

High Easter Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals, Approved May 2013



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1 Part 1: Appraisal

Introduction

1.1 Uttlesford is extremely rich in terms of its heritage. It contains a wealth of fine buildings, many of them ancient and 'listed'. These buildings with their varied styles and methods of construction span many centuries. Attractive small market towns and villages punctuate the gently rolling countryside, whose arable and pastoral mosaic of greens, yellows, blues and browns alter with the seasons and from ever-changing crop selection. These fine built environments in their rural settings have been subject to damaging economic and social influences in the past, but many settlements still continue to possess an architectural form and setting of the very highest quality, certainly amongst the finest in Essex and some arguably, worthy of inclusion in a list of the nation's best.

1.2 Patterns of change will inevitably continue to shape and influence the environment in the future. In Uttlesford, we live in a location where there are many significant economic pressures and where our community is increasingly aware of the need to protect the environment. The District Council therefore considers this is a particularly relevant moment to appraise the qualities of our best historic and architectural areas and put forward proposals to protect and enhance them for both the present and future generations.

1.3 There is now widespread recognition that the quality of such conservation areas is the sum total of a number of factors. These include general layout, overall scale, the relationship of buildings to each other, the spaces and views between them and the elements that unite them, the mixture of uses, the quality of advertisements, road signage, surfaces, street furniture and trees, as well as the quality of the individual buildings themselves. Conservation area designation and the undertaking of this appraisal recognise the importance of all these factors, particularly in exercising the control of development and in formulating associated management proposals.

1.4 The purpose of undertaking the appraisal is to:

- Identify and justify the special character of the area
- Identify elements that should be retained and enhanced
- Identify detracting elements
- Review the boundary
- Put forward enhancement proposals
- Provide and strengthen development and design control

1.5 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.

1.6 High Easter is a small rural village. The village has a good sense of community, which is fortunate to be represented by an active parish council. The village benefits from an enviable range of local amenities and workplaces, which contribute to its community life. These include a post office and café, and a village hall alongside which is a recreation ground. Within the Conservation Area is the current site of the High Easter Cricket Ground with St Mary's Church and The Punch Bowl Restaurant at the

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heart of the village. Community life is further demonstrated by its diary of events which this year includes a village fete, a Shakespeare evening, charity bike ride, annual assembly and summer walk.

1.7 High Easter Conservation Area was first designated in 1991. One consideration of this study will be to examine the extent of the existing boundaries to see whether or not further boundary changes are appropriate.

Planning Legislative Framework

1.8 To benefit all participants in this process, it is considered important that this appraisal outlines the basics of how the planning system operates.

1.9 The legislative basis for designating a conservation area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 hereafter referred to as the 'Act'. The Act states that Local Authorities 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 and enhance'.

1.10 Within conservation areas there are additional planning controls. It is important that if these are to be supported, particularly through the planning appeal process, our conservation area accord with the above statutory description, that rational and consistent judgements are made in determining their special qualities and extent of their boundaries and that the concept of designation is not devalued by including areas that lack special interest.

1.11 Uttlesford has the responsibility in law to designate conservation areas and once designated has to review them from time to time (section 69 of the Act). Section 71 of the Act makes it clear that councils should 'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of conservation areas and hold a public meeting to consider them.

1.12 There are two main additional planning controls that apply in conservation areas that are not relevant beyond them. Setting detailed exceptions to one side, buildings within conservation areas cannot be demolished without consent and secondly, any proposal to undertake works to trees has to be notified to the Council, who then consider whether or not to make such trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

1.13 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995, hereafter referred to as 'the Order', defines the overall range of minor developments for which planning permission is not required and this range of 'permitted development' is more restricted in conservation areas. In this respect, the Order currently requires that the addition of dormer windows to roof slopes, various types of claddings, the installation of satellite dishes fronting a highway and a reduction in the size of extensions, require planning permission in a conservation area.

1.14 However there still remain many other minor developments that do not require planning permission, even in conservation areas. To provide further protection to the built environment, councils may introduce additional controls. Examples of such controls

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include the construction or removal of chimneys, some developments fronting a highway or open space such as external porches, the painting of a dwelling house or the demolition of gates, fences and walls. The removal of particular types of architectural features that are important to the character or appearance of a conservation area, such as distinctive doors or windows to non-listed properties could be specified in a such a direction known in law as an 'Article 4 Direction'. The use of such direction can only be used in justified circumstances and where a clear assessment of the Conservation Area's qualities has been made. In conduction this exercise we will establish whether or not such additional controls are appropriate for High Easter.

