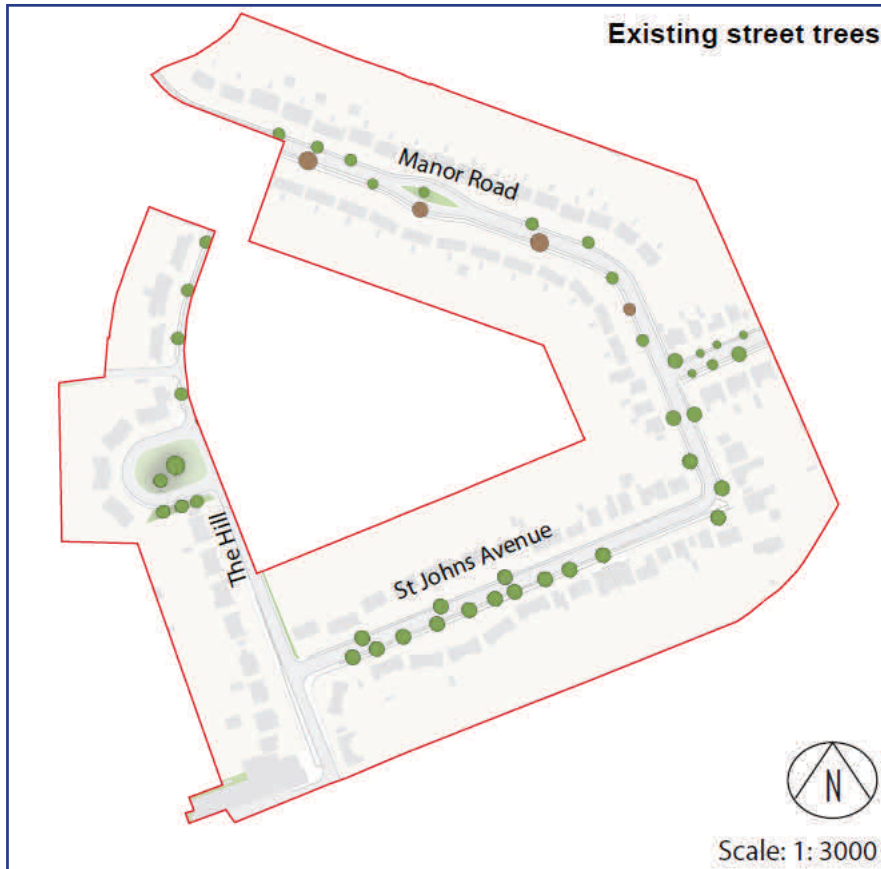
- 3.6 Important views, landmarks and street pictures are defined on the management and enhancement framework are key elements of the original garden village masterplan and play an important role in defining the distinct visual character and sense of place which can be experienced in the area. Like housing groups, street pictures, views and landmarks provide a framework by which people may identify, orientate with and move through the area. They are described in more detail in the character appraisal.
- 3.7 Street pictures and views are defined by the careful layout of dwellings around central landscape features and this practice was inspired by influential urban design theorists practicing at the time such as Raymond Unwin. The visual environment of these areas is held together by:
- the layout, orientation and scale of dwellings
  - the homogenous architectural and roofscape character and the consistent use of building materials
  - important landscape features such as street trees, greens and garden hedges.
- 3.8 These architectural and landscape features combine to create the conservation area's distinct garden village character. Opportunities to enhance street pictures and views through enhanced landscaping, public realm works and through the re-instatement of important landscape features will be sought through the planning decision making process.



### 3 Management and enhancement framework

#### Street trees

- 3.9 Street trees play an vital role in generating the garden village character of the area and are shown on the map below. Particularly important street trees are the mature lime trees which creates an attractive canopy along St John's Avenue and the trees at the green on the Hill.
- 3.10 Manor Road has comparatively fewer significant trees and there is scope for further planting to enhance the townscape character of these areas. An attractive element of Manor Road and the Hill is the diversity of trees in the public realm and this provides an attractive feature particularly in the spring and autumn.



