

**Ashdon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management  
Proposals, Approved January 2013**



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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 Ashdon 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 35 Conservation Areas and approximately 3,500 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.

**1.4** The District is situated in an economically buoyant region where an attractive environment, employment opportunities and excellent transport links, 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 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 relationships of the buildings with each other, the quality of the spaces between them and the vistas and views that unite or disrupt them. The relationship 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 that improve the character of the Conservation Area 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 workers 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 Ashdon
- 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 to the Parish Clerk David Green and to Glenn Miller who runs the local Museum, both of whom have been particularly helpful.

**1.11** Ashdon Parish Council produced a Parish Plan in 2007. In relation to the environment it would appear that some respondents supported strong controls within the Conservation Area, the protection of key views and use of appropriate building materials. The issue of traffic was a matter of considerable concern, a view shared by the fieldworker.



**1.12** The local museum is volunteer run and has a remarkable collection of artifacts representing village life with a particularly strong representation of Ashdon's strong agricultural association in the 19th century. Of particular note are a number of 17th century coins being part of a substantial hoard found locally in the late 20th century, an early font from the church; a replica of the Ashdon meteorite that fell in 1923 together

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with an interesting presentation on the subject prepared by the British Museum; a wealth of local photographs and many other artifacts of considerable local interest. The museum is very well worth a visit.

**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.

**1.16** 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

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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.

### 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)'.

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- 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.

**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 Ashdon 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 Ashdon no such buildings have been identified and neither has this Appraisal identified any.

**1.29 Ashdon Conservation Area date of designation.** There is incomplete information as archives only advise that 'the revised boundary... was designated in 1983'.

### The General Character and Setting of Ashdon

**1.30** Ashdon is a small rural community set in rolling open countryside on the Essex Cambridgeshire border. Whilst modern development is present and spread out along the approach roads, this does not unduly detract from the environmental qualities of Ashdon's two historic cores, namely the existing Conservation Area grouped around the Rose and Crown PH and secondly the area around the church.

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**1.31** In the Parish there are 65 Listed Buildings or groups of Listed Buildings whilst in the existing Conservation Area itself there are 21. The Listed Buildings are concentrated in two principal locations firstly in the centre of the Conservation Area and along Radwinter Road and secondly a smaller grouping around the Church and Guildhall that lies beyond the existing Conservation Area. The latter grouping is considered to be of an exceptionally high quality.

**1.32** All of the 21 Listed Buildings/groups of buildings identified on the English Heritage list in the Conservation Area are Grade II. Of these 6 date from the 16th century or earlier; 9 from the 17th century; 4 from the 18th century and just 2 from the 19th and 20th centuries.

**1.33** Thatch is a traditional roofing material in Ashdon and an important feature of the village that must remain. Of the Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area about a third have thatched roofs.



Picture 1.1 About one third of the buildings in the Conservation Area have thatched roofs

**1.34** Elsewhere at Church End two buildings are listed Grade I and Grade II\*, namely: All Saints Church and the former Guildhall respectively.

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

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**1.36** The River Bourne which runs through the centre of the Conservation Area is an attractive feature that is occasionally subject to flooding. The latter is an important local issue that the Parish Council has been seeking to resolve with the Environment Agency for some time.

**1.37** The 20th century railings supported on concrete posts, many erected as safety features, relating to the River Bourne are a feature of Ashdon. Whilst not being of particular architectural and historic interest they do add to Ashdon's overall quality. They are generally in good condition but some are in need of minor repair. 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.



Picture 1.2 The River Bourne is an important feature in the Conservation Area



Picture 1.3 20th century railings, although not of significant architectural or historic interest, do add to Ashdon's overall quality

**1.38** Throughout the Conservation Area, trees, either as groups or as individual specimens add considerably to its attractive appearance and diversity. This is also particularly the case beyond the existing Conservation Area in and around Ashdon Hall and the Church.

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

**1.40** There are many high quality buildings representative of various periods. Despite some 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. This Appraisal also considers the principle of identifying a new and separate Conservation Area based around the Church.

### Origins and Historic Development

**1.41 Prehistoric and Roman.** Prehistoric activity is recorded in the general area of Ashdon, Radwinter and Hempstead and the Uttlesford Environment Characterisation Project of 2009 advises that within this general zone 'find spots ...represent occupation in the area from the earliest prehistoric period onwards. The crop mark evidence within the zone includes a number of prehistoric enclosures, possibly Bronze Age or Iron Age

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in date. Several Roman roads cross this zone, and a possible settlement site has been identified at the junction of two of them at Radwinter. In addition a number of Roman rural settlements have been identified.

**1.42** In this respect several pieces of Roman pottery and Roman coins that were found locally can be seen at the Ashdon Museum referred to earlier. The nearby Bartlow Hills (now in Cambridgeshire) date to early Roman times and were probably built by important Romano British chiefs. Excavations here in the 19th century revealed a cremated body and rich artifacts.

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

*Ascenduna (Ashdon) 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).*

**1.44** Possibly from this period are extensive medieval remains of an abandoned settlement immediately to the east of All Saints Church which are discussed in more detail below.

**1.45 Post Medieval.** In Victorian times, *Kelly's Directory* of 1878 describes Ashdon as being 'a scattered parish and village, near the borders of Cambridgeshire and 2 miles from Bartlow station on the great Eastern railway...The church of All Saints is an ancient building...The National school is situated near the church, and was restored and enlarged in 1877. The Baptists have a chapel here. The charities yearly distributed in fuel and clothing amount to £19. The soil is mixed clay, loam and chalk; subsoil varies. The crops are wheat, oats, beans and barley. The population in 1871 was 1174.'

**1.46** In addition to the many farmers the same directory lists the following commercial activities: saddler and harness maker, millers (2), wheelwright; blacksmith (2); beer retailer (2); grocer and post office; grocer; grocer and draper. Two public houses are listed namely the Rose and Crown and the White Horse.

