

# Arkesden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals, 2012



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## 1 Part 1: Appraisal

### Introduction

**1.1** This appraisal has been produced by Officers of Uttlesford District Council to assess the current condition of the Arkesden Conservation Area, to identify where improvements can be made and to advise of any boundary changes that are appropriate. The document is in draft form and will be subject to public consultation and agreement by District Council Members.

**1.2** The historic environment cannot be replaced and is a resource that is both fragile and finite. Particularly in an age when society and its needs change with rapidity, the various historic and architectural elements of Conservation Areas can be perceived to interact in a complex manner and create a 'unique sense of place' that is appreciated by those lucky enough to reside in such special places and the many interested persons who appreciate and visit them.

**1.3** Uttlesford has a particularly rich built heritage, with 36 Conservation Areas and approximately 3,700 listed buildings displaying a variety of styles representative of the best of architectural and historic designs from many centuries. Generally and very importantly the clear distinction between built form and open countryside has been maintained. This is the case in Arkesden where the village is still mostly contained within the historic envelope straddling Wicken Water and with occasional development along the arterial roads.

**1.4** The District is situated in an economically buoyant region where an attractive environment, employment opportunities and excellent transport links by road, rail and air, make it a popular destination to live and work. The District is particularly influenced by Stansted Airport within its administrative area and by the presence of London and Cambridge within easy commuting distance. Additionally, there are other towns of substance such as Harlow, Bishops Stortford and Braintree that provide employment opportunities nearby. With such dynamics the historic environment of the District is a popular destination for in-migration. The associated pressures accompanying such in-migration make it more important to protect the high quality of both built and natural environments.

**1.5** The Uttlesford Local Plan adopted in 2005 recognises these facts and commits the Council to prepare Conservation Area Statements and Supplementary Planning Documents and the production of this document is part of this process.

**1.6** Conservation Areas are environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. In addition to the individual qualities of the buildings themselves, there are other factors such as the relationship of the buildings with each other, the quality of the spaces between them and the vistas and views that unite or disrupt them. The interaction with adjoining areas and landscape, the quality of trees, boundary treatments, advertisements, road signage, street furniture and hard surfaces, are also important features which can add to or detract from the Conservation Area.

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**1.7** This Appraisal will consider these factors carefully. Once it has been approved by the District Council it will be regarded as a 'material consideration' when determining planning applications. The document also puts forward simple practical management proposals to improve the character of the Conservation Area and that are capable of being implemented as and when resources permit.

**1.8** The recommendations in this Appraisal concerning non listed buildings and structures are generally formed by the field worker's observations made from the public realm and rarely involve internal inspection of buildings or their structural condition. Therefore such recommendations as set out in this Appraisal might be subject to reconsideration through the planning application process, where that is necessary, and which would involve the submission of additional relevant information.

**1.9** This Conservation Appraisal will:

- Identify the special character of Arkesden
- Identify elements that should be retained or enhanced
- Identify detracting elements
- Review the existing boundary
- Put forward practical enhancement proposals

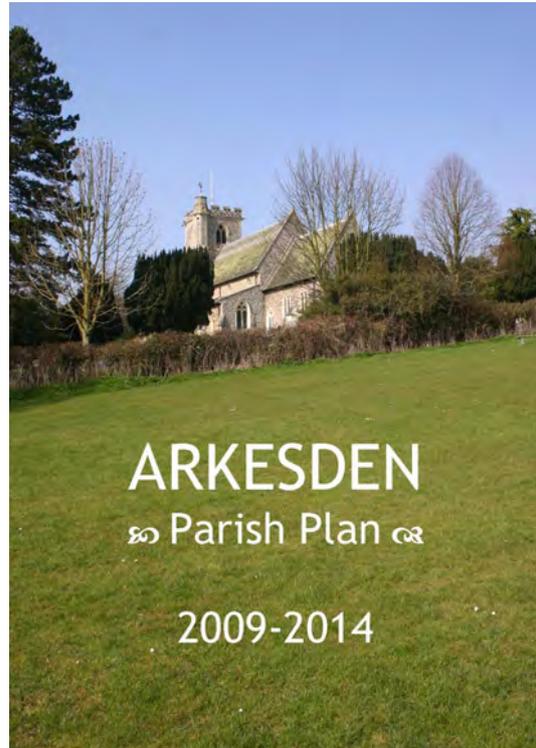
**1.10** The document has been prepared in partnership with the local community and the Council would like to record its thanks to the Parish Council and to the members of the local community who provided useful information to officers when the survey was being undertaken. Particular thanks are due to Kate Barwood for detailed historical information and to the Parish Clerk Steve Coltman.



Picture 1.1 Arkesden from the air (Essex HER)

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**1.11** The Arkesden Parish Plan Steering Group produced a Parish Plan in 2009. This document noted the local support for maintaining the unique character of the village and acknowledged the role of the Conservation Area in doing so. As with many similar settlements there are pressures for development, though opportunities for house building within the historic core are necessarily limited to a few infilling opportunities. A Village Design Statement was proposed to identify the physical qualities and characteristics of the village and its surroundings. Great concern was also expressed regarding the speed and volume of traffic through the village. This issue will be dealt with in the relevant section of this document.



**1.12** In undertaking an exercise such as this, one aspect that is too easily forgotten is the community itself and the people who live locally and contribute to its cohesion and social success. Arkesden is a vibrant village with a small but diverse range of local organisations. These include an active Parish Council, regular meetings of the Womens' Institute and a community library now accommodated in the disused K6 phone box. There is also a well used village hall and the Millennium Field and play area. St Mary's Church shares a vicar with the neighbouring parishes of Clavering, Langley and Wicken Bonhunt but still provides services every Sunday, although, in common with national trends, regular attendance has diminished. There is a keen group of bellringers who meet twice a week and the bells themselves underwent extensive refurbishment in 1999<sup>(1)</sup>.

**1.13** This document is written in three parts: Legal and Policy Framework; Appraisal; Management Proposals.

### Planning Legislative Framework

**1.14** The legal background for designating a Conservation Area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This states that the Council shall from time to time designate Conservation Areas, which are defined as being '*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance*'. The same section of the Act also requires that Councils undertake periodic reviews.

**1.15** Section 71 of the Act requires Councils to '*formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement*' of Conservation Areas and hold a public meeting to consider them.

1 cf. *Arkesden Parish Plan 2009-2014*, The Arkesden Parish Plan Steering Group, 2009

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**1.16** Within Conservation Areas there are additional planning controls and if these are to be supported it is important that the designated areas accord with the statutory definition and are not devalued by including land or buildings that lack special interest.

**1.17** One of the most important additional planning controls that apply to Conservation Areas is set out at section 74 of the Act which states that '*a building in a conservation area shall not be demolished without the consent of the appropriate authority*'. This requirement is known as 'Conservation Area Consent' and is subject to certain exceptions. For example, it does not apply to Listed Buildings which are protected by their own legislation but is relevant to other non listed buildings in the Conservation Area above a threshold size as set out in the legislation (115 cubic metres). Looking for and identifying such buildings is therefore a priority of this appraisal.

**1.18** The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (as amended), defines the range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required and this range is more restricted in Conservation Areas. For example, the Order currently requires that the addition of dormer windows to front roof slopes, various types of cladding, satellite dishes fronting a highway and a reduced size of extensions, all require planning permission in a Conservation Area, whereas they would not require permission beyond.

**1.19** However, even within Conservation Areas there are other minor developments that do not require planning permission. So as to provide further protection the law allows Councils to introduce additional controls if appropriate. Examples of such controls can include some developments fronting a highway or open space, such as an external porch, the painting of a house or the demolition of some gates, fences or walls. The removal of important architectural features that are important to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area or individual buildings within it such as distinctive porches, windows or walls or railings to non-listed properties can be subject to a more detailed assessment and if appropriate made subject to protection by a legal process known as an 'Article 4 Direction'. The use of such Directions can be made in justified circumstances where a clear assessment of each Conservation Area has been made. In conducting this appraisal, consideration will be given as to whether or not such additional controls are necessary.

**1.20 Trees.** Another additional planning control relates to trees located within Conservation Areas. Setting aside various exceptions principally relating to size and condition, any proposal to fell or carry out works to trees has to be 'notified' to the Council. The Council may then decide to make the tree/s subject to a Tree Preservation Order. This Appraisal diagrammatically identifies only the most significant trees or groups of trees that make a particularly important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Other trees not specifically identified may still be suitable for statutory protection.

**1.21 Hedgerows.** Some hedges may be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. This legislation is extremely complicated and only applies in certain situations that are determined by the location of the hedge, its age and or its historical importance, the wildlife it supports and its number of woody species.

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### Planning Policy Framework

**1.22 National Planning Policy Framework.** Published in March 2012, this document replaces previous advice, including PPS 5, Planning for the Historic Environment. The principle emphasis of the new framework is to promote sustainable development.

**1.23** Economic, social and environmental roles should not be considered in isolation because they are mutually dependent and positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment should be sought, including replacing poor design with better design. Whilst architectural styles should not be imposed it is considered proper to reinforce local distinctiveness.

**1.24** In relation to the historic environment the new National Planning Policy Framework advises as follows:

- There should be a positive strategy in the Local Plan for the conservation of the historic environment and up-to-date evidence used to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make.
- Conservation Areas. Such areas must justify such a status virtue of being of 'special architectural or historic interest'.
- Heritage assets. A Heritage asset is defined as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listings)'.
- Considerable weight should be given to conserving such heritage assets and the more important they are the greater the weight. For example the effect of an application affecting a non- designated heritage asset should be taken into account and a balanced judgment reached. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II Listed Building should be exceptional whilst harm to heritage assets of higher status, e.g. a grade I or II\* Listed Building should be wholly exceptional.
- Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that preserve such elements should be approved.
- The use of Article 4 Directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations 'where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the well being of the area...'
- Green Areas. Such areas of particular importance can properly be identified for special protection as Local Green Spaces in selected situations.

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**1.25 Uttlesford Adopted Local Plan.** Uttlesford District Council has a commitment to the environment and its Local Plan Policies. Uttlesford's policies protect Conservation Areas by only permitting development that preserves or enhances their quality and by preventing the demolition of structures that positively contribute to their character and appearance. The Council's Conservation Officer can provide appropriate advice.

**1.26** The Uttlesford Local Plan was adopted in 2005 and can be viewed on the Council's website or a copy can be obtained from the Council. In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is currently preparing a replacement Local Plan that will, in due course, contain the relevant Council planning policies.

**1.27** The Arkesden Village Inset of the Uttlesford Local Plan shows the existing Conservation Area and the Development Limits.

**1.28 Essex County Council Buildings at Risk Register.** The County Council has a 'Buildings at Risk Register'. In relation to Arkesden no such buildings have been identified and neither has this Appraisal identified any.