St John's Avenue - a large canopy of street trees requiring regular pruning and management

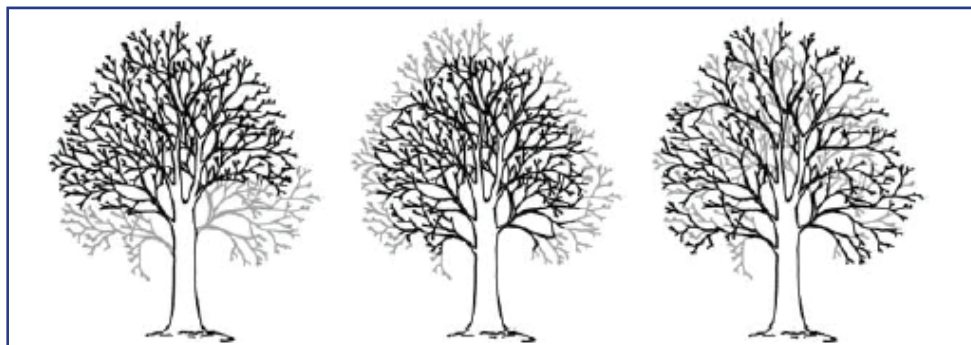


Along the Hill and Manor Road well chosen street trees add colour to the vibrant pastel palette of fronting dwellings.

### 3 Management and enhancement framework

#### Maintenance of street trees

- 3.11 Large street trees require careful pruning in order to ensure streets and dwellings are not cast in shadow during the summer months and for health and safety reasons. The collapse of a tall lime tree along St John's Avenue during the Autumn 2013 storm provided a timely reminder that large street trees need to be regularly and carefully managed.
- 3.12 Maintenance of existing street trees in the area is the responsibility of Essex County Council as the highways authority. The local planning authority is supportive of the sustainable and sensitive management of mature trees in order to ensure trees live long and healthy lives.
- 3.13 With expert attention it is possible through crown thinning to reduce the density of the crown of a tree whilst still retaining its height and natural form. Through crown reduction, it is possible to ensure trees do not grow to an unsustainable height and size given the proximity of adjacent properties. Crown lifting can also draw up the height of the lowest branches and thereby provide additional visibility and light at street level.
- 3.14 Where tree works are carried out it is important to employ experienced and skilled professionals who understand the requirements of the species concerned. A healthy tree may be easily ruined by drastic lopping and may produce a mass of dense shoot growth following unskilled pruning and this may alter the natural character of the tree.



Crown lifting

Crown reduction

Crown thinning



Aftermath of trees falling during the Autumn 2013 storm

### 3 Management and enhancement framework

#### Landscape structure

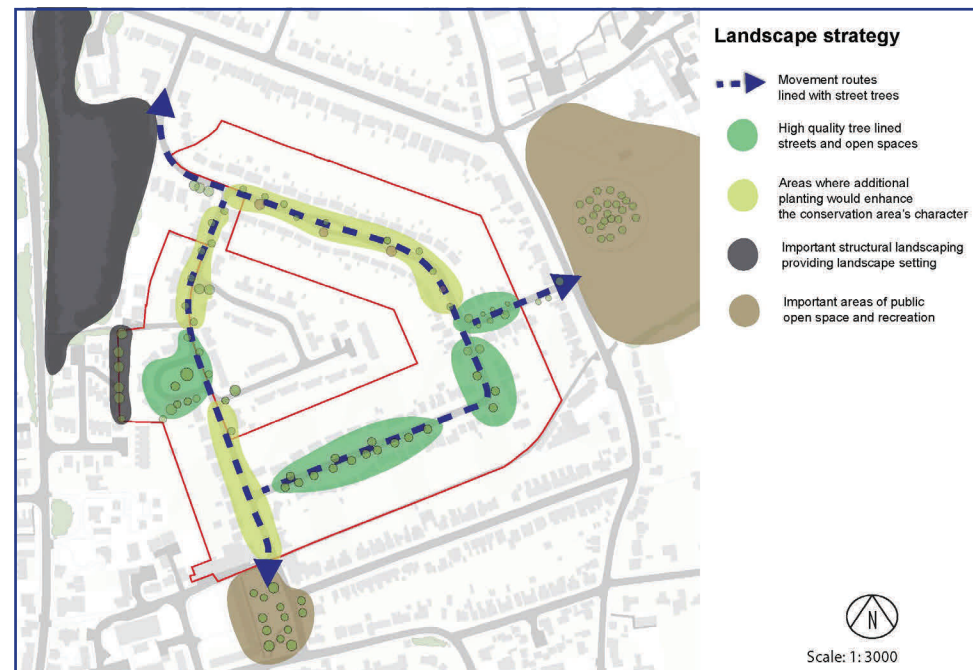
3.15 Landscape structure was a key original principle in the garden village estate masterplan. Tree lined verdant streets were laid out to link larger recreational green spaces located just outside of the estate such as the Forebury to the east and the Garden of Remembrance to the south. Along these well-landscaped routes a series of street pictures was created through the arrangement of dwellings to front central landscape features and avenues of street trees. Collectively, this landscape structure creates a highly memorable place.