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Picture 1.4 Flag decoration may commemorate the 1902 Coronation of Edward VII. Is there any additional local knowledge? (Courtesy of Ashdon Village Museum)



Picture 1.5 Little has changed

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**1.47** The Ashdon labourers' strike of 1914 came about because of discontent and employers practice of locking out and evicting farm workers who had joined the Agricultural Workers Union. There was particular militancy in Ashdon where 70 police officers were billeted at the Rose and Crown to keep the peace. Eight Ashdon farm workers were sent to prison for refusing to pay fines.

**1.48** *The Place names of Essex* by Reaney advises of a selection of the following names: Ascenunda (1086); Esse(n) donam (1121); Essyndon(e) 1248; Assindene (1291); As(s) heston (1384). Probably derives from original word meaning 'Hill overgrown with ash trees'.

**1.49** Ashdon Railway halt was opened in 1911 along Fallowden Lane at Church End, some distance from the main village. From 1916 passenger accommodation was afforded by an old GER carriage body with internal fittings removed and wooden benches placed around the sides. The halt was not staffed and the GER issued special instructions for trains stopping there. In the early days it was lit by oil lamps on posts, but later 'Tilley' lamps were substituted and the guards on passing trains were responsible for lighting and extinguishing them. The line was closed in December 1964 and thereafter quickly dismantled.



Picture 1.6 Could the carriage be repaired in situ or removed to a new location within Ashdon?

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**1.50** The existing Conservation Area boundary is shown on late 19th century mapping at Figure 1. As can be seen the extent of the village was much smaller and had considerable tree cover. Note locations of Old Gravel Pits to the north; the location of two Smithies'; the location of the Post Office at that time and the presence of a Lock Up. Local sources advise the latter had been removed before the First World War.

### Character Analysis

**1.51** Within Ashdon's Conservation Area there are no designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments although a very important one exists in the Parish elsewhere, being located immediately to the east of the church. This is described elsewhere in this Appraisal and is the site of an abandoned medieval settlement.

**1.52 Archaeological sites.** There are no archaeological sites within the Conservation Area although two exist elsewhere. 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.

**1.53 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.

**1.54 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?

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Picture 1.7 Ashdon as shown on the Chapman and Andre survey of 1777 (Courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)



Picture 1.8 Ashdon as shown on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898. (Courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

**1.55 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

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

**1.57 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?

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**1.58** 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 question of principal in paragraph 1.57.

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

**1.60** 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.

**1.61** 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.

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

**1.63** 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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### Ashdon and Church End

**1.64 General overview.** The Conservation Area is linear in nature spreading along the Walden Road, Bartlow Road and Radwinter Road. Its centre and focal point is the meeting point of these roads at Crown Hill. Several quality 19th century buildings have been identified worthy of protection. The general high quality of the Conservation Area is eroded by the presence of utility poles carrying overhead services.

**1.65** The separate historic area around the church is quintessentially English in character with its small but exquisite range of fine buildings of ecclesiastical and secular association, its open spaces, mature trees, and an unusual historical association, namely the site of an abandoned medieval village.

**1.66 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.** The abandoned medieval settlement to the east of All Saints Church represents part of a more extensive settlement that developed around the church in the medieval period. Remains include platforms that may be locations of houses and confirmed by a large quantity of pottery fragments retrieved in the 1970s. In the 1830s a number of graves were found, such burials were accompanied by weapons and pottery vessels indicative of an Anglo-Saxon date. It has been suggested that an earlier church was built as a Minster in the reign of King Cnut following the battle of Assandun in 1016, the site of which has been tentatively identified with Ashdon. The Scheduled Ancient Monument description provides no speculation as to the reasons for the demise of this settlement. Such an abandoned settlement is clearly of considerable historic interest and discussions have been commenced with Essex County Council to gain further information and advice.



Picture 1.9 Site of abandoned Medieval settlement near church; the fieldworker is seeking further archaeological information

**1.67 Archaeological sites.** There is one such site to the east on Kate's Lane (a Mesolithic flint find) and another to the south of the village to the east of Hill Farm Cottages being the site of a Neolithic polished axe find. Both of these lie beyond the existing Conservation Area.

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**1.68 Individually Listed Buildings.** A selection of representative Listed Building descriptions (generally abbreviated) is provided below. Additions in brackets are the fieldworker's further comments.



Picture 1.10 Rose and Crown circa 1910 (Courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

### A - Within the existing Conservation Area

**1.69** Juniper, Bartlow Road- Grade II. Early 19th century timber-framed and plastered house. Two storeys. Two window range, double-hung sashes with glazing bars. The ground storey windows are small canted bays. A central panelled double door with the upper panels glazed has a cornice hood. Roof slate, with a tall central square chimney stack.

**1.70** Aylwards, Dorvis Lane - Grade II. Timber-framed and plastered building probably of mediaeval origin, with floor and chimney stack inserted in the 17th century. One storey and attics. Casement windows. On the north side there is a medieval window with diamond mullions (restored). Roof tiled (modern), with a 17th century chimney stack with grouped diagonal shafts.

**1.71** The Clayes, Walden Road - Grade II. 16/17th century timber-framed house altered and added to in the 18th century and later. The wing to the east and part of the wing to the south are restored with the timber-framing exposed with modern brick nogging. The wing to the south was re-fronted or added in the 18th century.

**1.72** Dorvis Cottage, Dorvis Lane - Grade II. 17/18 century timber-framed and plastered. Originally a range of cottages, now one tenement. One storey and attics. Small casement windows. Boarded doors. Roof thatched, with 4 gabled dormers and 2 internal chimney stacks.

**1.73** K6 Telephone Kiosk, Crown Hill - Grade II. Designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made by various contractors. Cast iron. Square kiosk with domed roof. Unperforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and doors.