**1.29 Arkesden Conservation Area date of designation.** The Conservation Area was designated in 1977.

### General Influences

**1.30** Arkesden is situated in a primarily rural area on a gently sloping ridge some 18 miles south of Cambridge and 9 miles north of Bishop's Stortford. It is the settlement's proximity to both the M11 and to Stansted Airport, that exerts the greatest influences offering opportunities for employment and enhanced communications with Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford, Harlow, London and beyond. The main Cambridge to London railway line can be accessed from Audley End station some 3 miles distant. Bus services are infrequent but car ownership is high, eroding the need for local services. The Post Office and local shop closed in 2004 and there remains only one public house, the Axe and Compasses, to serve the needs of the community. There is also a well used village hall managed by an active Village Hall Committee and a community library in the disused K6 phone box.

**1.31** Because of the lack of local opportunities and the ease of access to good communication routes, out-commuting is high and has led in the past fifty years to a change in the residential make up of the village. There are few opportunities for local employment other than in agriculture, though the Axe and Compasses does offer the possibility of part-time and seasonal work.

**1.32** Historically, agriculture was the main source of employment and although still an important local activity, its prominence is not as marked as it once was. Parsonage Farm remains a working business but many other associated activities are now only remembered in the house names such as The Old Forge, the Old Post Office, the Old Maltings and the Old Vicarage. Empire Cottage was once the site of the old Empire

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Stores, The Green Man used to be a pub and there was a beer house at The Ancient Shepherd. Today, the buildings which were once home to these myriad activities have been converted to residential use.

**1.33** Because of its location the village will continue to be subjected to development pressures and so now is an appropriate moment to be considering how to best protect its built environment.

### The General Character and Setting of Arkesden

**1.34 Setting.** Arkesden is situated in a valley traversed by the Wicken Water from which the surrounding farmland rises gently. This Landscape Character Area (LCA) is classified as 'North West Essex chalk farmland'<sup>(2)</sup> and was described by Kelly in 1874 as "soil ... Heavy, with a portion of a lighter nature; subsoil clay and chalk"<sup>(3)</sup>. It is characterised by large open fields with panoramic views from the ridgetops interrupted by few trees or blocks of woodland, except near farmsteads or the village itself. Most notable is the ancient woodland at Wood Hall which dates back to the Domesday period. The Wicken Water valley is itself wooded and the sound of water from weirs and fords dominates. The *Landscape Character Assessment* for Uttlesford describes the area thus:

*This is not a populated area; Arkesden in the southwest is the only notable village, and the farmsteads are widely dispersed. It is a large-scale landscape of rolling arable fields, almost flat in some places on the higher ground in the northeast. The field pattern is regular, almost linear in places, with sporadic tree cover. Pylons cross the landscape from the southeast. There are fringing shelterbelts and scattered trees in places, with pockets of scrubby vegetation. Ditches and grassy tracks edge the fields, with some broken hedgerows. There are no patches of remnant ancient woodland, but there are some tree plantations. Long views are possible from the open lanes, which are almost straight, and public footpaths are few<sup>(4)</sup>.*

**1.35** In the nineteenth century wheat, oats, barley and roots were cultivated usually on a 'four course shift system'<sup>(5)</sup>. Today, wheat, barley and rape are most frequently grown and, the land is classified as being of Grade 2 quality (very good)<sup>(6)</sup>.

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2 *Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report Annex B: Baseline Information*, Essex County Council, June 2012, Parra. 9.1

3 *Post Office Directory of Essex*, London: Printed and Published by Kelly and Co., 1874, p.9

4 *Landscape Character Assessment*, Chris Blandford Associates, September 2006, p. 331

5 *Post Office Directory of Essex*, London: Printed and Published by Kelly and Co. 1874 p.9

6 *Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Land*, Defra Publications, 1988

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**1.36** The fieldscape consists of irregular fields of ancient origin, probably of medieval or earlier date, interspersed with areas of former common fields. Many of these were enclosed in the 19th century, forming large fields with irregular outlines and grid-like internal subdivisions. There has been a degree of boundary loss since the 1950s largely as a result of the removal of 19th century field divisions. Ancient lanes are sunken and winding and several leading to the village have Protected Lane Status<sup>(7)</sup>. The area is sensitive to land management changes. The open skyline on the ridges of the upland landscape means that any new development would be visible in the panoramic views across fields. Sensitivity to new development would also arise due to the sense of tranquillity, the presence of wildlife and biodiversity habitats and their strong historic integrity with historic buildings.

**1.37 General character and plan form.** With the exception of the modern development at Quicksie Hill and some infilling throughout the historic core, Arkesden has changed little over the last century reflecting the comparative isolation of many of the smaller rural settlements. The existing Conservation Area is a mirror reflection of the community as it existed in the late 19th century and as shown on the 1877 Ordnance survey map (see Figure 1). Within the village the scale is intimate, with channelled views out through trees to the sloping countryside. There is the sound of water rippling over weirs, and, where it flows through the village, individual small bridges provide access to houses along the stream. Colour-washed plaster and thatched roofed buildings predominate and the historic flint and brick St Mary's Church sits dramatically on a rise over the village green. Any incremental new housing is discreet and, where visible, has often been designed to blend in with the environment.

**1.38** The National Heritage List for England records some 41 individually listed buildings and other structures in the parish of Arkesden, of which 22 are to be found in the designated Conservation Area. The majority of these are timber-framed and plastered. Most date from the 16th to 18th centuries. St Mary's Church - properly called Church of St Mary the Virgin - is Grade II\*, the remainder are classified Grade II.

**1.39** Thatch is a traditional roofing material in Arkesden and an important feature of the village that must be retained. Of the Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area over 70% have thatched roofs.

**1.40** When examined in conjunction with the spread of unlisted constructions and buildings of later date, the indications are of a piecemeal infilling of timber framed buildings continuing into the early 19th century when brick and slate became the choice for the better quality buildings. Unlike other settlements along the Cam valley which saw periodic rises in prosperity and hence building development brought on either by trade or better communications, Arkesden, set in a rural hinterland, never experienced a dramatic rise in fortunes and has escaped substantial expansion.

**1.41** There are several other buildings and features that whilst not being listed are nevertheless of architectural and historical interest and which add to Arkesden's overall quality.

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7 Reference: UTTLANE22-24 and UTTLANE141 - *Uttlesford Protected Lanes Assessment*, Essex County Council, March 2012

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**1.42** One very important feature of the village is the use of low hedging and timber picket fences to define boundaries and link buildings. The use of these materials reflects the local landscape where hedged field boundaries form such a visually important part. This appraisal also identifies a number of important walls that are not individually listed but there may also be others not immediately visible from the public realm and or in otherwise inaccessible locations.

**1.43** Throughout the Conservation Area there are trees in abundance, either as groups or as individual specimens located on the small green and in the churchyard. Others are to be found in private gardens, many of which have already been made subject to Tree Preservation Orders. They add considerably to its attractive appearance and diversity of the Conservation Area particularly on the approaches to the village along Clatterbury Lane and down Quicksie Hill.



Picture 1.2 Trees and timber fences define the boundary of St Mary's Church in the early 20th century (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

**1.44** Wicken Water which runs through the centre of the Conservation Area is an attractive feature.

**1.45** The 20th century railings supported on concrete posts, many painted white, bordering Wicken Water and on the access bridges are a feature of Arkesden. Whilst not being of particular architectural and historic interest they do contribute to the quality of the street scene. They are generally in good condition but some are in need of minor repair or painting. It is very important that this feature is kept in good condition and painted on a regular basis because should railings or posts become shabby the visual qualities of the centre of the Conservation Area would be eroded.

**1.46** Overhead cables on poles detract significantly in some locations.

**1.47** There are many high quality buildings representative of various periods. Despite some occasional less than satisfactory adjoining modern development, the Conservation Area itself represents an historic grouping of buildings in a rural setting that warrants its formal designation. One further recognition of the quality of the local environment is the inclusion of the village on National Route 11 of the National Cycle Network.



Picture 1.3 20th century railings along Wicken Water, whilst of little historic or architectural note, add considerably to the quality of the Conservation Area

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### Origins and Historic Development

**1.48** Historical background data has been extracted principally from the *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report*<sup>(8)</sup> and the *Essex Historic Environment Record (HER)*<sup>(9)</sup>.

**1.49 Prehistoric and Roman.** There is extensive evidence of Prehistoric and Bronze Age activity in the Arkesden and Wicken Bonhunt zone in the form of sporadic cropmarks indicating the existence of a range of enclosures, many of probable prehistoric date, ring-ditch cemeteries of probable Bronze Age date and field systems. A number of excavated burials of Bronze Age date have also been identified. Both Iron Age and Roman populations were active in the area as shown by the presence of rural farmsteads, some of which may have been of substantial construction as large amounts of tile and possible masonry have been found. A late 2nd century Roman burial was found in 1844 "in draining work in an open field...close together". The objects, now in the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, were described later by R C Neville (of Audley End) and included, a terracotta figurine 3" high of a mother goddess nursing infants, 2 Samian platters, a complete Samian bowl. An ivory ball, possibly of Roman origin, was found in 1910 by Mr Housden, while carting gravel from a large pit beside the Wicken Water at Arkesden.



Picture 1.4 Wenden Road - the ancient sunken lane, of Medieval or earlier origin, as it descends from Hobs Aerie and Quicksie Hill

**1.50 Medieval.** *A History of the County of Essex*, Victoria History of the Counties of England 1903, describes the Domesday entry thus:

8 *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report*, Essex County Council, 2009, Parra. HECZ 2.2 Arkesden and Wicken Bonhunt

9 <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/>

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*Ascenduna (Arkesden) which was held by Ailid as a manor and as 2 hides is held by Ralf in demesne. Then 14 villeins, now 20. Then 3 bordars; now 9. Then 2 serfs; now none. Then as now 2 ploughs on the demesne and 4 ploughs belonging to the men. Woodland for 100 swine, 6 acres of meadow, 1 acre of vineyard. Then 2 rounceys, 5 beasts, 60 swine, 200 sheep, 10 hives of bees; now 1 rouncey, 7 beasts, 60 swine, 65 sheep, 3 hives of bees. It was then worth 6 pounds, now 8. (Glossary of terms: 'Demesne' essentially means land belonging to the lord of the manor; a 'villein' was a peasant legally tied to land he worked on; a 'bordar' was similar to a villein who rendered service for his cottage'; a 'rouncey' was an all purpose horse).*

**1.51** To the northeast of St Mary's Church there is some limited evidence of a Norman castle identified as an incomplete, irregular moat, 5-8m wide, up to 2m deep (SMR Number: 3939).

**1.52** Evidence of further earthworks comprising a small mound with bailey surrounded by an outer ditch at Plash Wood to the north of the village. The site is now only visible as a cropmark ( SMR Number: 18361).

**1.53** Using evidence from the Essex Placenames Project<sup>(10)</sup> it is possible to build up a picture of Arkesden at this period as a fairly typical small agricultural community surrounded by common land, tenanted and privately held fields.

**1.54** The 13th century St Mary's Church is the principal built structure extant from the Medieval period although it was extensively rebuilt in 1855 when the foundations of an earlier Saxo-Norman round tower were discovered on the site. There are some important monuments inside, including a 12th century font and a 15th century effigy of a priest, in the north wall of the chancel. There is also a military brass of 1439.