#### Landscape enhancement strategy

3.16 The landscape enhancement strategy set out on the map right is intended to provide a framework for investment in street trees as a means of enhancing the character of the conservation area. It is also intended to inform the consideration of planning applications for tree works or tree felling within the conservation area.

3.17 The strategy highlights:

- particularly high quality tree lined street and open spaces within the conservation area.
- important areas of public open space and recreation which lie outside the conservation area and important structural landscaping areas which help to establish the conservation area's wider landscape context.
- areas where additional planting could enhance the conservation area's character and help to link high quality landscape areas within the conservation area and important areas of open space and recreation in the wider area.

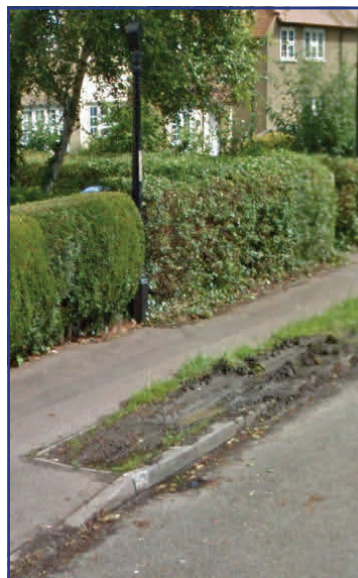


Along Manor Road there is potential for street trees to be planted within the central landscape feature to enhance the street picture.

### 3 Management and enhancement framework

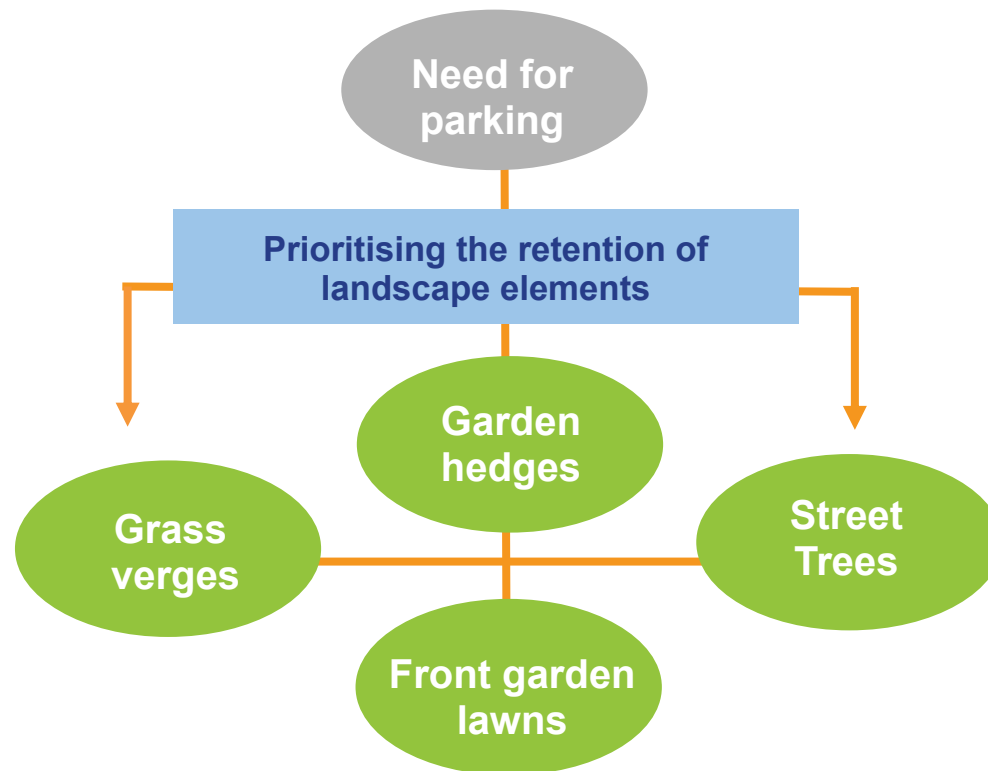
#### Resolving parking and landscape issues

- 3.18 The need to accommodate sufficient parking is a key issues which is likely to affect the landscape character of the conservation area. This issue needs to be resolved in a way in which adequate parking can be accommodated whilst most appropriately preserving the special landscape character of the area.
- 3.19 As highlighted in chapter 2, parking issues have the potential to erode the special character of the area if they are not resolved. Along St John's Avenue in particular, vehicles parking on grass verges diminishes the quality of these original landscape elements resulting in untidy strips of mud or dry soil.
- 3.20 A lack of appropriate on-street parking provision also encourages the provision of on-plot parking and where vehicle access and on-plot parking has been implemented in an unsympathetic manner the result has been the complete removal of front garden hedges. This has significantly eroded the homogenous original character of the streetscene. Whilst on-plot parking is not incompatible with the character of the conservation area, it does need to be implemented in a way which retains the special landscape character of the location.



