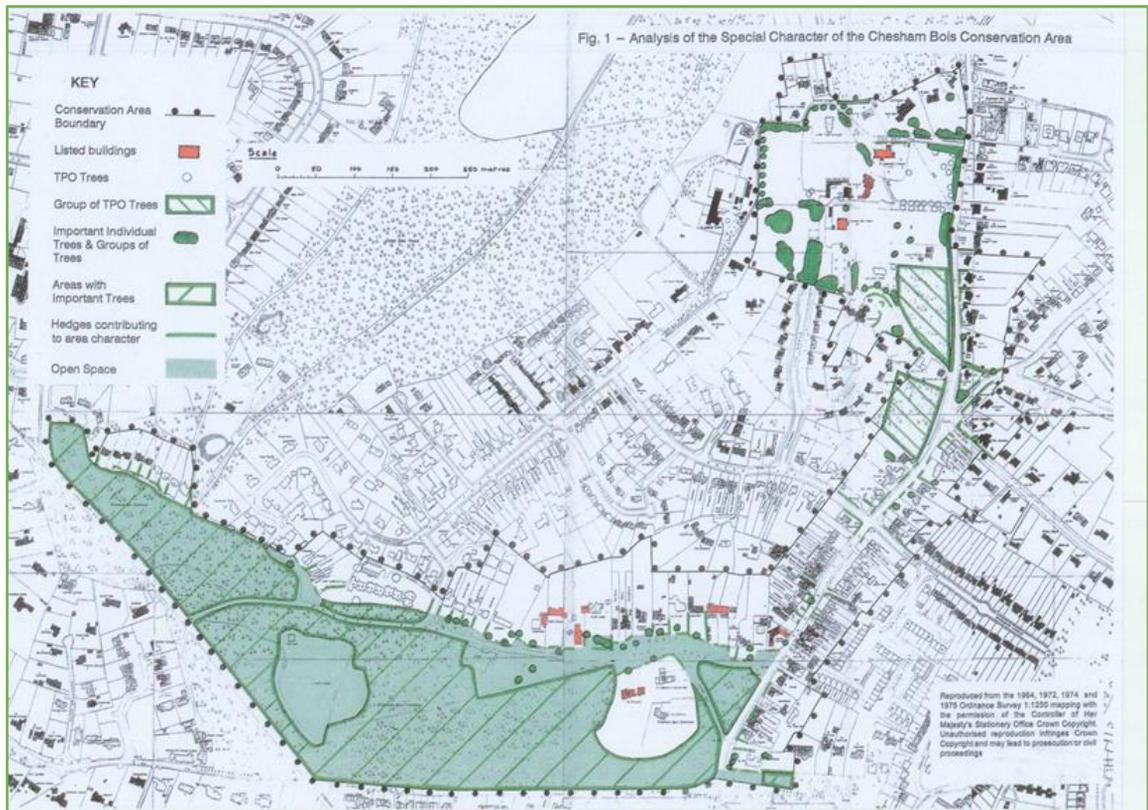


PROTECT

CHESHAM BOIS COMMON & SURROUNDING AREA

The Chesham Bois Conservation Area



The Chesham Bois Conservation Area – An irreplaceable resource for future generations

In the early 20th Century London doctors advised patients to move to Chesham Bois for the benefit of their health. In 1905 estate agents promoted local air as *'proverbially salubrious and bracing'*. As early as 1896 Chesham Bois Common was described as *'situate in one of the most picturesque and healthy positions to be found in the historic County of Bucks, over 500 feet above sea level. The Common, with its long, level grassy rides, gorse-covered stretches, shady trees, picturesque Rectory, and fine bracing air, has long been recognised in the neighbourhood as a true Health Resort.'*

This is true over 110 years later thanks to the Chesham Bois Conservation Area!

The Chesham Bois Conservation Area was designated in 1992 because of its special architectural and historic interest. The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act states: *'These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'*.

Covering an area of 34.4 ha, the Chesham Bois Conservation Area includes the Common, North Road, Manor Drive, the Grade II listed War Memorial, most of Bois Lane and extends to St Leonard's Church and surrounding buildings in High Bois Lane

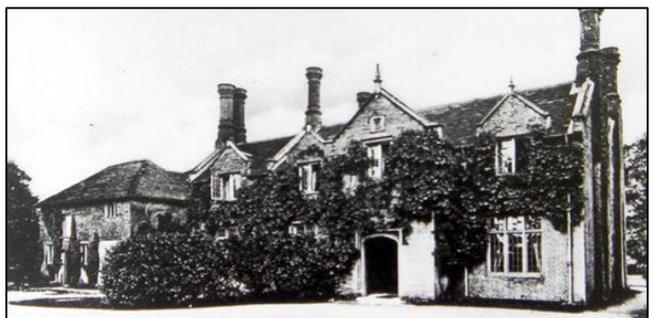
THE CHESHAM EXAMINER, AMERSHAM AND RICKMAN

Attractive Freehold Building Sites.