**1.55 Post Medieval.** Historically, the settlement was focused around St Mary's Church with further development extending to the east along the route of the Wicken Water although until the 20th century this remained rather piecemeal. More recent infilling has tended to interlink these areas giving the village its present linear layout.

**1.56** The number of surviving domestic buildings dating from the 17th and early 18th centuries onwards indicate that the area had entered a period of relative prosperity. Dove Cottage, Watts Folly, and Church Green Cottage, all clustered around the church, date from this period whilst the Axe and Compasses on the Wicken Road and the 18th century Glebe Cottage at the south eastern extent of the Conservation Area demonstrate a gradually spreading settlement, though still with close ties to the



Picture 1.5 Interior of the 13th century St Mary's Church as it was in the late 1800s (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

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church. Further piecemeal development continued throughout the late 18th century and into the 19th century when a number of quality brick built properties, such as the Old Vicarage and the Rose Cottage, Jessamine Cottage and Brick Cottage grouping, make an appearance on the streetscene.

**1.57** The Chapman and Andre survey of 1773-5, published in 1777, and the 1821 enclosure map for Arkesden<sup>(11)</sup> both give a good idea of the village at this period. The focus of the settlement is still on St Mary's Church with a number of buildings strung out along the banks of Wicken Water to the junction of Wicken Road and Clatterbury Lane.



Picture 1.6 Arkesden as shown on the Chapman and Andrew map of 1777 (Reproduced courtesy of a private collection)

11 'Plan of the parish of ARKESDEN, 1821' unofficial enclosure map held by Essex Record Office Reference Code: D/DYo 2

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**1.58** In Victorian times, *The Post Office Directory of Essex* for 1874 describes Arkesden as being 'a village and parish, situate on a winter brook falling into the Cam ... 3 ½ miles south-west from Audley End Station, 3 ½ west from Newport Station, 5 south-west from Saffron Walden, and 44 from London. The church of St. Margaret is a fine large building, situated on rising ground adjoining the village ... There is a national school, erected in 1844, by grants and public subscription ... The area is 2,320 acres ... and the population in 1871 was 436'.

**1.59** In addition to the several farmers the same directory lists the following commercial activities: Nathan Bailey 'shopkeeper' and Nathan Bailey jun. 'higgler'; William Farnham 'beer retailer'; Ezra Francis 'carrier'; William Heyden and Charles Pilgrim 'blacksmiths'; William Jeffrey 'grocer' and William Pluck 'shopkeeper'. John Reed was the publican of the Axe and Compasses and James Monk is listed at the Green Man.

**1.60** There was also a Congregational Church adjacent to Church Green Cottage and now replaced by the Village Hall and a Methodist Chapel in Hampit Road, built on land given in the 1880s by Mrs Birch Wolfe following a row between her and the Reverend Herbert Matthew Fearn. This was converted to a private dwelling in the mid 1990s.

**1.61** The official Census summary report of 1831<sup>(12)</sup>, paints a picture of Arkesden as a primarily rural community largely reliant on the land. Then the total population is listed as 490 persons comprising 245 males and 245 females. There were 67 inhabited houses, 2 uninhabited and none under construction. In all a total of 109 families are chiefly employed in agriculture against only 8 whose main occupations are given as trade manufacture and handicraft. Just 2 are described as "Capitalists, Bankers, Professional & other Educated men". At the time of the census the majority of men aged 20 and above, some 86 altogether, worked on the farms this accounting for some 70% of the population as against a national average of 40%. As a consequence when agricultural depression hit in 'the hungry forties' Arkesden would be particularly badly affected with many families relying on the parish for support. Surprisingly, almost exactly half of the male population, some 123, were then aged under 20, making the village a much more youthful community than today.

**1.62** Half a century later and in 1881 the village still seems to be a vibrant and mostly self-contained community. The population has diminished slightly to 420<sup>(13)</sup> but there are still 70 men and 3 women employed in agriculture. There were, though, 17 men

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12 *1831 Census of Great Britain, Abstract of answers (Sample Report Title: Abstracts of the Answers and Returns Made pursuant to an Act, passed in the Eleventh Year of the Reign of His Majesty King George IV, Intituled, "An Act for taking an Account of the Population of Great Britain, and the Increase or Diminution thereof." Enumeration Abstract.), Table [1]: "Population Abstract". Available on the Vision of Britain Through Time website*

13 *1881 Census of England and Wales, Population tables 2, Table 4, 'Area, Houses, and Population of Civil Parishes in the several Registration Sub-Districts in 1871 and 1881' Available on A Vision of Britain Through Time website at: [http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit\\_page.jsp?u\\_id=10234219](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit_page.jsp?u_id=10234219)*

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employed as "Wkrs in General or Unspecified Commodities" and 16 women in domestic service. Surprisingly, two women are listed as being of "Professional" class against the single male resident in this category.



Picture 1.7 Arkesden as shown on the 1898 Ordnance Survey mapping. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

**1.63** Although small there were still a number of tradesmen carrying on business including Nathan Bailey who ran the shop and his son, Nathan jun. Described as a 'higgler'. Both are listed in the 1874 edition of *Kelly's Post Office Directory for Essex*<sup>(14)</sup> as are William Farnham 'beer retailer', William Heyden 'blacksmith' and William Jeffrey 'grocer'. James Monck carried on business at the Green Man pub and John Reed was publican at the Axe and Compasses, a trade he combined with that of local carpenter. Miss Hawkins is recorded as mistress to the National School, then situated in a building next to Church Green in what is now the front garden of Parsonage Farm.



Picture 1.8 The Axe and Compasses still trades today

14 *The Post Office Directory of Essex* Edited by E. R. Kelly, London: Printed and Published by Kelly and Co. 1874

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Picture 1.9 The National School school next to Church Green in what is now the front garden of Parsonage Farm (Reproduced courtesy of Arkesden Parish Plan)

**1.64** The agricultural depression of the early twentieth century only exacerbated the general decline in population as more and more villagers moved away from the land. This population shift has in part been halted by the new developments of the past fifty years around the perimeter of the conservation area and by gradual infilling elsewhere so that during the latter part of the 20th century the population has increased gradually from 224 in 1931 to 282 in 1961 (Census reports, 1931-1981). The 2001 census records a population of 363 (2001 Census, Office of National Statistics).

**1.65** In common with many other rural settlements, Arkesden has seen a steady erosion of local facilities over the years. The National School was closed in 1949 and was subsequently demolished. The Green Man pub has been converted to a private house and the village no longer has any shops, the last one - the Post Office and local crafts shop - having closed in 2004. Today only the Axe and Compasses still trades.

### Character Analysis

**1.66** The current Conservation Area has been divided into two character areas, each with a map and key common to all. Historical photographs have been provided by Saffron Walden Museum and from the Arkesden Parish Plan publication. Other photographs have been taken by the fieldworker. All maps are reproduced from the Ordnance Survey under Uttlesford District Council Licence No: 100018688 (2004).

**1.67** The extent of the character areas is shown on Fig 2. They are:

- Area 1 St Mary's Church and the village green
- Area 2 Wicken Road and Wicken Water to Clatterbury Lane

**1.68** Within Arkesden's Conservation Area there are no designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

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**1.69 Archaeological sites.** Arkesden is described by the *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project*<sup>(15)</sup> as being of Medieval and earlier origin. There is one site archaeological interest which, although outside the boundary, influences the Conservation Area; the moat site of a possible Norman castle (centred TL483346) to the north east of the church. Not all archaeological sites are of equal importance and the Council will decide a course of action that may vary from archaeological investigation and recording to protecting such a site from development, when determining planning applications. There will generally be a presumption in favour of preservation in situ.

**1.70 Listed buildings.** Individually listed buildings have been identified, plotted and a representative selection is described, such abbreviated descriptions being based on the Dept. of Culture Media and Sport's list. Full descriptions can be obtained on line at English Heritage's website or Heritage Gateway website ([www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)) Listed Buildings are protected from unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension. Structures, including railings and walls, within the curtilages of listed buildings, if they are pre-1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings.

**1.71 Non-listed buildings of quality and worthy of protection from demolition.** This Appraisal has identified several non listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area and these have been separately identified. The basic questions asked in identifying such buildings/structures are:

- Is the non listed building/structure of sufficient architectural or historic interest whose general external form and appearance remains largely unaltered?
- Does the building contain a sufficient level of external original features and materials?
- Has the building retained its original scale without large inappropriate modern extensions that destroy the visual appearance, particularly in respect of the front elevation?
- Is the building/structure visually important in the street scene?

**1.72 Traditional materials and detailing.** Traditional materials and detail make a significant contribution to the character of the local area.

**1.73** Lime render, either finished plain or with pargetted decoration is the predominant finish at the historic core of the village where buildings are most commonly constructed from oak timber frame. Timbers are often left exposed, sometimes picked out in contrasting colours or, where plain, weathered to a silver grey. Infill should be with wattle panels, left unfinished for decorative effect. Bricks, used for principal construction from the eighteenth century, are handmade reds, occasionally with gault brick detailing and with cambered or gauged arches to openings. Other features such as applied

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15 *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project*, Essex County Council, 2009, pp. 73-4

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moulded window copings are typically found on better quality buildings dating from the 19th century. Brickwork is most commonly found in Flemish bond although English bond is also used, usually on perimeter walls and outbuildings where decorative effect is required. Barns and outbuildings are usually constructed in weather board which is prevalent, both feather edged and plain edged. It is historically preserved with pitch or creosote through now most often painted black.

**1.74** Throughout the historic core there is a predominance of traditional straw thatch found laid very steeply, typically at a pitch of 45 to 60°. It is usually finished plain, but ridges may be finished with decorative ligger work in patterns including dragons' teeth, diamond, scalloped, clubbed, herring-bone and crossed, usually hipped. On other buildings roofs are sometimes of double cambered handmade red clay plain tiles laid steeply (47 to 50°) or for 19th century and later additions, natural blue-grey slate at a lower pitch Orange clay pantiles are usually confined to outbuildings only.

**1.75** Windows are largely traditional; in painted or stained timber with either symmetrical flush or recessed casements, vertical or horizontally sliding sashes, the latter a particular feature of North West Essex. Although plastic replacement windows are to be found on a number of later properties, surprisingly few historic houses have been assailed by this blight. Where replacement windows are in evidence they are usually good copies of the original or are in period style.



Picture 1.10 A narrow dormer pierces the thatch

**1.76** Roofscapes provide a rich variety of architectural detail, form and shape. Interest is drawn from the single or multiple red brick chimney stacks, some of very elaborate shape. On low 1 ½ storey cottages dormer windows penetrate the roofline where they typically provide contour and interest. On grander buildings smaller pitched roof dormers are typically narrow openings sometimes partly concealed behind a parapet.

**1.77** Boundary treatments are an important element in defining the street scene where they provide texture and interest to an area. Walls, many of which are constructed of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping, and fences, many of the timber picket type, are typically low to front and side elevations on public through-fares. They are either painted white or left untreated.

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**1.78** Fields are defined by heavy agricultural timber fencing, always unfinished and usually of three horizontal bars either roughly squared or left in the round. Hedged boundaries are also frequent, particularly on the more rural periphery of the conservation area where they sometimes conceal more modern developments.