#### Prioritising landscape elements

- 3.21 The demand for parking cannot be accommodated within the area whilst still preserving all original landscape features including front garden hedges, lawns, and grass verges found within the highway.
- 3.22 In providing a more manageable long-term parking solution for the area it is necessary to prioritise the landscape elements which are deemed to be most significant in generating the special character of the area. Elements which are less significant may need to be sacrificed to ensure the preservation of the most significant landscape elements.
- 3.23 Of the below landscape assets, this appraisal has concluded that street trees and garden hedges make the greatest contribution to the character of the area and therefore warrant being prioritised over other landscape elements.

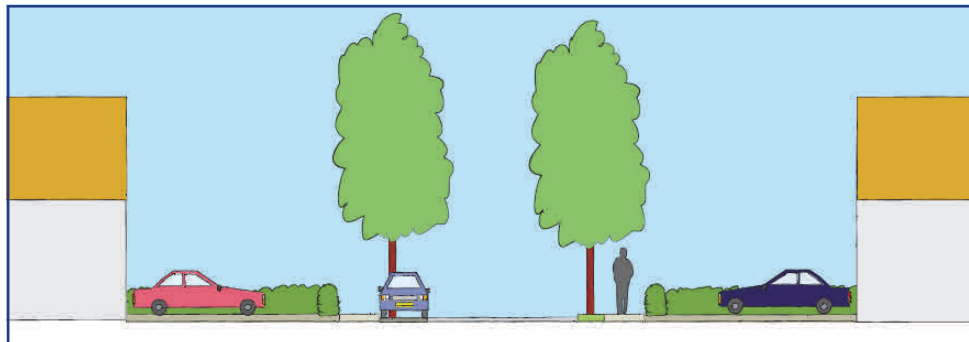




### 3 Management and enhancement framework

#### Proposed parking strategy

- 3.24 The following parking strategy aims to provide a sustainable long-term planning framework for managing the landscape and parking issues affecting the character of the conservation area. The strategy aims to accommodate the need for parking in the conservation area in a way which most appropriately maintains the special landscape character of the area.
- 3.25 The strategy involves the following aims:
- A Encouraging on-plot parking where vehicle access and parking can be achieved alongside a retained area of front garden hedge to screen parked vehicles and areas of hard standing thus retaining the landscape character of the area.
  - B Where possible the further roll-out of the provision of on-street parking bays along green verges adjacent to the footway and carriageway. Bays could be accommodated between street trees and vehicle driveway access points along one side of the street or staggered on different sides of the street depending on the location of trees and existing driveways.



An illustrative example of how both on-plot and on-street parking can be accommodated along St-John's Avenue with on-street parking bays provided in designated locations along one or both sides of the street to provide a more appropriate design solution to the existing parking situation.

#### Design guidance for on-street parking

- 3.26 Providing street trees are retained and their long-term health not negatively affected, it will be acceptable for grass verges concreted over to provide on-street parking bays, as has been achieved on Manor Road.
- 3.27 However, street materials used would need to be of a higher specification than has been used on Manor Road and provide paving materials of a quality and colour more in keeping with the area's conservation area status as required by Essex County Council's Street Materials Guide (2012, p28) and encouraged by English Heritage publication Streets for All (2005).

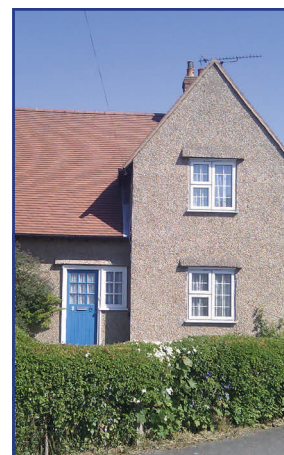


Unsympathetic street materials used for on-street parking along Manor Road which have a detrimental impact on the character of the conservation area.