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**1.74** The Old Smithy, Radwinter Road – Grade II. 17/18th century timber- framed and plastered house. Three window range of casements. A thatched gabled porch with exposed timber-framing projects on the front. Roof thatched, half hipped at the north and south ends, with an internal rectangular chimney stack.

**1.75** Rose and Crown Inn, Crown Hill - Grade II. 16/17th century timber-framed and plastered building with wings extending to the north and west. Three window range on the front, mainly casements with glazing bars. Roof tiled, hipped, with an internal original chimney stack with diagonal shafts, rebuilt or restored). The north room on the ground storey has moulded ceiling beams and joists and a series of early 17th century wall paintings. (The exterior of the front elevation is in need of repainting).



Picture 1.11 Very important 17th century wall paintings in declining condition; their long term future is being discussed with English Heritage

**1.76** The fieldworker observed that the 17th century wall paintings at the Rose and Crown are badly damaged in places and was advised by the landlord that small pieces had been removed as 'souvenirs'. The paintings are now protected by Perspex mounted on battens. The future of these rare paintings must be secured. The room whose surfaces they adorn is used to play pool and other items are stacked against the protective Perspex in some places, a situation that is not ideal. The fieldworker is seeking further advice from English Heritage.

**1.77** Ashdon Post Office and Stores, Crown Hill - Grade II. 16/17th century timber-framed building with an early 19th century stuccoed block built on the front. Eight window range, double-hung sashes with glazing bars. No 1 has paired modern sashes, No 4 has modern casements. Roof slate, hipped at the north and south ends with a low pitch. (An early wall letter box inscribed GR with crown dates from early/mid 20th century)

### B - at Church End

**1.78** All Saints Church, Church End - Grade I. Mainly from the 14/15th century with some 16th century clerestory windows which are mentioned in a will of 1527. It consists of a west tower, nave, with north and south aisles and chancel. There are chapels on the north-east, north-west and south. There are many 14th century features and particularly notable is the south chapel with a fine early 14th century kingpost roof. The nave arcades and chancel arch are circa 1400. The chancel and aisles have 14/15th century roofs and there are a number of 14th century windows in the south aisle, the north wall of the north-west chapel and the south chapel. The west tower, with a stepped

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parapet and a spire, has angle buttresses and an early 14th century window. The internal fittings include an early 16th century altar tomb and an early 16th century achievement of arms, both to the Tyrrel family. The church was restored in the 18th and 19th centuries.



Picture 1.12 All Saints Church

**1.79** Guildhall, Church End - Grade II\*. Late 15th century timber-framed building mentioned in a will dated 1501 when Roger Bryght left his tenement with 2 houses on it, called "Bryghtes" to the Guild of St Mary the Virgin. The first mention of the Guildhall occurs in the court roll for the Manor of Ashdon Hall in 1518. In 1731 the Guildhall was converted into 3 dwellings for poor families and in the 20th century it was restored and converted into one tenement. On the north side the timber-framing is exposed and it is plastered on the south side. The upper storey is jettied on the north front, on exposed joists with the remains of some original brackets and shafts. On the upper storey of the north front there are the remains of the sills of 3 original oriel windows and a restored boarded and studded door. Roof tiled, with a gambrel at the east end. A modern porch projects on the south side.

## Part 1: Appraisal 1



Picture 1.13 The former Guildhall, a fine Grade II\* timber framed building from the 15th century

**1.80** Ashdon Hall, Church End - Grade II. 19th century brick house, plastered with a 17th century timber-framed core. Much altered and added to. Slate roof. The interior has 17th century panelling inserted from another house.

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Picture 1.14 Ashdon Hall, principally 19th century

Constructed of flint or of red brick with rounded capping details, some date from the 19th century. The frontage boundary wall is of later date and unusual design incorporating wooden detailing between piers above brickwork.

**1.83** Outbuildings to Aylward's. 18th/19th century former agricultural barns, timber framed and weather boarded with tiled roofs, formerly thatched. Central lower section roof is sagging; repairs need undertaking and timber frame raising.



Picture 1.15 Former agricultural buildings within the curtilage of Aylward's, the roof of one building in particular is in need of repair

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

### A- Within the existing Conservation Area.

**1.82** Various walls associated with The Clayes being located to the south of The Clayes and forming the front boundary with Walden Road. Walls vary in construction, height and age.

## Part 1: Appraisal 1

**1.84** Barrel of 19th century pump in garden to rear of Rose and Crown.

### B - at Church End.

**1.85** A group of single storey weather boarded barns with slate roofs to the south within the curtilage and to the south of Ashdon House, 19th century in appearance.

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

### A - Within the existing Conservation Area

**1.87** Ashdon Baptist Church. 19th century in appearance may have earlier origins. A tall elegant and prominent building, largely unaltered, constructed of red brick with central doorway and arched detail above. Original windows and slate roof; also simple decorative arch detailing supported by brick detailing. Fine interior with fixed wooden seating, gallery and pulpit contemporary with the age of the building. It is important that such selected windows and architectural detailing is preserved and retained. Formal protection is provided by existing planning controls.



Picture 1.16 Ashdon Baptist Church, an unlisted building of considerable quality most worthy of additional protection

**1.88** School, Bartlow Road. Late 19th century school with later additions. The historic front is constructed of red brick with decorative blue brick banding and lintel detailing. Tiled roof with prominent chimney stacks and central cupola; original windows,

## 1 Part 1: Appraisal

bargeboard and other detailing. A visually important and prominent building, a good example of its type and largely unaltered when viewed from Bartlow Road. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected windows chimney stacks and selected architectural detailing may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

**1.89** Skye Cottage, Dorvis Lane. An unusual late 19th/early 20th century two storey residence added to at later dates. A combination of yellow stock and red brick with tiled roof and decorative ridge tiles; several chimneys with pots. A number of original windows some with arched lintels in a Gothick style. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected windows, chimneys and selected architectural detailing would be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 1.17 Skye Cottage, an unusual late 19th/early 20th century residence worthy of additional protection

### B - At Church End

**1.90** Former 19th century school now occupied by Lucy King Curtains. Tall two storey former school building constructed of flint with slate roof and a large chimney stack with pot. The building virtue of its former historic use, its flint construction and size is an important structure and visually prominent in the local street scene. Brick quoins and brick detailing together with a bell tower and a stone plaque inscribed 'Ashdon National School erected AD 1833 restored AD 1878' add to its historic and architectural interest. One door blocked in at later date. Article 4 Direction to provide protection for chimney and bell tower may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification and subject to agreement to include the property in a new Conservation Area.