**1.79 Trees and hedgerows.** There are a considerable number of trees that particularly contribute to the quality of the Conservation Area. The basic criteria for identifying such important trees are:

- They are in good condition
- They are visible at least in part from public view points
- They make a significant contribution to the street scene or other publicly accessible areas



Picture 1.11 Trees have always been an important feature of the village as evidenced by this early 20th century image of a fantastic elm near the bridge. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

**1.80** A large number of trees within the Conservation Area and around the Church are already subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

**1.81 Open land, open spaces or gaps of quality that contribute to the visual importance of the Conservation Areas where development would be inappropriate have been identified.** The basic question asked in identifying such areas is:

- Is the open space or gap an important landscape feature contributing to the general spatial quality and visual importance of the Conservation Area?

**1.82** Private open spaces forming an important setting for an historic asset and unkempt spaces that have the potential to be enhanced are candidates for selection subject to complying with the principle question.

**1.83** Any other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution are noted.

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**1.84** Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions in justified circumstances and the criteria for their selection in relation to features associated with selected non listed properties is as follows:

- In relation to retention of chimneys, these need to be in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property, prominent in the street scene and generally complete with chimney pots. Exceptionally chimney stacks of particular architectural merit without pots may be selected.
- In relation to retention of selected windows, these need to be on front or side elevations, fronting and visible from the street/s, contemporary with the age of the property and where the majority of windows of respective elevations retain their original characteristics and have not been replaced by modern glazing units.
- In relation to retention of walls or railings, those selected need to be below the prescribed heights (walls including a footpath or bridleway, water course or open space 1m fronting a highway or 2m elsewhere require prior consent for their demolition), be prominent in the street scene and make a positive architectural or historic contribution to its visual appearance.
- In relation to retention of other features, these may include good quality architectural detailing to non-listed buildings, constructed of wood, metal or other materials.
- It may also be appropriate to introduce Article 4 Directions to retain quality buildings below the prescribed threshold where consent for demolition is not required or to prevent the erection of inappropriate additions such as porches to terraced properties of historic interest.

**1.85 Local Geological Sites (LoGS).** Local Geological Sites are non-statutory designations that are the geological equivalent of Local Wildlife Sites. Arkesden is remarkable in that three such sites are located within the Conservation Area: Arkesden War Memorial (St Mary's churchyard) comprising a very large single boulder of puddingstone; Clatterbury Lane puddingstone marker (south of the village to the side of Clatterbury Lane); Wicken Water boulders (found in the bed of Wicken Water by the road bridge) comprising an unusually large collection of glacial erratic boulders.

**1.86** Features that detract or are in poor repair have been identified and appear in the Table 'Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements' set out in Part 2.

**1.87** Important views are identified and are briefly described.

**1.88** In suggesting any revisions to boundaries of the Conservation Area, consideration has been given as to whether or not the land or buildings in question form part of an area of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be conserved.

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### Area 1 - St Mary's Church and the village green

**1.89 General overview.** This area - the historic core of the village - is quintessentially English in character with St Mary's church sited dramatically on a rise over the village green framed by mature trees and the open sky. Below historic buildings cluster about the small triangular green or sit on the banks of Wicken Water. On the other side of the Wenden Road to the church the scale and spacing of structures is different where large houses such as The Old Vicarage or the agricultural structures of Parsonage Farm sit in their own generous plots.

**1.90 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.** There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments recorded.

**1.91 Archaeological sites.** There is one site of archaeological interest just outside this part of the Conservation Area; the moat site of a possible Norman castle centred TL483346 to the north east of the church and suggested by Morant in 1768 as the site of the original manor house<sup>(16)</sup>. The remains comprise an incomplete, irregular moat, 5-8m wide, up to 2m deep at a site adjoining the north side of the churchyard sloping south towards the church and east towards a boggy area on its eastern edge<sup>(17)</sup>. An archaeological watching brief on the construction of a water pipeline in the area of the church revealed no archaeological features. Neither did a separate archaeological watching brief observing the construction of a children's play ground in the north west corner of Millenium Playing Field which also revealed no archaeological features or finds. The existence of a moat in this area is of considerable interest locally and a future survey of the earthworks should be considered.

**1.92 Palaeolithic implements** from an unknown location around Arkesden are now held in Saffron Walden Museum as is a bronze age founder's hoard found at Highfield, Arkesden in 1872, during land drainage. Roman, Saxon and Medieval finds have also been recorded throughout the parish including a fine Decorative copper alloy mount, possibly casket fitting or sword scabbard fitting of 9th century date.

**1.93 Individually Listed Buildings.** A selection of representative Listed Building descriptions (generally abbreviated) is provided below.

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16 Morant, P *History of Essex* Vol 2, 1768

17 SMR3939 (Hedges, John D) Dated : 1973

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Picture 1.12 St Mary's Church in the late 19th century (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

**1.94** St Mary's Church. Grade II\*, properly called Church of St Mary the Virgin. Using local materials to their full potential, the walls are of flint rubble with stone dressings, the roof now in slate. Chancel and nave originally date from c.1250 to which north south aisles were added in the 1380s. The west tower was rebuilt in about the middle of the 15th century and a south porch added. The north aisle was largely rebuilt early in the 16th century according to an inscription said to have formerly been in the north wall. Some medieval windows tracery remains as does a 12th century square tapering font. Traces of a Norman tower found in 1855 when the present west tower was built. At that time, according to Bettley and Pevsner further renovations were carried out to the clerestory, chancel arch and hammerbeam roof<sup>(18)</sup>. Inside there are a number of important monuments including a 15th century effigy of a priest (thought to be John Croxby, Vicar here 1435-56), in the north wall of the chancel and the late 16th century monumental tomb of Richard Cutte and his wife now "crudely repainted"<sup>(19)</sup>. Other tablets and inscriptions are to the Birch Wolfe family of nearby Wood Hall. There is also a military brass of 1439.

18 James Bettley and Nikolaus Pevsner *The Buildings of Essex*, London, Yale University Press, 2007, p. 90

19 op cit.

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Picture 1.13 St Mary's church in 2012

**1.95** Dove House (formerly Jefferies) and Church Green Cottage both abut the diminutive Church Green. The former, a timber-framed and plastered building but very much modernised and altered, dates from the late 17th or early 18th century. Two storeys and attics. Modern casements, bow windows on the ground storey. Roof thatched, half hipped, with a ridge chimney stack. The latter building, of 18th century date, is again, thatched, timber-framed and plastered, one storey and attics. Casement windows. Both are Grade II.

**1.96** Lower down on the bank of Wicken Water sits Watts Folly (Grade II), a typical 17th century timber-framed and plastered house on an L shaped plan, originally two cottages until 1936. One storey and attics, modern casement windows with leaded lights. Roof thatched, with 2 dormers on the south front and one dormer on the east side. At the east end there is a large external chimney stack.

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Picture 1.14 A quintessential English village scene; the thatched Watts Folly sits on the banks of Wicken Water with the west tower of St Mary's Church rising through the trees behind

**1.97** On the other side of the green Applebee (originally three cottages), Empire Cottage (formerly Thatched Cottage) and Parsonage Farm Cottage (all Grade II) form a pleasing group. All date from the 17th and 18th centuries and with their thatched roofs pierced by small dormer windows, plastered or weather-boarded external treatments, red brick chimney stacks and sympathetic renovations they make a positive contribution to the street scene.

**1.98** In the centre of the village green stands the 19th century cast iron pump with spout and handle (broken). It is Grade II listed and in need of repainting.

**1.99** The only other listed building in this part of the village is the Old Maltings a 17th century two storey timber-framed house with exposed timber-framing and brick nogging in the square panels (some original brick). The upper storey is jettied on the east end on exposed joists. An original central chimney stack with grouped diagonal shafts on a rectangular base punctures the thatched roof as do the two modern dormers. The 1877 Ordnance Survey map shows that this building once formed part of a much larger complex which had been substantially demolished by 1946.

**1.100 Important buildings or structures within the curtilages of Listed Buildings.** A number of such buildings have been noted and are detailed below.

**1.101** On the north side of the churchyard is the important large chest tomb of Allen Hurrell (died 1838) with fluted nook-shafts and acroteria at each corner.

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**1.102 Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution.** A number of such buildings have been noted and are detailed below.

**1.103** The Old Vicarage. A tall elegant and prominent building, 19th century in appearance although it may have earlier origins, largely unaltered, two and a half stories, constructed of red brick with central pedimented porch. Original windows and slate roof of steep pitch with carved barge boards, two tall chimney stacks at west and east ends. Two projecting bays, the front elevation punctuated by two, then one, then two vertical hung sashes of 16 panes each, side lights and small upper story single lights. A single storey extension was added in the early 20th century. The living was a discharged vicarage, yearly to a value of £230 in 1874, having been formerly 'endowed with a portion of the great tithes, which were commuted for land and a corn-rent, under the inclosure (sic) act, in 1814'<sup>(20)</sup>. Throughout the 19th century the residence was in the gift of the Birch Wolfes of Wood Hall. The relative wealth of the living may account for the size and quality of the building. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for windows and selected architectural detailing may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 1.15 The Old Vicarage; an unlisted building of very high quality

20 Samuel Lewis *A Topographical Dictionary of England*, London, S. Lewis and Co., 1848 p. 69

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**1.104 Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution.** Walls so identified are protected from demolition without prior consent unless otherwise stated.

**1.105** A range of boundary treatments are found within this part of the Conservation Area - wooden picket style fences, some traditionally painted and others left untreated; garden hedges and flint walls with brick piers and capping detail. These are notably found to the front of The Old Vicarage and The Old Maltings. A modern close boarded gate giving entrance to The Old Maltings from Wenden Road/Quicksie Hill is not in keeping and its replacement should be considered. Few of these boundaries are not particularly high permitting views into the many well-maintained gardens. Smaller historic dwellings generally sit to the front of their gardens whilst modern properties and larger period houses are often set further back in their generous plots. This spacing has helped to preserve the spacious and uncluttered village feel of Arkesden.

**1.106** The 20th century railings supported on concrete posts, erected as a safety barrier along the course of the Wicken Water, are a feature of Arkesden. Whilst of little historic or architectural note, they add considerably to the quality of the Conservation Area.

**1.107 Important open spaces.** The churchyard represents an area of high quality open space. The churchyard contains a number of historic tombs that add to its quality. The 20th century war memorial is also located here, notable as it is constructed from a very large and conspicuous example of Essex puddingstone.

**1.108** Church Green and Pump Green, the latter retaining the listed village pump, are two further areas of important open space. Together they contribute to the quality and diversity of the centre of the Conservation Area adding its charm with a combination of mature trees, informal seating and historic features.

**1.109 Particularly important trees and hedgerows.** Mature trees of exceptional quality are one component of a quintessential English landscape around the church and nearby properties. Those to the front of Conkers effectively screen the property from the road whilst trees behind Dove House and Church Green Cottage provide a green backdrop to these properties setting them in scale to the overall streetscene. Hedgerows delineating the boundaries of front gardens play an important function in adding to the high quality and diversity of the environment. The quality hedges abutting the run down into the village from Quicksie Hill to Wenden Road provide a transition from the surrounding countryside to the core of the village. Their retention is of the utmost importance.