### 3 Management and enhancement framework

#### Locally listed buildings

- 3.28 The character appraisal has provided the opportunity to examine whether any buildings within the conservation area are worthy of being added to Harlow's schedule of locally listed buildings.
- 3.29 Whilst locally listed buildings do not receive the same level of statutory protection as grade listed buildings they are an important part of Harlow's heritage because of their local architectural and historic value. Their presence enhances the quality of the local environment by providing an irreplaceable understanding of the past and help to generate a distinctive local character.
- 3.30 Locally listed buildings are heritage assets as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework. The purpose of including buildings on the local list ensures that their special interest is taken into consideration when determining planning applications which would affect their significance or their setting.
- 3.31 Numbers 4 to 30 (evens) St John's Avenue have been designated as locally listed buildings due to their special homogenous character and architectural and landscape features which are of significant interest.
- 3.32 These dwellings comprise an important housing group as defined in the character appraisal. The appraisal highlights a range of significant architectural and landscape features which help to generate the cohesive character of the housing group.
- 3.33 When considering planning applications which would result in the loss, replacement or harm of these significant features, the local planning authority will ensure that these important features are preserved and enhanced. Where such features such as garden hedges have been lost, the local planning authority will encourage their reinstatement in order to reinforce the character of the area.



## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

### Article 4 Direction

4.1 To address the gradual erosion of the conservation area's key features and special character an Article 4 Direction is in place along St John's Avenue. This Direction has been in force since 1 June 2012 and applies to the following properties as shaded orange on the map to the right:

- numbers 4 to 30 (evens) St John's Avenue
- numbers 7 to 37 (odds) St John's Avenue

### What is an Article 4 Direction?

4.3 Article 4 Directions remove certain permitted development rights normally available to householders under the 1995 General Permitted Development Order (as amended) (GPDO). Where an Article 4 Direction is in place, householders must make a formal planning application to the Council and receive planning permission before carrying out the forms of development specified in the Direction.

4.4 An Article 4 Direction is a useful method of preserving the character groups of important historic buildings which are not statutorily listed. It enables the local planning authority to manage change in special areas in a positive way by ensuring small-scale development proposals and alterations are undertaken in a way which reinforces and does not erode the unique character of the area.

4.5 Planning applications for forms of permitted development removed by an Article 4 Direction can be made free of charge.



**Please note: Due to changes in government legislation, a charge is now applicable for planning applications made as a result of an Article 4 Direction.**

## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

- 4.6 The Article 4 Direction removes the following forms of permitted development as defined by the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO):

### Part 1 of the GPDO - Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse

- The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse - where this would front a highway (Class A). This includes front extensions, re-cladding of walls and the replacement of doors and windows.
- Any alteration to the roof of a dwellinghouse - where this would front a highway (Class C).
- The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse - where this would front a highway (Class D).
- Development consisting of:
  - the provision of any hard surface within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse - where this would front a highway; and
  - the replacement of such a surface - where this would front a highway (Class F).
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe on a dwelling house - where this would front a highway (Class G).

### Part 2 of the GPDO - Minor operations

- The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure where a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure would front a highway (Class A). Basic and regular maintenance of existing boundaries such as the trimming a hedge or varnishing a wooden fence would not require planning permission.
- The painting of the exterior of any building which would be visible from the highway (Class C).

### Part 40 of the GPDO - Installation of domestic microgeneration equipment

- The installation, alteration or replacement of solar photovoltaics or solar thermal equipment on either of the following:
  - (i) a roof slope forming the principal or side elevation of the dwellinghouse and would be visible from a highway; or
  - (ii) a roof slope of a building within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse and would be visible from a highway.

## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

### Why is an Article 4 Direction in place?

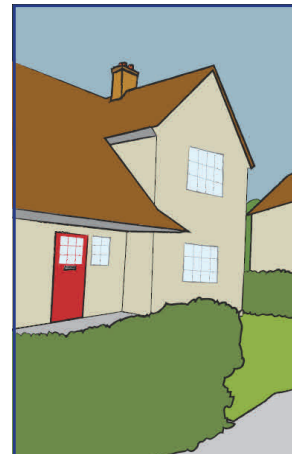
- 4.7 The character appraisal identified the St John's Avenue housing group as having very special, homogenous character which the Council would like to preserve and enhance.
- 4.8 The appraisal has shown that the architectural and landscape character of St John's Avenue housing group is particularly susceptible to being eroded through small-scale changes carried out under permitted development - eg. the removal of garden hedges or the erection of a porch extension. The appraisal has also shown that unsympathetic changes in this area have gradually eroded the area's character.
- 4.9 The Article 4 Direction will help the local planning authority to preserve the character of these areas by requiring householders to submit a planning application for work which is likely to affect the external appearance of a home. The planning decision making process can then ensure that changes permitted are in keeping with the character of the area. Suitable guidance can be provided to householders considering making changes to the front of their homes.