## Part 1: Appraisal 1



Picture 1.18 Former National School building at Church End. An unlisted building of considerable architectural and historic interest worthy of protection

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

### **A – within existing Conservation Area.**

**1.92** Double entrance gates, railings to front and railings to north side on dwarf walls: also red brick wall to south side - Ashdon Baptist Church. Gates and railings to front probably 20th century, side railings to north side late 19th/early 20th century as is wall defining south boundary. Front gates and railings exceed 1m and are thus protected from demolition without prior consent. Side railings and wall not fronting the highway are less than 2m and so are currently unprotected. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for these may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

**1.93** Interesting 19th century stone marker inscribed BARTLOW STATION, 2 MILES.

**1.94** Highway directional sign opposite.

## 1 Part 1: Appraisal



Quality highway features: 19th century stone mile marker (left) and historic highway directional sign (right)

**1.95** Rose and Crown. This traditional metal pole with 2 no. cast iron metal finger signs probably dates from early/mid 20th century. The sign pointing to Saffron Walden and the one relating to the Baptist Church are later additions.

**1.96** 19th century pump on green sward opposite Post Office Stores. A cast iron pump in very good condition complete with decorative finial cap and handle. Regrettable framed by two utility poles that detract from its historic importance. Its location is not identified on 19th century mapping (as are other pumps in the village at the time) so this one may not be in its original location. This pump is a candidate for listing and it is anticipated English Heritage may consider such an application favourably as there are other similar ones elsewhere in the District that have been listed.



Picture 1.19 Farming near Ashdon circa 1930 (Courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

### B - at Church End.

**1.97** Miscellaneous walls and railings as diagrammatically shown on mapping within curtilage of Ashdon Hall.

## Part 1: Appraisal 1

**1.98 Important open spaces.** Opposite the school on the east side on the Bartlow Road is a triangle of open space between the Radwinter Road junction and the Allotment Gardens, bounded by the stream. This consists of two informal areas of grass with mature trees with seating and a more formal area being the War Memorial. The latter consists of a simple and dignified stone obelisk with metal name plaques and carved inscription surrounded by beech hedge and approached through wooden gates in the design of the Union flag. The whole contributes to the quality and diversity of the centre of the Conservation area and its charm is a combination of mature trees and the contrasting qualities of formality and informality.

**1.99** Beyond the existing Conservation Area, the churchyard represents an area of high quality open space. The churchyard



Picture 1.20 19th century pump of quality; it is important that the Parish Council maintain it in good condition



Picture 1.21 Ashdon War Memorial

contains a number of historic tombs that add to its quality.

**1.100 Particularly important trees and hedgerows.** Trees and hedgerows within the existing Conservation Area and within the church yard and Ashdon Hall play an important function in adding to the high quality and diversity of the environment. The present owner of Ashdon Hall has planted a considerable number of additional trees within the immediate curtilage of Ashdon Hall and elsewhere in its grounds. These include extensive formal planting of a 'Yew Meadow' and 'Yew Circle' adjacent to the southern boundary, an arboretum that includes a range of local and exotic species to the west of the approach road to the church and much traditional planting elsewhere.

## 1 Part 1: Appraisal



Picture 1.22 Mature trees of exceptional quality are one component of a quintessential English landscape around the Church and Ashdon Hall

**1.101** Mature trees of exceptional quality are one component of a quintessential English landscape around the Church and Ashdon Hall.

**1.102 Elements that are out of character with the Conservation Area.** Utility poles throughout the Conservation Area. A number of utility poles and their overhead services are most detracting. The practicalities and associated cost of achieving real improvements, particularly in this difficult economic climate, is recognised. However it is considered appropriate to draw attention to the level of visual damage, particularly where this occurs in proximity to Listed Buildings and to discuss the matter with the relevant utility companies to explore the potential of achieving improvements now or in the longer term. Two poles in the centre of the village are located in very close proximity to each other that are particularly intrusive.

## Part 1: Appraisal 1

**1.103** A finger post sign to the church that needs re-erecting in an upright position.

**1.104** Car park for Baptist Church. Situated in a prominent position on the Radwinter Road immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area and next to a public footpath the boundary of this car park is defined by concrete posts and poor quality chain link fencing. A significant improvement would be achieved if an appropriate boundary landscaping scheme could be implemented. There are various possible solutions, one of which might ideally involve the planting of boundary native hedging. This would need to have regard to the potential presence of underground services that may or may not be present. Should the owners wish to develop this idea further, the Council's Landscape Officer could provide additional advice.



Picture 1.23 Intrusive utility poles and services in the heart of the Conservation Area.

**1.105 Opportunities to secure improvements.** Re-erect directional sign to the church in centre of village. Consider landscaping scheme to front and southern boundaries of the Baptist Church car park on Radwinter Road.

**1.106 Suggested boundary changes.** This Appraisal concludes that the area around All Saints Church and Ashdon Hall is of a particularly high environmental quality and clearly fulfils the necessary requirement of designating a Conservation Area namely being 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance'. It is therefore proposed to identify a separate Conservation Area in this location, the boundaries of which will be drawn to include the Church, The Guildhall, The Old Vicarage, Ashdon Hall and its arboretum, Church Farm, the former school building, now Lucy King Curtains and the site of the abandoned medieval village. These details are shown in Figure 4.