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Picture 1.16 A very English scene - Dove Cottage (left) and Church Green Cottage (right) front onto Church Green and are set in scale by mature trees in the background. The presence of utility poles detracts from the quality of this view

**1.110 Important views.** One such view is identified - looking up towards St Mary's Church from Church Green.

**1.111 Elements that are out of character with the Conservation Area.** A number of utility poles and their overhead services detract from the quality of the streetscene. It is considered appropriate to draw attention to the level of visual damage, particularly where these services intrude in proximity to Listed Buildings. It is recognised that in the current economic climate it may be difficult to achieve any real improvements, though, it will still be worth while exploring the potential for the under grounding of services with the utility companies should the opportunity arise.

**1.112** As mentioned above, the close boarded gate giving entrance to the Old Maltings from Wenden Road detracts. Dialogue should be opened with the owners to seek a more appropriate gate in this historic wall.

**1.113 Opportunities to secure improvements.** Repaint highway directional sign and the adjacent pump on Pump Green.

**1.114 Suggested boundary changes.** None are recommended in this part of the Conservation Area.

**1.115 Other actions.** As set out in the Table 'Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements' in Part 2.

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### Area 2 - Wicken Road and Wicken Water to Clatterbury Lane

**1.116 General overview.** The Conservation Area here is linear in nature following for the most part the course of the Wicken Water to just beyond the junction of Wicken Road and Clatterbury Lane at almost the southern extent of the village. The views are intimate, out through buildings and trees to the gently ascending countryside. The roadways, in some places quite narrow, are bordered with a mix of colour-washed thatched cottages, small-scale 19th century housing and larger later developments, the latter mostly screened by mature hedges. Everywhere there is the sound of flowing water as it passes over weirs or under the individual small bridges which provide access to properties along the stream.

**1.117** Comparison with the 1877 Ordnance Survey mapping indicates that, in spite of gradual infilling over the past 130 years, there has been little change in the streetscene. The most noticeable change has been the intercession of modern properties along the northern bank of the Wicken Water on what was open land and the loss of associated tree cover. As in so many places, many of the former activities carried out in this part of the village now only survive in the building names - The Green Man Inn, The Old Post Office, The Old Forge.

**1.118** Throughout the settlement here several quality 19th century buildings have been identified as being worthy of protection. The general high quality of the Conservation Area, though, is marred by the presence of utility poles carrying overhead services.

**1.119 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.** There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments recorded. However, the SMR notes two standing stones just beyond the extent of the present Conservation Area one to the east of the village, possibly not in its original position (SMR Number: 3618) and the second just beyond the south extent of the village envelope adjacent to Clatterbury Road and on the way to Clavering (SMR Number: 3955).

**1.120 Archaeological sites.** An ivory ball was found in 1910 by Mr Housden, while carting gravel from a large pit beside the stream at Arkesden. Examination revealed it to be of elephant ivory, possibly of Roman or early medieval date due to the oval shape being caused by the lateral shrinkage of the ivory. The find is now preserved in the collections at Saffron Walden Museum.

**1.121 Individually Listed Buildings.** There are 12 Listed Buildings in this part of the Conservation Area for which selected descriptions (generally abbreviated) are provided below. All are Grade II listed.

**1.122** Sitting on the northern bank of the Wicken Water can be found The Green Man and Sextons. Formerly The Green Man Inn, this late two storey late 16th or early 17th century timber-framed and plastered building was altered in the 18th and 19th centuries with a slate roofed wing added at the north-east end. Windows are a mixture of casements and some double-hung sashes with glazing bars. The roof is tiled with an original central chimney stack with 3 square shafts on a rectangular base. In the adjacent plot, Sextons is from a slightly later period with the date 1699 scratched in the plaster

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of the dormer gable on the front. Again of timber-framed and plastered construction, it is single storey with attics, the frontage broken up with casement windows with leaded lights and a modern bay on the ground storey. There is a modern doorway with a pedimented hood. Roof tiled, half hipped, with one gabled dormer and a central chimney stack.

**1.123** In front of the unlisted Old Post Office can be found the listed Type K6 telephone box. Designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and made by various contractors the red painted square kiosk with domed roof is immediately recognisable in the street scene. Although a phone is no longer installed, it has been adopted locally and is used as a community library.

**1.124** Across the Wicken Road stands Hill House, an elegant 18th century and later timber-framed and plastered building of three storeys with triple range of casement windows. The centre part, of one window range, breaks forward on the front with a gable and a porch on the ground storey. The roof tiled, with end chimney stacks. Set well back from the road in its own generous plot and surrounded by mature trees it makes a pleasing prospect in the street scene.

**1.125** Just adjacent and different in scale is Pen-Y-Wyn, another 18th century timber-framed and plastered building, but this time of two storeys with iron casement windows and a thatched roof with a central rectangular chimney stack. It was substantially rebuilt in the late 20th century following an extensive fire.

**1.126** The Axe and Compasses is now the sole remaining public house in the village. Built sometime around 1700, it is of single storey timber-framed construction refronted in red brick in the late 18th or early 19th century. Two small ground floor bay windows with double-hung sashes with glazing bars are a notable feature. The roof is thatched, with end chimney stacks and 2 dormers giving light to the attics. A later, probably 19th century, addition with a slate roof extends to the west.

**1.127** Just a little further along the road is a pleasing group of four listed properties comprising The Old Cottage, The Old Forge, Old Post Cottage and Box Tree Cottage. All are dated by the Listing reports to the 18th century and are principally of timber-framed construction but with differing external treatments ranging from weather-boarding to pargetted plaster work. Windows are a mixture of casements horizontal sliding sashes and double-hung sashes with glazing bars. Recent local historical research considers the Old Forge to comprise part of a hall house of 1470-85, now much altered and with the addition of a later outbuilding on the south-east side; this was originally a late 18th century blacksmith's workshop.

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Picture 1.17 Long Thatches and Ivy Cottage sit back from the road across Wicken Water

**1.128** Long Thatches is was originally a run of three 17th century timber-framed and plastered cottages, but was renovated in the 20th century to form one tenement. It is one storey with attics, small casement windows. Roof thatched, with 5 dormers; one central and 2 end chimney stacks. Adjacent is Ivy Cottage, recorded in the English Heritage listing entry as Barnford Cottage, of similar date and construction to Long Thatches. Much renovated in the 20th century now with modern casement windows, thatched, half hipped, with 2 dormers.

**1.129** Glebe Cottage, presumably so named because of an association with the parochial glebe lands further up the lane, originally comprised two 18th century timber-framed and plastered cottages, but is now one tenement. It is two storeys high with small casements and a thatched roof with a lower eaves level on either side of the upper storey windows, central chimney stack and end stack.

**1.130** In the adjoining plot sits Byrne's Cottage. This was formerly known as Daws and that is still the name under which the listing entry is held by English Heritage. Dating from the 17th century this timber-framed house was much restored in the 20th century, with exposed timber-framing and modern brick nogging, one storey high with attics. Casement windows and a modern porch are later additions. The roof is thatched, half hipped, with one dormer and a central chimney stack. A free-standing barn was formerly included within the curtilage of this building forms an adjacent property known as May Barn. This was converted to a private house in 2003.

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**1.131** In a prominent position on the junction of Wicken Road and Clatterbury Lane sits Baileys Cottage; formerly a pair of timber-framed and plastered cottages, now joined to form one tenement of one storey and attics. Dating from the around the end of the 17th century the small casement windows are later additions. Roof thatched, with 3 dormers and a central chimney stack.

**1.132 Important buildings or structures within the curtilages of Listed Buildings.** As noted above, May Barn was formerly within the curtilage of Byrne's Cottage and as such certain constraints still apply.

**1.133 Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution.** A number of such buildings have been noted and are detailed below.

**1.134** Rose Cottage, Jessamine Cottage and Brick Cottage on Wicken Road comprise a pleasing run of three (originally four) related terraced cottages dating from the 19th century. They are shown on the 1877 Ordnance Survey mapping as such. Constructed of yellow-white gault brick, tiled roofs, two chimney stacks with a range of eight double hung vertical sashes of 16 panes each under cast lintels. Front doors are 20th century replacements and Jessamine Cottage has a porch. Article 4 Directions to provide protection for windows and selected architectural detailing may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 1.18 Rose Cottage, Jessamine Cottage and Brick Cottage on Wicken Road comprise a pleasing group of non-listed buildings worthy of note

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**1.135** Finchley and Reubens. This pair of mid to late 19th century semi-detached plastered cottages sit at an important focal point on the junction of The Gap and Wicken Road. They are two storeys high with a seven window range of 20th century casements, central front doors under slate porches in style with the slate roof. Red brick central chimney stack. Article 4 Directions to provide protection for selected architectural detailing may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

**1.136 Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution.** Walls so identified are protected from demolition without prior consent unless otherwise stated.

**1.137** Wooden picket fences, most painted white are very much in evidence in this part of the Conservation Area and are often found demarking the front boundaries of properties.

**1.138** As in Area 1 the 20th century railings supported on concrete posts along the course of the Wicken Water are a dominant visual motif. In some cases these have been continued along the sides of the many small individual bridges which give access to properties across the stream.



Picture 1.19 Cast iron signpost manufactured by the Maldon Ironworks in 1934. Junction of Wicken Road and Clatterbury Lane

**1.139** At the junction of Wicken Road and Clatterbury Lane can be found a cast iron circular section tapered signpost with conical finial. Dating from 1934, this was originally manufactured by Maldon Iron Works. There are three 10½-inch arms of which one is a replacement casting without mileages<sup>(21)</sup>. This is now in need of some repainting.

**1.140 Important open spaces.** Whilst not a large open space the embankments of Wicken Water present a particularly pleasing spectacle fringed with aquatic and marginal species nearer the water's edge and with field plants on the top. The presence of the stream and its associated embankments edged with rough cut

granite setts provides a ready reminder of the rural landscape surrounding the village.

21 Maldon Ironworks Order No. R/301 dated 28/7/1934. See: John V. Nicholls *Essex survey of cast iron signposts 2002-2005*. 2005

## Part 1: Appraisal 1



Picture 1.20 Distinctive railings, wide banks and rough cut granite setts edging the road all combine to add to the quality environment in front of the former Green Man Inn

**1.141 Particularly important trees and hedgerows.** Mature trees are found throughout this part of the Conservation Area. Particularly notable are those in the grounds of Hill House and Baileys Cottage. Hedges make an important visual contribution to the landscape often marking the boundaries between properties. Typically on historic properties they are low and punctuated by similarly scaled picket gates permitting views into neatly maintained cottage gardens. Those fronting the modern housing on the north side of Wicken Road are higher serving to screen the buildings from the road. In their varying shapes and sizes, their use of different species and their use together with other features such as small wooden gates they provide texture and interest reinforcing the rural nature of this part of the village.