### How will planning applications be assessed?

- 4.10 In assessing planning applications, the Council would want to ensure that the changes proposed are in keeping with the character of the conservation area and that traditional features are preserved or replicated where possible or replaced by features which are sympathetic to the character of the area.
- 4.11 Planning applications in the Article 4 Direction area will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will be informed by:
- adopted local and national planning policies;
  - relevant guidance provided in the Harlow Design Guide SPD;
  - the character appraisal and design guidance provided in this management plan document; and
  - specialist advice provided the Council's heritage advisers.

### Key design features and planning considerations

- 4.12 Within the Article 4 Direction area, particular design considerations will be the desire to maintain and, where appropriate re-introduce the following elements:
- an attractive roofscape of steep-pitched reddish tiled roofs
  - regularly spaced and visually prominent gable elevations and tall chimneys
  - consistent beige pebble dash render
  - front boundary hedges and wooden gates
  - casement windows
  - original colourful doors with 6 and 9 pane windows



Strong architectural and landscape features under threat along St John's Avenue have required an Article 4 Direction removing certain permitted development rights.

## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

### Article 4 Direction design principles

- 4.13 The following design principles will be applied within the Article 4 Direction area.

#### Quality

- 4.14 A major requirement for any development proposal in the conservation area is quality, covering the design, materials, workmanship and execution.

#### Architectural design and character

- 4.15 Whilst the local planning authority does not generally dictate the choice of architectural styles it is important to note that the Article 4 Direction contains a number of highly unified housing groups within whose relatively homogenous architectural and landscape design features play a key role in generating the conservation area's strong character.
- 4.16 Development proposals should make a positive contribution to this local character and distinctiveness present. Proposals which fail to respond to the identified characteristics of housing groups are likely to erode the character of housing groups and will be resisted.

#### Quality and appearance of materials

- 4.17 The selection of appropriate render materials and paint is a critical issue within the Article 4 Direction area. It is critical that the materials used in front facing extensions or alterations or on new dwellings is of a high standard and that the colour and texture of materials used is appropriate to its context.
- 4.18 The Council will require building and roof material materials of a similar appearance to be used on extensions or alterations visible from the highway. Where appropriate, the Council will require that sample of the proposed materials are submitted and approved as part of an application or will request through a planning condition that materials are submitted and approved prior to the commencement of an approved development.

### Roof alterations

- 4.19 The roofscape is an important and attractive visual element of the character of the Harlow Garden Village Estate conservation area. The character appraisal highlighted the visual importance of steep pitched roofs in the conservation area and this means that special care and attention needs to be paid to the scale, massing, design and the materials used in front facing roof extensions.

### Chimneys

- 4.20 Chimneys are a very important element of the roofscape character of the conservation area and these features should be retained unless they must be removed for structural or safety reasons. Replacement chimneys stacks and pots of a similar design and material will be sought where this is the case.



## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

### Front dormer extensions

4.20 Whilst all roof extensions will be considered on their individual merits the following general design principles should be followed:

#### *Scale and proportions*

- 4.21 Extensions should be visually subservient to the roof of the main dwelling. It should be of an appropriate size, height and massing in relation to the original dwelling roof.
- 4.22 The proportions of the original dwelling must remain legible. This can be achieved by setting a dormer extension back and reducing the eaves and ridge height of any dormer roof.

#### *Design*

- 4.23 The design of front roof extensions should be well-integrated with the existing dwelling. Extensions should have similar or visually appropriate features such as roof types and windows to the architectural features present on the main façade. Generally casement windows should be used.
- 4.24 Hipped roof dormer extensions do not respond to the roofscape character of the article 4 area and are likely to be resisted. Gable fronted, flat roof, and shed roof dormer extensions are more appropriate designs.

#### *Visual alignment*

- 4.25 A dormer extension and its architectural features should be well-aligned with the main elevations, windows, doors and other façade features of the main dwelling to provide a visually coordinated effect.

#### *Materials*

- 4.26 The colour of roof tiles makes a significant contribution to the character of conservation area and materials used in any extension should be similar in appearance to those found on the roof of the house.