Planning Policy Framework

1.15 The new National Planning Policy Framework (2012) replaces previous national advice, including PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment.

1.16 The principal emphasis of the new framework is to promote sustainable development. An overarching theme is the suggestion that 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. Under the Requirement for Good Design, it suggests that whilst architectural styles should not be imposed it is considered proper to reinforce local distinctiveness.

1.17 In specific reference to the historic environment, the 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 importance of heritage assets.
- Conservation Areas status should be justified by virtue of being of 'special architectural or historic interest'.
- 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. This includes designated assets and those 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 judgement reached. Substantial harm to, or loss of, a Grade II Listed Building should be exceptional. 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.
- 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 of particular importance can be identified for special protection as Local Green Spaces.

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1.18 The current development plan is the Uttlesford Local Plan which was adopted in 2005 and in which High Easter is designated as a settlement. Approximately half of the Conservation Area lies within the 'Development Limits' where there is a general presumption in favour of appropriate development, including housing infilling on suitable sites.

1.19 Planning policies in the current Local Plan directly relevant to the Conservation Area include:

- Policy ENV1: Design of Development within Conservation Areas
- Policy ENV2: Development affecting Listed Buildings
- Policy ENV 3: Open Spaces and Trees
- Policy ENV4: Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance
- Policy ENV 8: Other Landscape Elements of Importance for Nature Conservation

1.20 Policy ENV1 is particularly relevant. This states that development will be allowed where it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the essential features of a conservation area, including plan form, relationship between buildings, the arrangement of open spaces and their enclosure, or significant natural or heritage features. It also states that demolition of buildings that positively contribute to the area will not be permitted. Thus one of the aims of this appraisal will be to identify non-listed buildings that contribute to the character and appearance of High Easter's conservation area.

1.21 The Council is currently working on a new local plan. Once this is complete it will replace the current adopted plan. It will also contain policies to protect the character of the conservation areas in the District.

1.22 This Conservation Area Appraisal, once it has been subject to public consultation will be approved by the Council for use in the process of determining planning applications and also for implementing management proposals in High Easter.

General Influences

1.23 Although High Easter has a rural setting, with no major roads running through, it is reasonably well located for major transport links, retail and service centres and employment areas. It is not far from the B184 which gives access to Great Dunmow, the nearest town, five miles to the north. It is also reasonably close to the A1060 which links to the county town of Chelmsford 10 miles away to the south east as well as Stansted Airport, Bishop Stortford and the M11 (junction 8). The nearest railway stations are at Chelmsford and Sawbridgeworth, which provide easy access to major centres including London and Cambridge. The village also benefits from a bus service to Chelmsford amongst others, though times are restricted.

1.24 The residential makeup and relative affluence of the village is characterised by the local rural economy and commuting. Local employers include Hayden's Farm, Lodge Coaches, SSG Landscape Construction and The Punch Bowl Restaurant.

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The General Character of High Easter

1.25 High Easter has a tranquil rural setting. The village is the main settlement in The Parish of High Easter, which in 2001 had a population of 657. The other main settlements in the parish are the hamlets of Stagden Cross, a mile away to the east and Bishop's Green, two miles to the north.



Picture 1.1 St Mary's Church from the village's western landscape setting

1.26 The village lies on a glacial till plateau in an area of central Essex farmlands with a chalky boulder clay geology. The landscape setting of this part of Uttlesford is characterised by irregular field patterns, mainly medium size arable fields, delineated by sinuous hedgerows and ditches, with small woods and copses giving the landscape further structure and edges. Settlement patterns are scattered, with frequent small hamlets, isolated moated farmsteads and a network of narrow, winding lanes, variable width of grass verges and greens.

1.27 The Parish is gently undulating interspersed by brooks and streams. The Conservation Area rises to a height of 78m around the cricket ground, noticeably dropping about 10m down to Parsonage Brook. Otherwise the local area gently slopes to the south west and the upper reaches of the River Can. The highest point in the parish is about 8m higher than the highest point in the neighbouring Parish of Good Easter.