**1.142 Important views.** Along Wicken Road.

**1.143 Elements that are out of character with the Conservation Area.** Utility poles throughout the Conservation Area; as noted above, opportunities to reduce the image of these intrusive features should be explored.

## 1 Part 1: Appraisal

**1.144** There is an issue with traffic speed through this part of the Conservation Area which detracts from the quality of the environment. Parking on the road in front of the Axe and Compasses, particularly at weekends, causes congestion and can adversely impact on the streetscene.

**1.145 Opportunities to secure improvements.** Repaint short post sign at the junction of Wicken Road and Clatterbury Lane.

**1.146 Suggested boundary changes.** Elm Brook and Bramley Cottage and their associated gardens are recommended for inclusion. The properties were built in the inter-war period and appear on the Ordnance Survey mapping revisions to 1946. Whilst not of architectural or historical significance they make an important and pleasing visual contribution on the approach to the village along Clatterbury Lane.



Picture 1.21 Utility poles intrude into the streetscene in Wicken Road

**1.147** Revisions are proposed to the Conservation Area boundary to follow property boundaries to the rear of May Barn and Byrne's Cottage.

**1.148** Similarly, revisions are proposed to follow the rear boundaries of Bridge Cottage, Plym Cottage and Hinchmans.

**1.149** A further revision is proposed to follow the new rear boundary of properties from Waterbridge to Long Thatches. Planning Consent has recently been granted for a change of use from agricultural land to domestic gardens at land to the rear of the aforementioned properties. A condition of the consent is that the boundary should be demarcated with post and wire fencing and that soft landscaping works with approved planting should be undertaken. Good practice is to draw Conservation Area boundaries such that they follow demarcated boundaries on the ground. Whilst current Conservation Area boundary follows the historic field and property boundaries its is considered that the revised boundary should enclose the extent of the newly extended back gardens of these properties.

**1.150 Other actions.** As set out in the Table 'Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements' in Part 2.

## Part 2 - Management Proposals 1

### Revised Conservation Area Boundary

**2.1** There are four areas proposed for revision:

1. Elm Brook and Bramley Cottage and their associated gardens are recommended for inclusion. The properties were built in the inter-war period and appear on the Ordnance Survey mapping revisions to 1946. Whilst not of architectural or historical significance they make an important and pleasing visual contribution on the approach to the village along Clatterbury Lane.
2. Revisions are proposed to the Conservation Area boundary to follow property boundaries to the rear of May Barn and Byrne's Cottage.
3. Similarly, revisions are proposed to follow the rear boundaries of Bridge Cottage, Plym Cottage and Hinchmans.
4. A further revision is proposed to follow the new rear boundary of properties from Waterbridge to Long Thatches. Planning Consent has recently been granted for a change of use from agricultural land to domestic gardens at land to the rear of the aforementioned properties. A condition of the consent is that the boundary should be demarked with post and wire fencing and that soft landscaping works with approved planting should be undertaken. Good practice is to draw Conservation Area boundaries such that they follow demarked boundaries on the ground. Whilst current Conservation Area boundary follows the historic field and property boundaries its is considered that the revised boundary should enclose the extent of the newly extended back gardens of these properties.

### Planning Controls and Good Practice: The Conservation Area

**2.2** All current planning policies are contained in the Uttlesford Local Plan adopted in 2005. It is against this document that the District Council will process applications. As set out above, this will be superseded in due course by the Council's new Local Plan.

**2.3** Applicants considering submitting any application should carefully consider the relevant policies and if necessary contact Council Officers to seek advice. For further details including advice on Planning Applications, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Landscaping and other general administrative advice, please contact the Planning Department for assistance.

Website: [www.uttlesford.gov.uk](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk)

Telephone no. 01799 510510

Or write to Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER

### Planning Controls and Good Practice: The Potential Need to Undertake an Archaeological Field Assessment

**2.4** Potential need to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation. Good practice for applicants will be to carefully consider the content of the policies set out in the Local Plan.

## 1 Part 2 - Management Proposals

### Planning Control and Good Practice: Listed Buildings

**2.5** Those buildings that are individually listed and other buildings, structures or walls within the curtilage of a Listed Building are similarly protected in law.

**2.6** The Listed Buildings and associated structures within their curtilages, including those specifically identified by this Appraisal are important and are a major contribution to the quality of the built environment of Arkesden. It is essential that their architectural detailing is not eroded or their other qualities and settings not compromised. Good practice for applicants will be to carefully consider the content of the policies set out in the Local Plan.

### Planning Controls and Good Practice: Other Buildings that Make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution

**2.7** A number of such unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area have been identified. The Council will seek to ensure that these are retained. These are as follows: The Old Vicarage on Wenden Road; Finchley/Reubens on Wicken Road and Rose Cottage/Jessamine Cottage/Brick Cottage on Wicken Road.

**2.8 Proposed Article 4 Directions.** There are other distinctive features that are integral to some of the unlisted buildings identified in the previous paragraph that make an important architectural or historic contribution, including selected chimneys, windows and other architectural detailing. In some situations protection already exists through existing planning controls but in other cases protection could only be provided by removing Permitted Development Rights via an Article 4 Direction. The associated legislation is complex. Should the Council consider such a course of action appropriate there would be a process of notifying the affected owners separately at a later date. This would be associated with further detailed consideration and possible refinement of the general proposals set out earlier in this Appraisal.

### Planning Controls and Good Practice: Other Distinctive Features that Make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution

**2.9** This Appraisal has identified several features including walls and signposts that make a particular contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Some walls are protected from demolition without prior consent by virtue of exceeding the specified heights relevant to Conservation Area or by Listed Building legislation. Any proposal involving their demolition is also unlikely to be approved.

### Planning Control and Good Practice: Important Open Spaces, Trees and Groups of Trees

**2.10 Important open land, open spaces and gaps.** The open spaces as identified being the churchyard, Church Green and Pump Green. Additionally, the embankments of Wicken Water are of note. All represent landscape features that materially contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area that must be protected.

## Part 2 - Management Proposals 1

**2.11 Particularly important trees and hedgerows.** Only the most significant trees are shown very diagrammatically. Many have already been made subject to Tree Preservation Orders but others worthy of protection have not. Subject to certain exceptions all trees in a Conservation Area are afforded protection and a person wanting to carry out works has to notify the Council. Trees that have not been identified may still be considered suitable for protection by Tree Preservation Orders. Owners are advised to make regular inspections to check the health of trees in the interests of amenity and Health and Safety.

### Proposed Controls: Other Distinctive Features that make an Important Visual or Historic Contribution

**2.12** The most important views within and out of the Conservation Area are diagrammatically shown.

### Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements

**2.13** The Appraisal has identified a number of elements that detract which are summarised below together with a proposed course of action. Within the staff and financial resources available, Council Officers will be pro-active and provide assistance. It must be recognised that such improvements will frequently only be achieved with the owners' co-operation.

*The features identified below are shown on the accompanying plans.*

Detracting element	Location	Proposed Action
Overhead utility services on intrusive poles	At various locations. These poles and associated overhead services are the most disruptive element in the Conservation Area	Contact utility company to explore potential of securing improvements of selected overhead services in selected locations
Historic highway signpost	Junction of Wicken Road and Clatterbury Lane	Contact Essex County Council and repaint
20th century signpost	Pump Green	Contact Essex County Council and repaint
Close boarded gate	Entrance to The Old Maltings, Wenden Road	Liaise with owners to seek solution to include a more appropriate gate in this historic wall
Traffic management plan	Principally through the core of the village	Discuss with parish council and local members to pursue with Essex County Council as appropriate

## 1 Part 2 - Management Proposals

### Other actions

19th century pump on Pump Green Suggest Arkesden Parish Council monitor condition and maintain in present good condition

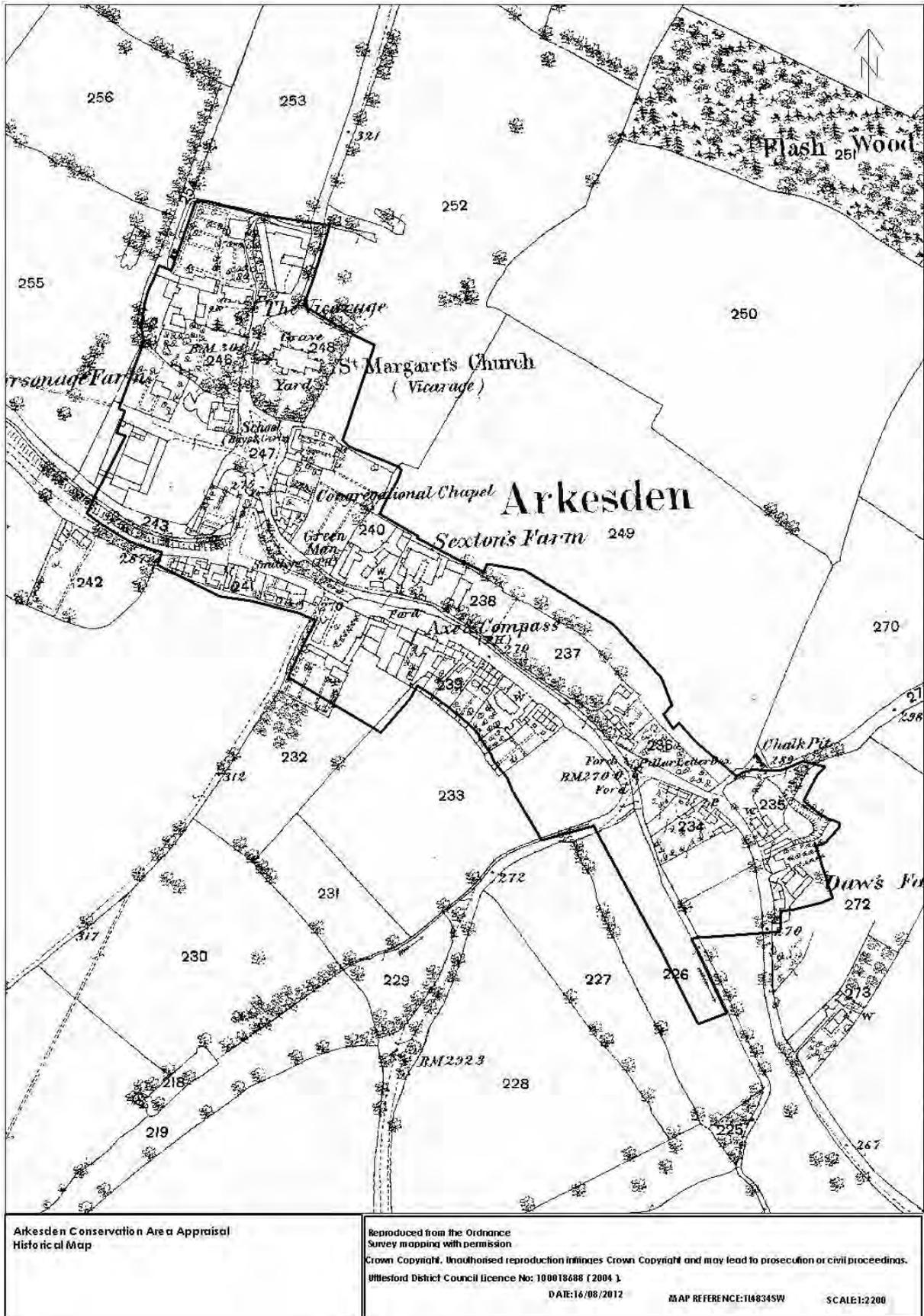
It is suggested the condition of the protective railings bordering Wicken Water be monitored on an occasional basis and that the parish council advise Essex County Council of any necessary remedial actions