An example of a visually dominant roof extension



An example of a more visually subservient extension which is set back into the roof



An example of a hipped roof extension



An example of a gable fronted roof extension



An example of a shed roof extension



How extensions should be well-aligned with the elevations and features of a façade to provide a visually coordinated effect

## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

### Porch extensions and extensions to the front or side of homes

- 4.27 Visually prominent projecting gable elevations and steep pitched roofs are important elements of the area's character. Consequently, it is important that porch extensions and any other extensions to the front of homes which could alter the visual dimensions and proportions of building facades and roofs are carried out in a sensitive manner.
- 4.28 Front and porch extensions need particular care and attention in the following instances in the Article 4 area:
- where sloping hipped roofs fall to eaves just above the ground floor on front elevations; and
  - where dwellings have visually prominent front gable Elevations and sweeping gables.
- 4.29 In these instances the most appropriate and sympathetic porch extension to the character of St Johns Avenue would be porch extensions with cat slide / shed roofs. This involves drawing the eaves of the extension down below the eaves height of the main house in order to continue the shape and profile of the roof and mirror the pitch of the roof as much as possible (see photo top left).
- 4.30 Although porch extensions with gable roofs would mirror the design of the main gable elevations of homes, they need to be visually subservient to the main front gable elevations found on the original dwelling so as not to diminish the important original visual role of these architectural features. Hipped roof porch extensions are not generally in keeping with the original façade and roofscape character of the area.
- 4.31 Where dwellings are two storey in height and do not have original two storey gable elevations there may be more scope to accommodate extensions to the front and side of properties providing designs are subservient to and follow the main roof type found on the original dwelling.



An appropriately designed porch extension with a cat slide / shed roofs which follows the profile and pitch of the roof of the main dwelling



Where porch extensions with gable roofs are provided they should ensure that these projections do not diminish the prominent role of two storey gable elevations found on the main dwelling which are a key feature of the area



Front and side extensions to homes need to follow the roof type and pitch found on the original dwelling



## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

### Front boundaries and on-plot parking

- 4.35 Front garden hedges are critically important and original landscape features on the street and reflect the garden village estate character. In general, front hedges are well-preserved and well-maintained. However, in some areas they have been partially or wholly removed to make way for vehicle driveways. It is important that this threat is managed sensitively in a way which ensures the essential character of the conservation area can be retained.
- 4.36 To provide on-plot parking a significant proportion of an existing garden hedge and lawn may need to be removed. However, to ensure this form of development does not completely erode the special landscape character of the area, it is important that a proportion of front garden hedge is retained. This will help to visually screen parked cars and areas of hard landscaping.
- 4.37 The degree to which it is possible to retain a garden hedge will depend on the depth and width of a frontage area and will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Examples are provided below which demonstrate how hedges and on-plot parking have been successfully accommodated within the conservation area in a way which has reinforced the character of the area.



Examples of appropriate and sensitively designed on-plot parking and access. Access provided through the use of a gate and the majority of a garden hedge is retained. This maintains the character of the area but also helps to screen parked vehicles from view.

### Wooden gates and fences

- 4.38 Visually permeable wooden gates and fences are a common in the conservation area and when combined with landscape features such as hedges they help to provide a strong front boundary and generate a highly attractive streetscape character. Consequently, these boundary features are encouraged and should be retained where possible.



Wooden fencing and gates within the Article 4 area

## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

### Refuse and recycling storage and collection facilities

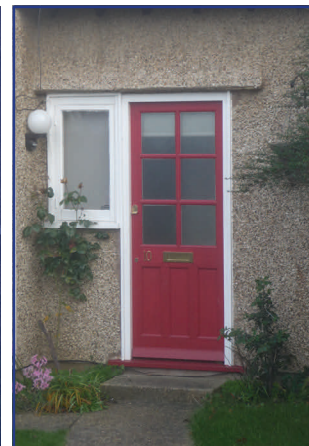
- 4.39 Chapter 2 highlighted that the presence of large wheelie bins can have a detrimental impact on the character of the street scene, particularly where frontages lack boundaries and where bins are not visually screened.
- 4.40 On properties which have retained original front garden hedges wheelie bins can be best accommodated behind garden hedges so that they are screened from view until the day of collection when they can be placed adjacent to the footway.
- 4.41 Where structures are required for the storage of refuse and recycling bins they should ideally be provided behind garden hedges as this will help to screen them from view and ensure that the special landscape character of the streetscene is retained.
- 4.42 Where structures for the storage and collection of refuse and recycling bins are to be incorporated into a front boundary and will be visible from the street it is important for these highly prominent structures to be wooden and of an appropriate height, scale and colour so that they do not detrimentally affect the character of the area.