CHESHAM BOIS COMMON.

These sites are situated on the high lands of the Chilterns, 600 feet above the sea level, and command splendid, uninterrupted views. The air is proverbially salubrious and bracing. There is an abundant water supply, the water—of the purest quality—being supplied by the Amersham and Beaconsfield Water Company. The land is situated within ten minutes' walk of the Amersham (Metropolitan Railway) Station, from whence it is a 60 minutes' journey to London. It is within one mile of the thriving town of Chesham. There will be good school accommodations adjacent, and the Parish Church is in the immediate vicinity. To be sold in half-acre plots, or more, to suit the convenience of purchasers, and houses erected to suit the requirements of purchasers if necessary. Plans and full particulars can be obtained from

JESSE MEAD, Builder & Contractor,
CHESHAM, BUCKS.





There are 12 Grade II listed buildings in the Conservation Area with 7 scattered across the parish. 9 of the 12 are clustered around the Glebe at the heart of the village. Most are the earliest buildings in the parish and are fundamental to the character of the area as they tell the story of the village's rural past before the arrival of the Metropolitan Railway. There are also many fine Arts and Crafts houses in or adjacent to the Conservation Area which are now considered non-designated heritage assets as they form part of our rich cultural identity.

Chesham Bois Common is owned by the Parish Council and is used by all the community, young and old. It is the home of Chesham Bois Cricket Club and a natural haven for wildlife. It is regularly used by community groups such as the Forest Schools, the Scouts and Chiltern Rangers and is the site of the Chesham Bois Parish Fete and village picnic. The Parish Council website states that they 'consider it vital to conserve the character of Chesham Bois Common'.

According to the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, when considering any planning proposal in a conservation area 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of **preserving or enhancing** the character or appearance of that area'

The boundary between urbanisation and semi-rural tranquillity

The Common marks the boundary between the **town** of Amersham-on-the-Hill and the **village** of Chesham Bois. The Common is the beginning of the Conservation Area, where we see a shift from urbanisation to a distinctive semi-rural character. The Common is a '*tranquil area which has remained relatively undisturbed by noise and is praised for its recreational and amenity value for this reason*'.



PROTECT
CHESHAM BOIS COMMON
& SURROUNDING AREA

The threat to the Conservation Area

The planned redevelopment of the St Leonard's Parish Centre, at the heart of the Chesham Bois Conservation Area, is the largest development proposed in Chesham Bois for over 100 years.

The proposal is on land owned by the Church of England on the corner of Glebe Way, South Road and Bois Lane. According to St Leonard's Church Parish Centre Redevelopment FAQs, they will demolish the existing Parish Hall and Rectory and build a new worship centre for 275 people, an additional hall similar in size to the existing parish centre with capacity for another 100 people, a new rectory, an additional caretaker's house, new offices for the Church and the Parish Council, a church-led café and a self-contained day nursery. In excess of 400 people could be on site if both halls, the nursery, the café and the offices are used at the same time. This could be a 400% increase on current usage.

Given that the proposed buildings can hold around 400 people a major concern for the Conservation Area is the increase in traffic with the incremental increase in pollution, noise and parking issues. Inevitably, parking will spill out on to the surrounding roads as there is only 70 permanent carpark spaces included in the current proposal. This will lead to urbanisation of the Conservation Area which could be downgraded as it will lose its distinctive rural character.

Many residents are questioning the justification for the proposed scale of the development. Given that the Church of England own statistics report a decline in church attendance, the building should be sized for the existing St Leonard's congregation. 40% of the St Leonard's congregation already come from outside the area. If St Leonard's grows by attracting new members to its Evangelical Charismatic style of worship this growth will also be from outside the parish so the provision of adequate carparking is fundamental.

The redevelopment of St Leonard's Parish Centre as currently proposed will have a negative impact on the Conservation area. It does not preserve the setting of the 9 of the 19 listed buildings in the village or preserve the Common. The impact on the Grade II Listed Old Rectory is particularly damaging as its current rural aspect will be transformed into a car park.

Protect Action Group

As residents of Amersham & Chesham Bois, we highly value and want to protect the unique nature of the Common, the woodland and the buildings that make the heart of Chesham Bois village and surrounding area enjoyable for everyone. Families are still attracted to the village by the promise of a better quality of life and are prepared to pay a premium to live in a Conservation Area because they trust that it offers protection from over development and the urban sprawl which is blighting villages and towns all over the country.

We are expecting St Leonard's to submit their formal Planning Application in December. If you want to stay informed and be notified when the Planning Application is submitted, please email : protectcbcommon@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook: Protect Chesham Bois Common & Surrounding Area. Website: www.protectcbcommon.co.uk
Details of the development can be found on St Leonard's website:
www.stleonardscb.org.uk/parishcentreredevelopment

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