Picture 1.24 Centre of the village the finger post sign in need of re-erection

## 1 Part 1: Appraisal



Picture 1.25 All Saints churchyard framed by the former Guildhall and Old Vicarage

**1.107 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 Additional Conservation Area.** The revised boundary of the proposed new Conservation Area includes the following : The Church, the Guildhall, the Old Vicarage, Ashdon Hall and its arboretum, Church Farm, the former school building, now Lucy King Curtains and the site of the abandoned medieval village being a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument. These details are shown on Figure 4.

### General 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** Good practice for applicants will be to carefully consider the content of the policies set out in the Local Plan

### 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 Ashdon. 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.

## 1 Part 2 - Management Proposals

### 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: Ashdon Baptist Church on Radwinter Road; the School on Bartlow Road; Skye Cottage on Dorvis Lane and a former school building, now Lucy King Curtains, at Church End.

**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 railings that make a particular contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Some walls/railings are protected from demolition without prior consent 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. However selected unprotected walls and railings at the Baptist Church are proposed for an Article 4 Direction, following separate notification and further consideration to take place with the owners at a later date. The pump on the green sward is worthy of listing and application to English Heritage to achieve this would be an appropriate course of action.

### 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 triangle of land extending from the Radwinter Road junction to the southern boundary of the Allotment Gardens and the churchyard represent landscape features that materially contribute to the character and appearance of the existing and proposed Conservation Areas respectively that must be protected.

**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

## Part 2 - Management Proposals 1

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
Church sign	Crown Hill	Request sign to church be re-erected vertically
Front and south boundaries to car park	Baptist car park, Radwinter Road	Consider implementing boundary landscaping scheme, ideally with native hedgerow. Further advice available

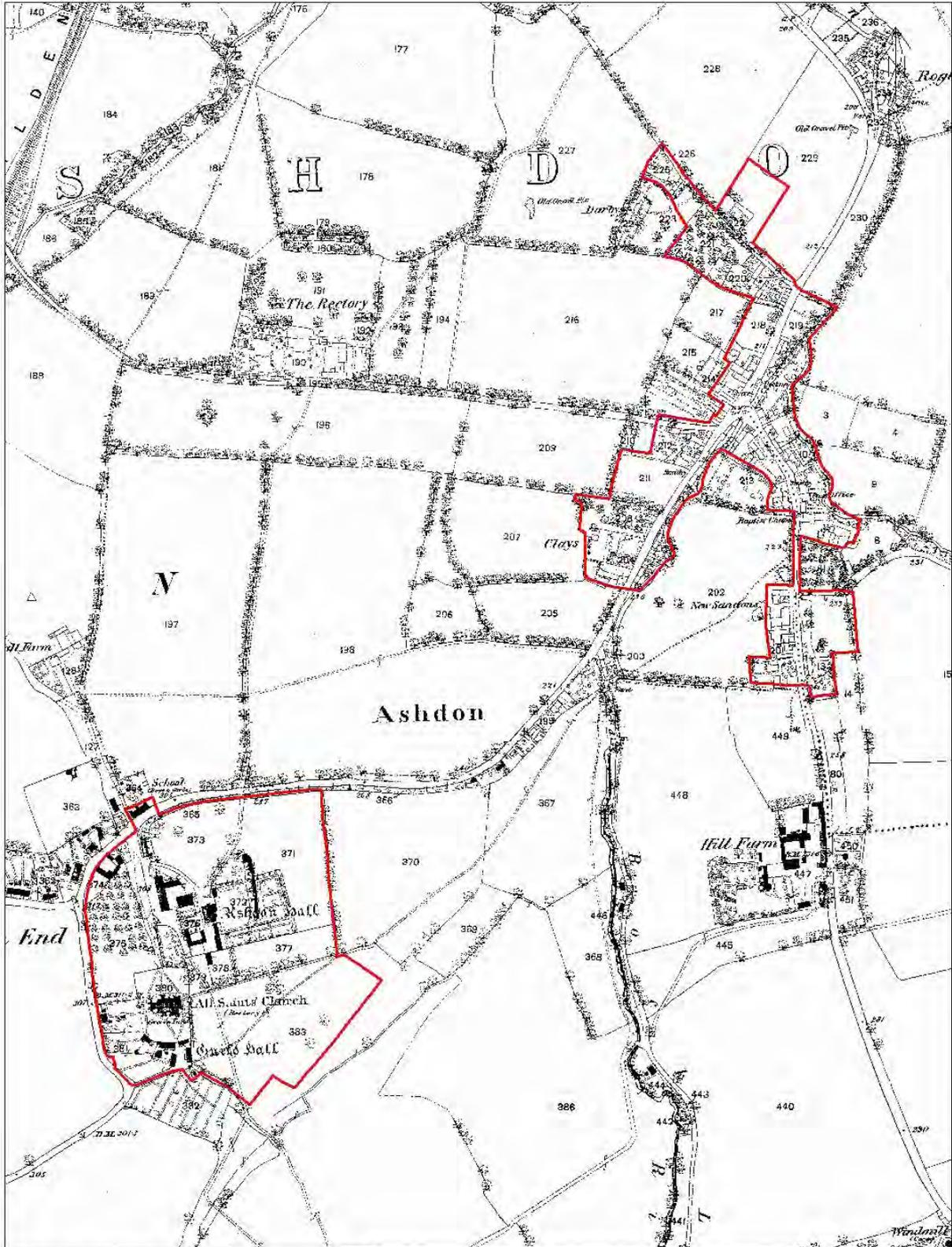
## 1 Part 2 - Management Proposals

Other actions
19th century pump on green sward opposite Rose and Crown. Suggest Parish Council monitor condition and maintain in present good condition
It is suggested the condition of the River Bourne's protective railings be monitored on an occasional basis and that the Parish Council advise the County Council of any necessary remedial actions
Maintain watching brief on condition of Rose and Crown and its 17th century paintings. Additionally seek owners co-operation to carry out external decoration
Contact Essex County Council advising them of desire to retain traditional inscribed direction stone outside The Clayes
Advise Uttlesford District Council officers of the differences between English Heritage's and their interpretation of the extent of the Scheduled Ancient Monument
Explore potential of repairing/relocating Ashdon Halt carriage body
Contact owner of Aylward's seeking co-operation to repair section of historic outbuildings with the curtilage of the main listed building