Advise English Heritage of differences in naming of listed properties - Byrne's Cottage (formerly Daws) and Ivy Cottage (formerly Barnford Cottage)

**If you require this publication in an alternative format and/or language please contact us on 01799 510510**

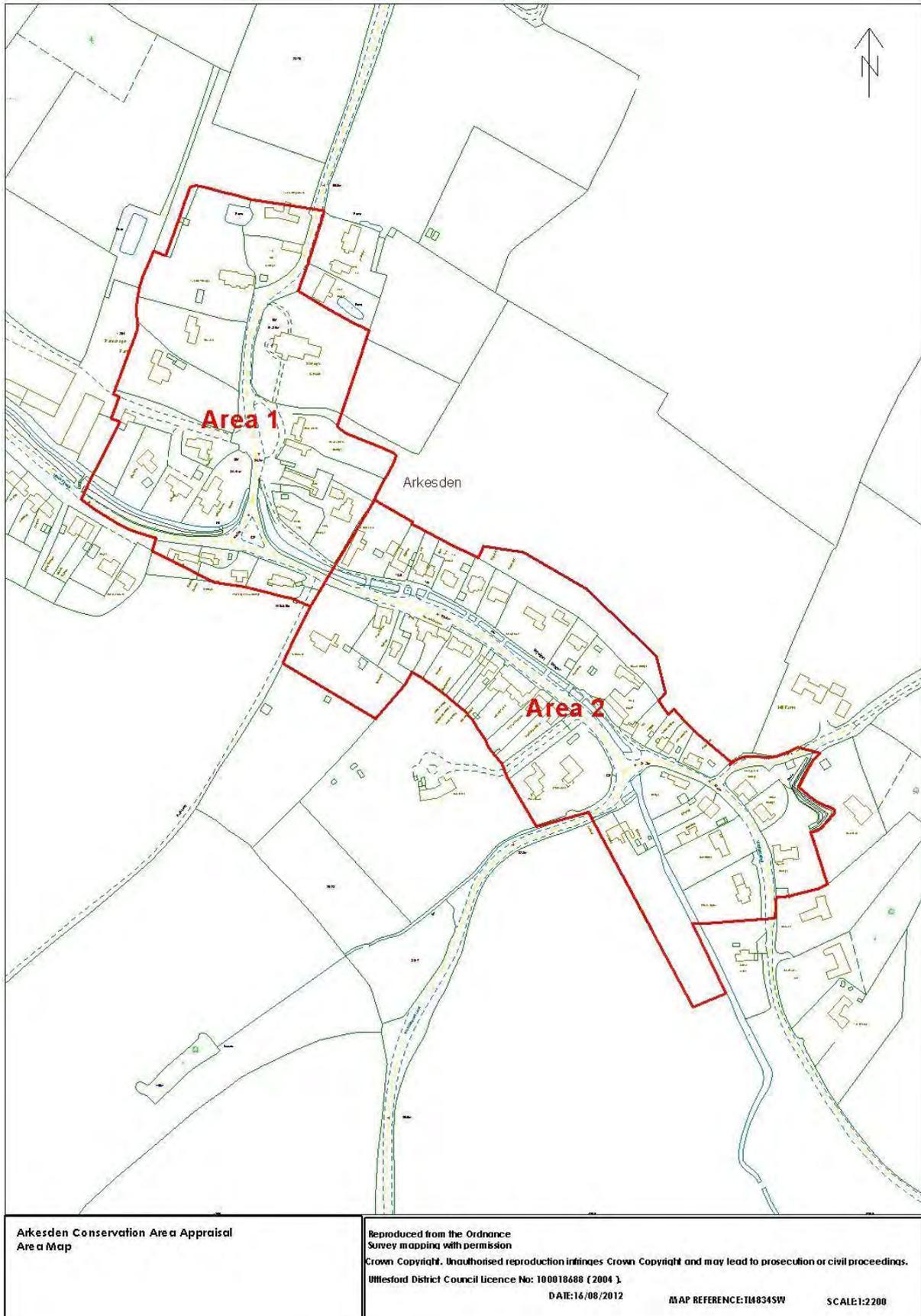
Maps 1

Figure 1 - 1877 Ordnance Survey Map



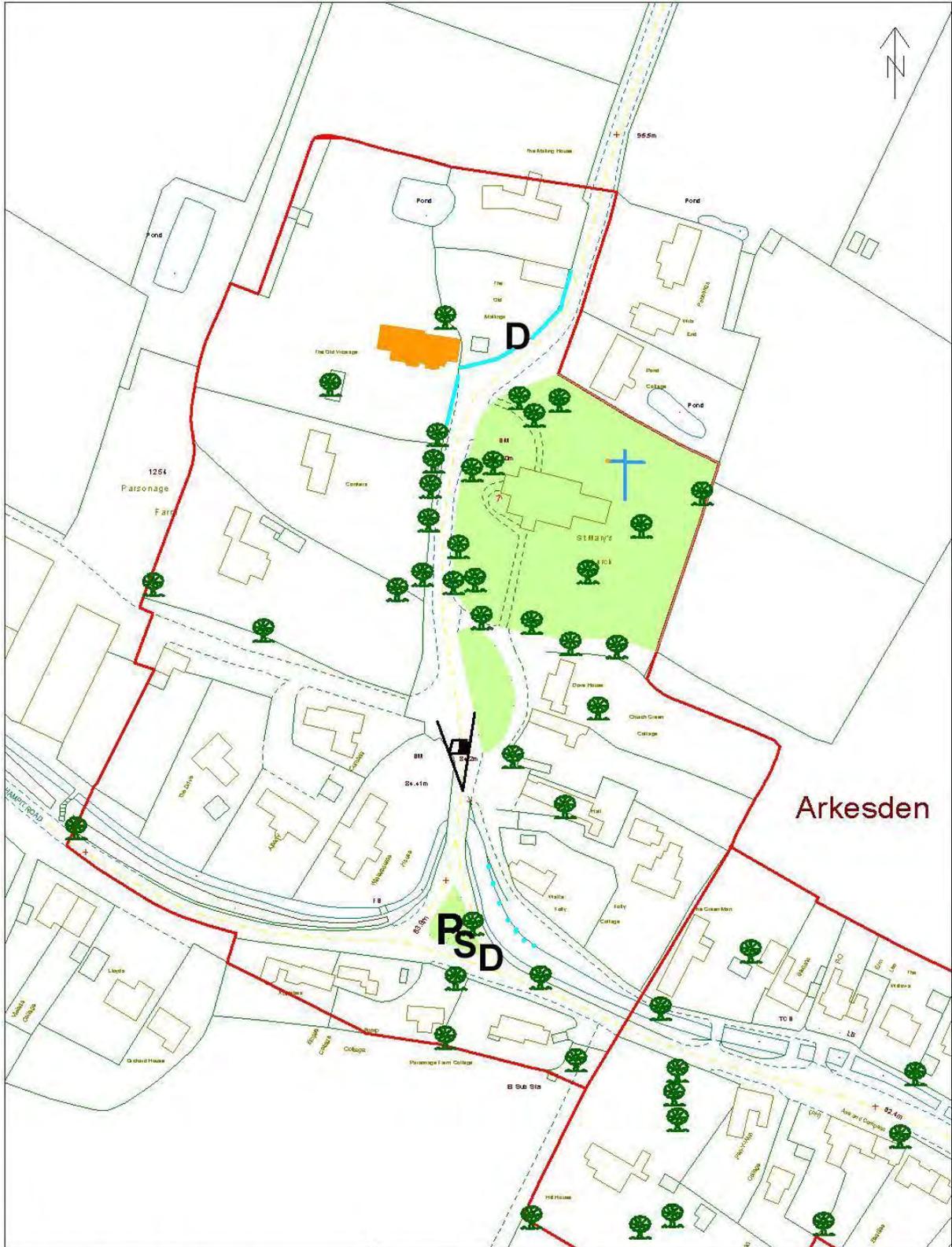
## 1 Maps

### Fig 2 - Character Analysis Areas



Maps 1

Fig 3 - Area 1

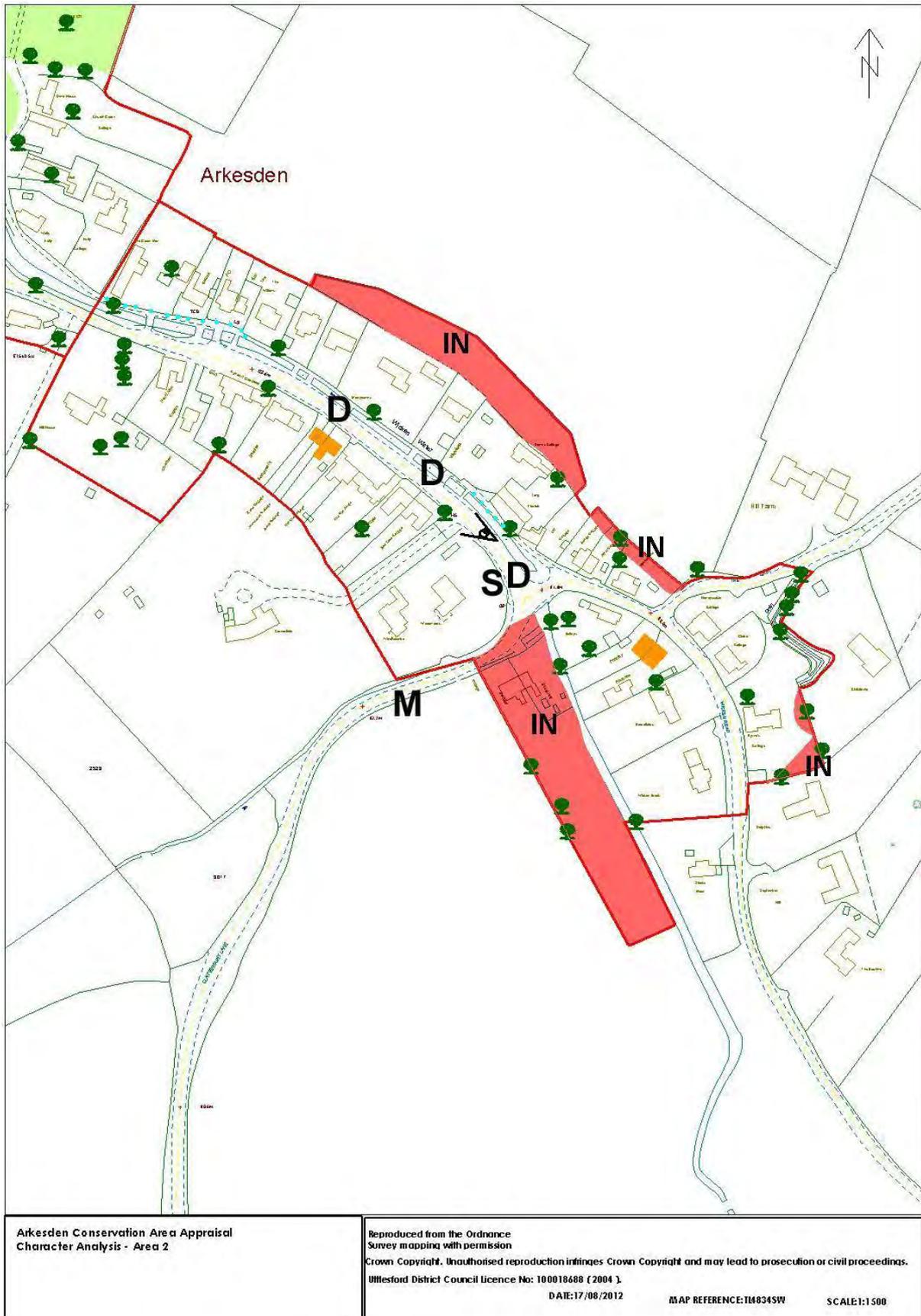


Arkesden Conservation Area Appraisal  
Character Analysis - Area 1

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Uttlesford District Council licence No: 100018688 (2004 )  
DATE:17/08/2012 MAP REFERENCE:TI4834NW SCALE:1:1000

