Batchworth Community Council
Eastbury - Moor Park - Rickmansworth

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Mike Kirkman, Clerk to the Council
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Monday, 10 August 2026

For the attention of: Marko Kalik, Head of Planning Policy and Conservation

Dear Marko,

Re: Draft Rickmansworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Batchworth Community Council (BCC) welcomes the review and supports the preparation of an updated Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. We have identified several areas where we believe the draft document could be strengthened and, in some instances, updated.

1. In Section 2 Planning Policy Context, the draft document currently references the old version of Three Rivers District Local Plan and should be updated to reflect the version of the Local Plan recently published as part of the Reg 19 consultation.
2. Section 2 should also reference the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan (2023-2028) which covers the Rickmansworth Conservation area and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This should be clearly recognised throughout the document.

   Suggested wording might include:

   "Batchworth Community Council's Neighbourhood Plan contains the Batchworth Neighbourhood Design Code which gives guidelines and codes which are expected to be followed and used as a reference point against which to assess planning applications.

   The Rickmansworth Town Centre Concept Plan further develops the Batchworth Neighbourhood Design Code, illustrating high level ideas and potential strategies for change in the town centre. Applicants for development in the town centre are expected to refer to the Concept Plan."
3. The list of Locally Important Buildings (para 8.4 on pages 81-82) should be reviewed to ensure it is accurate and up to date. Several building references are now incorrect; for example, Barclays Bank is now a restaurant, The Hogs Head is now occupied by Costa Coffee, and the reference to Chequers Restaurant is also inaccurate.
4. The Table at 3.3 identifies several other buildings of architectural interest and we support their inclusion in the list of locally important buildings.

5. There are inconsistencies within the document that require clarification. Page 64 refers to the height of buildings, while page 72 refers to tall buildings. Consistent terminology should be used throughout, and the document should reflect the new Local Plan by making it clear that buildings within the conservation area should generally be limited to no more than three storeys.

6. BCC considers that there should be a stronger Management Plan. The section on maintenance should clearly explain the powers and tools available to TRDC and set out how proposals will be implemented and enforced. A clear methodology or Action Plan should be included, covering implementation, the application of the design code, consistent terminology, accurate building references, and the reinstatement of materials following utility works to ensure they match the existing historic materials. The document should also specify appropriate materials for footpaths, roads, seating and signage to ensure consistency whenever maintenance works are undertaken.

7. Article 4 Directions should be clearly referenced and adhered to, as they are essential in maintaining a coherent approach to planning within the conservation area. Furthermore, the Conservation Area guidelines should apply to the entirety of buildings, not simply the shopfronts. This should include rear elevations, wider views, plant equipment such as HVAC units, traffic impacts and service areas including bin stores. For example, at McDonald's, balconies now overlook HVAC equipment and traffic has increased, demonstrating the importance of considering the wider setting of development.

8. BCC also considers that the Management Plan should promote a consistent approach to building finishes, railings and other streetscape details, referencing the approach adopted in the Neighbourhood Plan. At present there are inconsistencies, such as the cobbled paving at one end of the High Street compared with standard paving on the opposite side. A clear specification for materials used throughout the conservation area would help preserve its character and appearance.

9. The draft makes little reference to existing environmental policies or how they will operate within the conservation area. The Local Plan contains guidance on provision of sustainable energy and reduction of emissions in new and existing buildings. This should be referenced in the draft together with clear guidance on balancing environmental objectives with the need to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. BCC would welcome future liaison with TRDC regarding the implementation of sustainable energy measures, including electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Any such proposals should be guided by a cohesive strategy that aligns with both the Local Plan and the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan, ensuring that new infrastructure is sensitively designed and does not detract from the historic street scene.

10. The draft refers to a future review of the District's conservation area boundaries. BCC proposes that such review considers extending the existing boundaries to include additional areas adjacent to Rickmansworth Town Centre and its environs

and Nightingale and Cedars Avenue conservation areas. We also request that a future boundary review considers the inclusion of parts of Mill End together with an Article 4 Direction to restrict the scope of permitted development rights and changes of use from town centre to residential and office to residential. Areas in the locality bordering the River Colne should also be considered in the review.

We trust these comments are helpful and look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with TRDC to ensure that the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides a robust framework for protecting and enhancing the special character of Rickmansworth Conservation Area.

Yours Sincerely,

Mike Kirkman

Mike Kirkman Clerk to the Council

PP Rupa Ahluwalia Officer to the Council