### Doors and windows

- 4.43 Eight pane casement window frames are an important characteristic of homes along the street. Whilst the vast majority of traditional timber window frames on the street have been replaced by modern uPVC windows are still of a casement design and together with a number of original doors found in the street do help to generate the original garden village character.
- 4.44 Original doors on St John's Avenue are typically colourful and contain 6 or 9 individual pane windows. The most prominent doors on the street are those in red, blue and white which when viewed against beige pebble dash inject vibrant colours onto the street scene.
- 4.45 PVC doors with unsympathetic window dimensions have replaced many of the traditional doors on the street and if all original doors were lost the area would lose an important feature of its distinctive character.
- 4.46 The Council will encourage replacement doors which follow the original casement and panel window design and for all new doors and windows to reflect the dimensions and design found on the street as this is a key ingredient of the area's homogenous and unified character.



Original doors with 9 pane casement windows



Sympathetic local authority replacement doors which follow the traditional style and colours.

## 4 Article 4 Direction & guidance

### Solar panels

4.48 Within the Article 4 Direction area proposals for installing solar panels and photovoltaic panels on roof slopes facing or visible from the highway will require planning permission and will need to be considered and assessed on a case-by-case basis. As a minimum panels should:

- be installed flush with the roof slope;
- not protrude more than 200mm beyond the plane of the roof slope; and
- not result in any part of the panel or equipment being higher than the ridge line of the roof.

4.49 Because a defining feature of the housing groups at St John's Avenue are roof tiles found on steep sloping roofs, it would be preferable for solar photovoltaic roof tiles to be used as these blend in with the roofscape and minimise the aesthetic impact on the special roofscape character of the area.



Examples of solar photovoltaic roof tiles which retain roof tile lines and have a less detrimental impact on the character of the roofscape

## 5 Boundary review

### The need for a boundary review

- 5.1 Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty on a local planning authority to assess the appropriateness of the conservation area boundary and examine whether any further areas should be added. To address this requirement this section of the management plan outlines how the conservation area boundary was established and how surrounding streets have been assessed.

### The original masterplan

- 5.2 A noticeable feature of the original masterplan for the Harlow Garden Village Estate is that it included Priory Avenue, St Edmund's Way and Mill Field. However, these streets have not been included within the conservation area boundary. This section explains why this decision has been taken.



Conservation area boundary and adjacent streets



The original masterplan - above and above right

### National guidance on conservation areas

- 5.3 In defining the conservation area boundary, the local planning authority has taken into consideration paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This states:

'When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.'



## 5 Boundary review

### Rationale for the conservation area boundary and areas excluded

- 5.4 During the appraisal process dwellings within the areas shaded blue on the map to the right were assessed in detail in order to establish whether they were worthy of conservation area status.
- 5.5 As has been outlined, dwellings on St John's Avenue, Manor Road and the Hill were seen to comprise cohesive housing groups which collectively exhibited a range of distinctive garden village characteristics in terms of their shared architectural and landscape features and in the arrangement and layout of dwellings. The identification of these three main housing groups has therefore shaped the scope of the conservation boundary, in addition to minor housing group areas found along the eastern stretch of St John's Avenue.
- 5.6 Though dwellings along Priory Avenue were plotted on the original masterplan and do have a similar landscape character to dwellings within the garden village estate they have not been included in the conservation area because they are not seen to exhibit the architectural and historic character worthy of conservation area status.
- 5.7 Priory Road does contain a number of attractive bungalows set in regular, well-landscaped plots. However, these dwellings are of a different scale and character to those found on St John's Avenue and Manor Road. The character of the street also lacks the cohesive architectural qualities present in housing groups within the defined garden village estate conservation area.
- 5.8 Dwellings along St Edmund's Way, Mill Field and the northern stretches of the Hill and Manor Road have also not been included. Despite sharing strong landscape boundaries these dwellings have a different New Town character to the garden village estate and have therefore not been included in the conservation area.
- 5.9 Homes along the northern stretches of the Hill and Manor Road were also appraised and were not considered seen to exhibit the same landscape or architectural character as the conservation area and were not considered worthy of conservation area status.



Priory Avenue



Mill Field



St Edmund's Way



The Hill