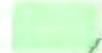
## 1 Maps

**Fig 4 - Area 2**



## Maps 1

## Character Analysis Key

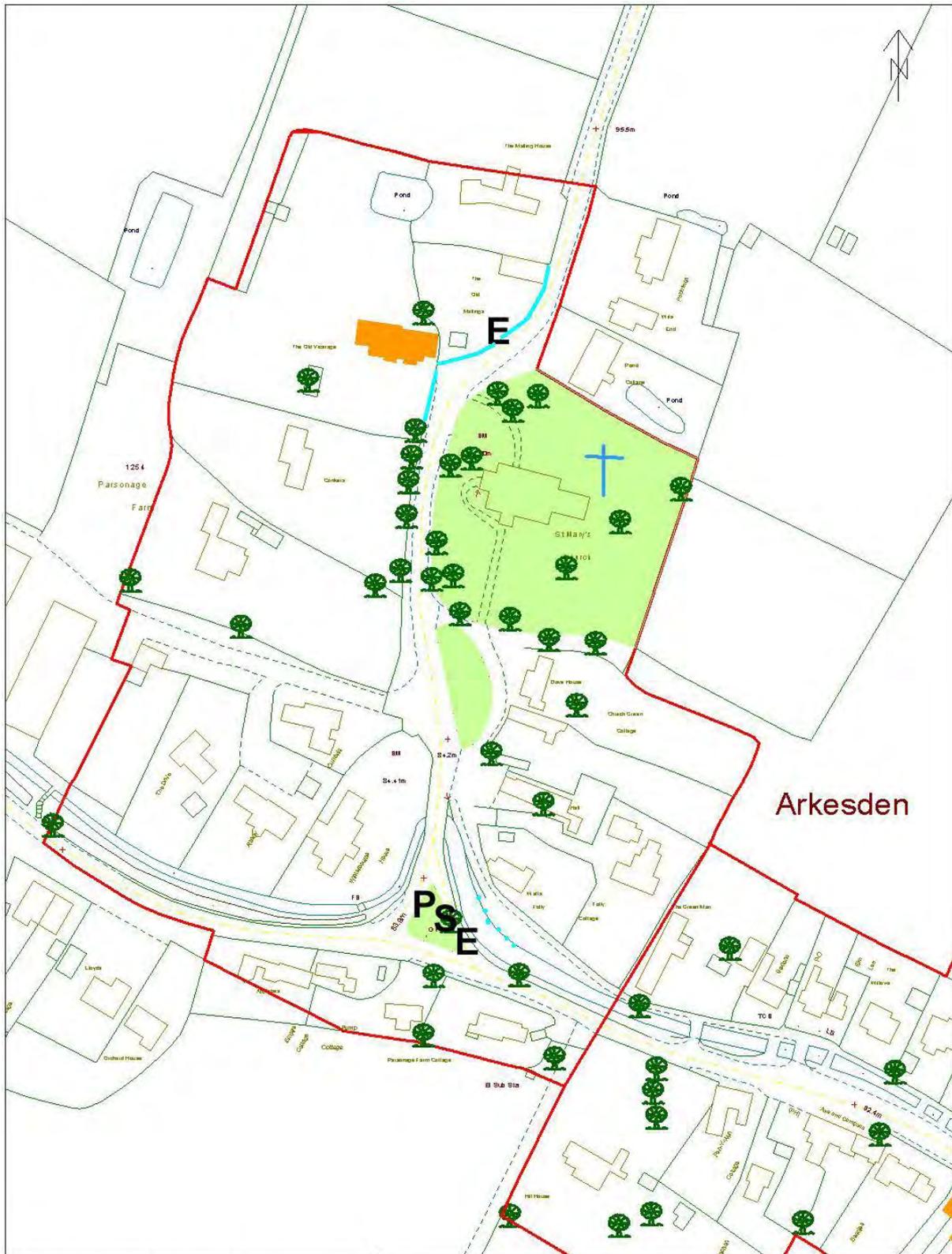
	Existing Conservation Area boundary
	Individually Listed Walls and Railings
	Important buildings in the curtilages of Listed Buildings
	Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area
	Important Open Spaces
	General location of important trees/hedgerows

Other distinctive features to be protected from demolition within the parameters of legislation (including walls and railings within the curtilages of listed buildings):

	Walls
	Railings
	Tombstones
	Road marker
	Pump
	Highway sign
	Important Views
	Elements out of character

# 1 Maps

## Figure 5 - Management Plan Area 1



Arkesden Conservation Area Appraisal  
Management Plan - Area 1

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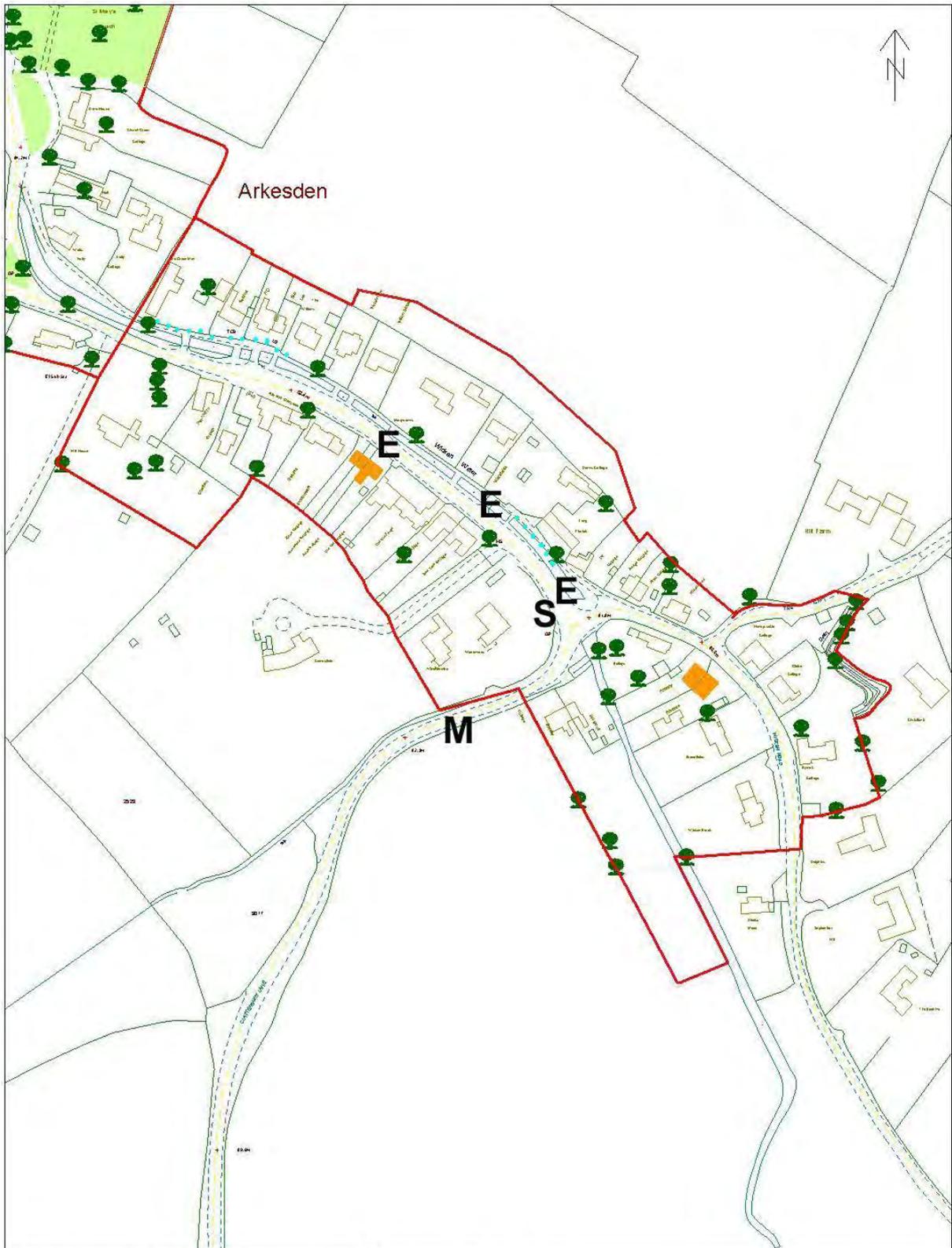
DATE: 17/08/2012

MAP REFERENCE: T14834NW

SCALE: 1:1000

Maps 1

Fig 6 - Management Plan Area 2



<p>Arkesden Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan - Area 2</p>	<p>Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with permission Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Uttlesford District Council licence No: 100018688 (2004 ). DATE:17/08/2012      MAP REFERENCE:TI48345W      SCALE:1:1500</p>
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## 1 Maps

### Management Plan Key



Revised Conservation Area boundary adopted Policy ENV1 applies



Individually Listed Walls and Railings adopted Policy ENV2 applies



Important buildings in the curtilages of Listed Buildings, adopted Policy ENV2 applies



Other buildings to be protected from demolition see Policy ENV1. Additional controls to be introduced for selected buildings



Important Open Spaces to be protected from development, adopted Policy ENV 3 applies



General location of important trees/hedgerows to be protected within parameters of legislation

Other distinctive features to be protected from demolition within the parameters of legislation (including walls and railings within the curtilages of listed buildings):



Walls



Railings



Tombstones



Road marker



Pump



Highway sign



Proposed enhancements

## Appendices 1

### Appendix 1 - Sources

ACT "An Act for taking an Account of the Population of Great Britain, and the Increase or Diminution thereof."enumeration Abstract. 1831

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HERITAGE GATEWAY <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/>

## 1 Appendices

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