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

Maps 1

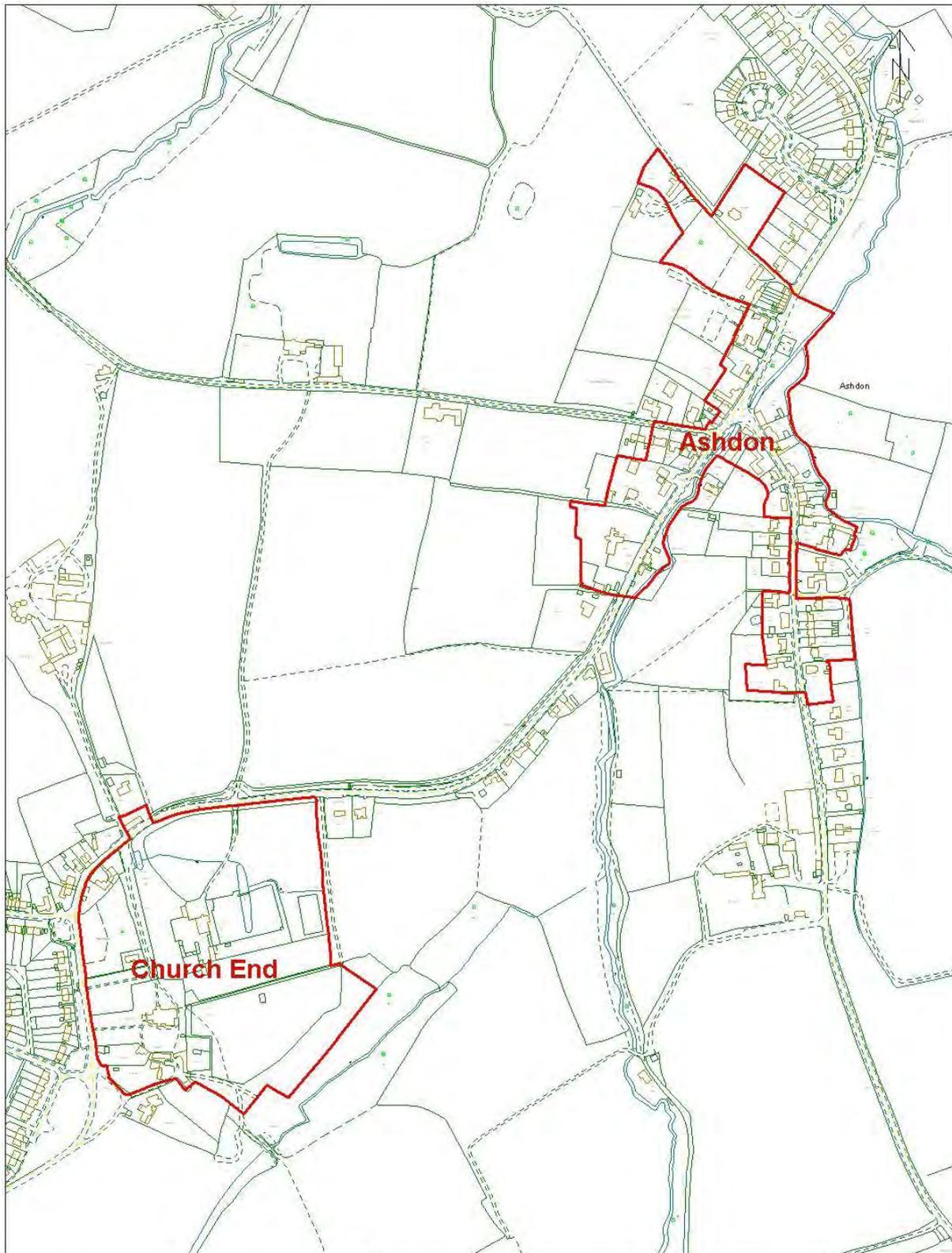
Figure 1 - 1877 Ordnance Survey Map



<p>Ashdon Conservation Area Appraisal Historical Map</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. Huntingdon District Council Licence No: 100018688 (2004 ) DATE:13/08/2012      MAP REFERENCE:IL5841      SCALE:1:3500</p>
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## 1 Maps

### Fig 2 - Character Analysis Areas



Ashdon Conservation Area Appraisal  
Character Area Map

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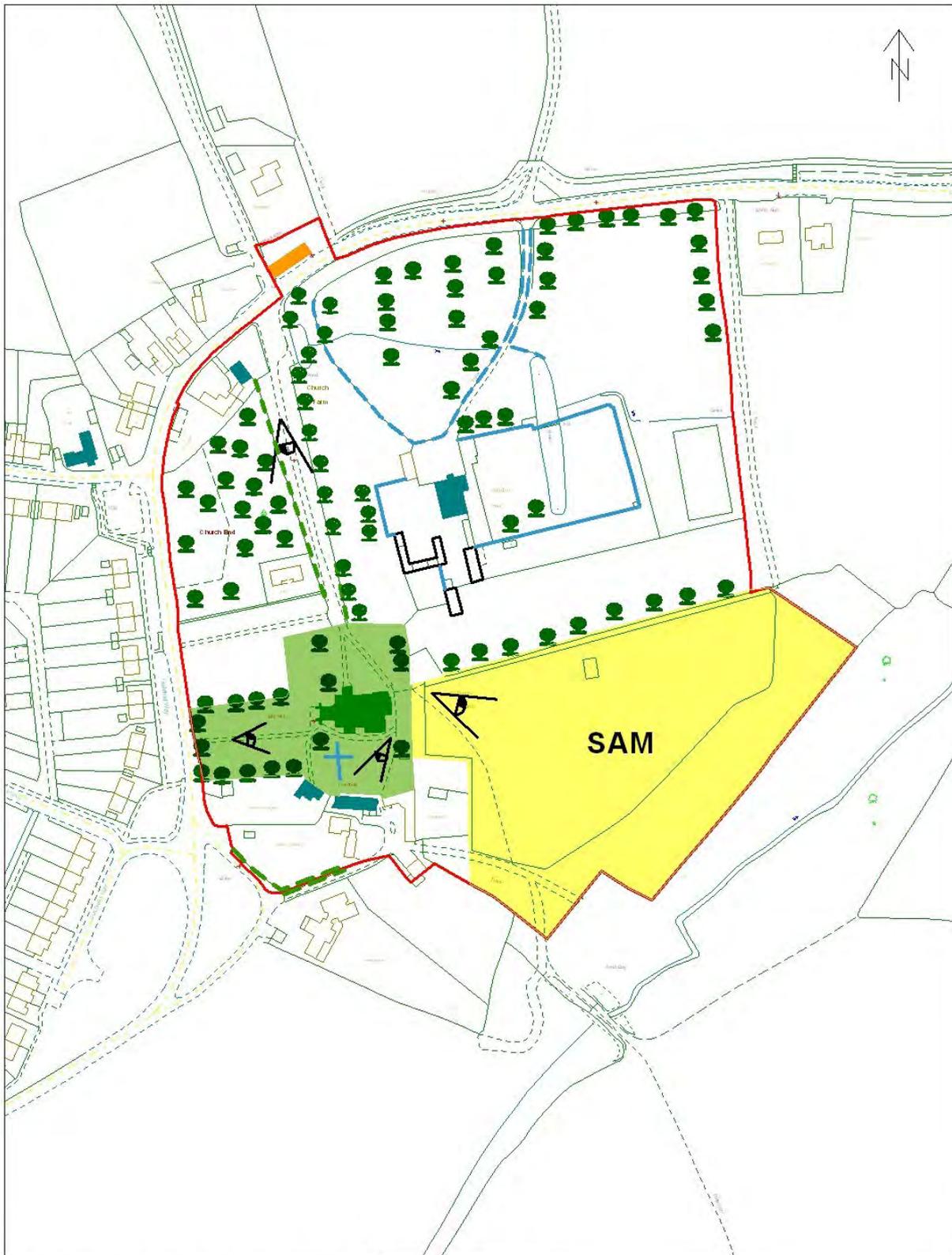
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# 1 Maps

## Fig 4 - Church End



Ashdon Conservation Area Appraisal. Proposed additional conservation area at Church End. Character Analysis

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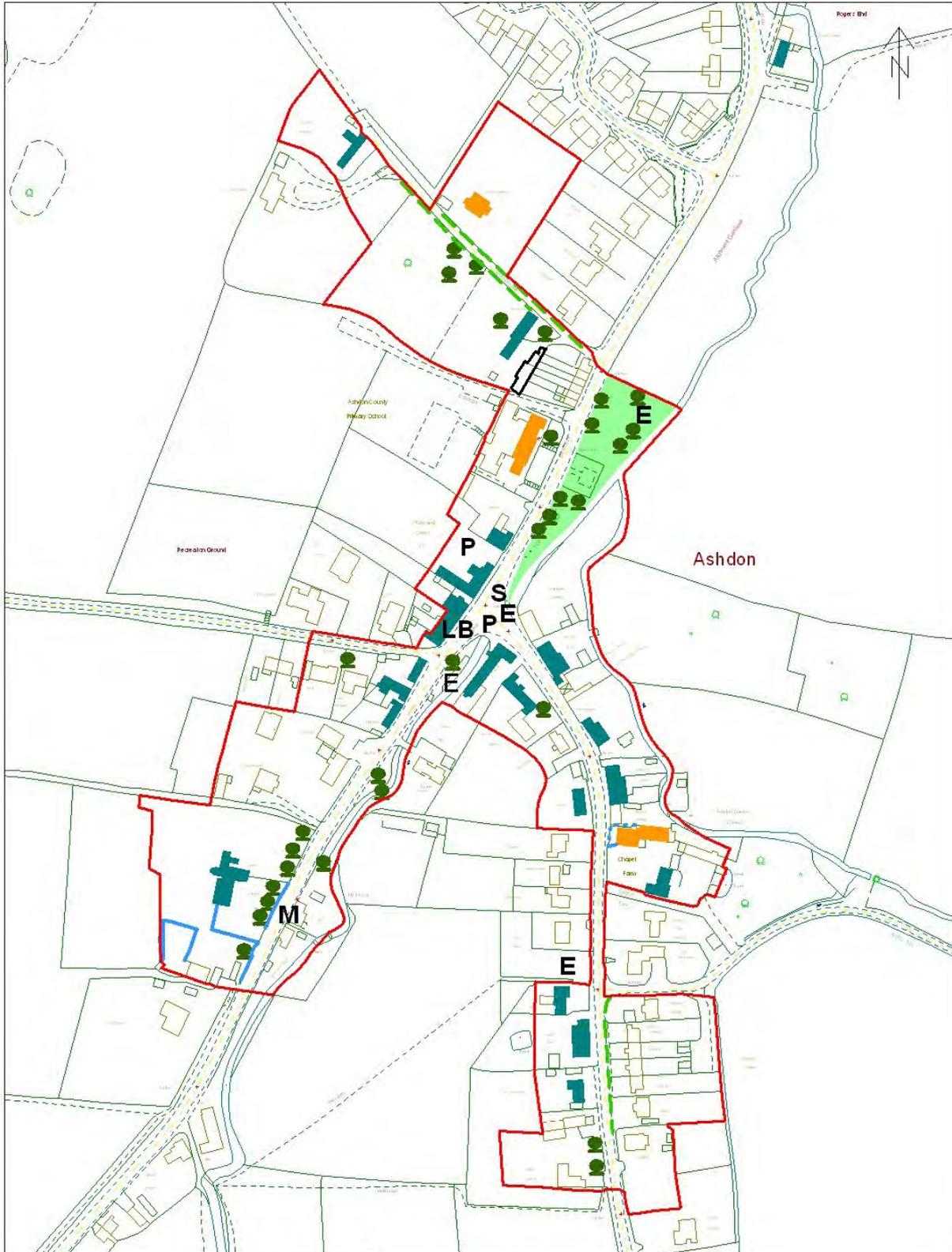
## Maps 1

### Character Analysis Key

	Existing Conservation Area boundary
	Proposed additional Conservation Area at Church End
	Scheduled Ancient Monument (Church End)
	Individually Listed Buildings
	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
	Letter box
	Highway sign
	Important Views
	Elements out of character

# 1 Maps

## Figure 5 - Ashdon Management Plan



Ashdon Conservation Area Appraisal.  
Management Plan

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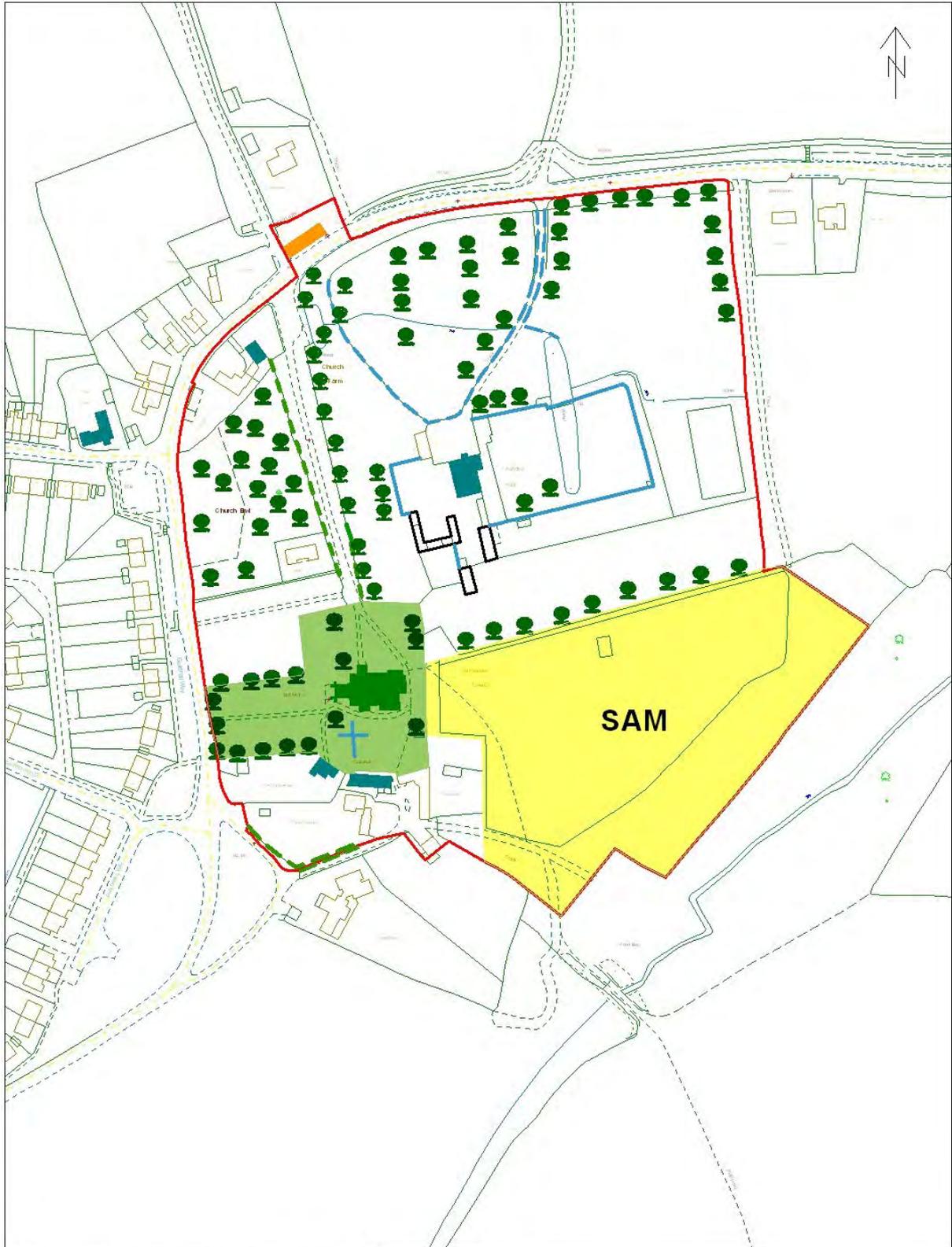
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Maps 1

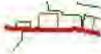
Figure 6 - Church End Management Plan



<p>Ashdon Conservation Area Appraisal. Proposed additional conservation area at Church End. Management Plan</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:13/08/2012      MAP REFERENCE:IL5841NW      SCALE:1:1500</p>
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## 1 Maps

### Management Plan Key

	Revised Conservation Area boundary adopted Policy ENV1 applies; no changes to existing boundary, new boundary as shown at Church End
	Scheduled Ancient Monument (Church End)
	Individually Listed Buildings, adopted Policy ENV2 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
	Letter box
	Highway sign
	Proposed enhancements

## Appendices 1

### Appendix 1 - Sources

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