1.28 The extent of the existing conservation area is a reflection of the village settlement area as it existed in the late 19th century, and as shown on the 1877 Ordnance survey map (see Figure 1).

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1.29 The historic core of the village, at the convergence of The Street and School Lane remains the hub and most highly concentrated part of the village, off which is St Mary's Church, the village's main landmark. Closely aligned with the church is the old manor house of High Easterbury which still lies at the western periphery of the settlement area.

1.30 The east of the village is centred on the convergence of The Street and High Easter Road. Historically this area was dominated by the parsonage, being sparsely populated. It has evolved and grown into a residential area, though retains its central space (currently the cricket ground) and leafy outlook.



Picture 1.2 Glimpse of St Mary's Church from The Street

1.31 20th century housing has infilled The Street, especially to the east, though only becoming dominant in character beyond the cricket ground.

1.32 The village has a linear form of development, predominantly hugging The Street (or well-spaced offshoots) and backing onto countryside. As a result most properties benefit from contrasting aspects.

Origins and Historic Development

1.33 There is evidence of Bronze Age and Roman activity in High Easter Parish, albeit outside the village settlement area. Bronze Age activity is evidenced by the discovery of bronze socketed celts found at Pentlow End and a dominative bronze

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socketed axe found at Great Garnets. There is also evidence of Roman activity, primarily in the area of Stagden Cross Villas where pottery, coins and tiles were discovered suggesting occupation for around four hundred years up to the Roman departure of Britain.

1.34 Domesday records that High Easter had belonged to Ely Abbey, but the monks had been dispossessed by Ansgar, a powerful Saxon noble. However, Ansgar's enjoyment of the manor of 'Estra' did not survive the arrival of the Normans. His extensive landholdings in central Essex, which also included Great Waltham and amounted to 12,000 acres, were given to Geoffrey de Mandeville. High Easter is a large parish, and at Domesday was larger still, including Pleshey where the de Mandevilles founded their castle. The Domesday entry implies that there were several discrete landholdings in High Easter, and this is consistent with the later existence of five sub-manors as well as the main manor of the Bury, or High Easter Bury. The Norman manor was centred upon the church and the Bury manor house which adjoined the churchyard. The only other manor within the Conservation Area was that of the Parsonage. Around this village were great open fields divided into strips.

1.35 The de Mandevilles were to briefly become Earls of Essex, but their line died out in 1189. High Easter, in common with their other lands, passed through the de Bohun family to the duchy of Lancaster. Charles I sold the Bury manor to the City of London. In the 18th century, it was acquired by the Tufnell family of Langleys, Great Waltham.

1.36 The later history of High Easter is that of a typical agricultural village, with the usual range of tradesmen and craftsmen. Between 1762 and 1848, it is recorded that 'there were five grocery and drapery shops, four shoemakers, three tailors and glovers, four or more dressmakers, two carpenters, a bricklayer, a miller, an apothecary, two or three medical women, two principal publicans'. (Gepp, 1931)

1.37 By 1743, there was a workhouse. More parish workhouses followed until they were superseded by the completion in 1840 of the Dunmow Union workhouse at Dunmow.

1.38 The first Sunday School was started in 1817 using St Mary's Church. The first purpose-built school, originally for 100 children, was completed in 1850 on School Lane, just outside the village core. It has now been converted into a dwelling

1.39 In 1844 an old slaughterhouse and granary on backland near the Cock and Bull was converted into a Congregational Chapel and here began a British School from 1846, initially for 104 scholars. A larger chapel (now The Chantry) was completed in 1848 on The Street. In 1893 was built a new 'Memorial School' (currently being converted into a dwelling) in the memory of the Congregational Church's founder in High Easter, with a school house built on the opposite side of The Street (Newberry Cottages).

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Picture 1.3 The Street – western view, High Easter, circa 1906 (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)



Picture 1.4 The Street – eastern view, High Easter, circa 1900 (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

1.40 The windmill, once a focal point at the edges of village, ceased to work from 1906, its site now represented by a brick base on which has been built a tower called 'The Old Mill'. Mains water arrived as late as the 1930s, which consequentially reduced the importance of Pump Green in village life. Street lighting followed in 1970. In the

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1980s Jubilee Playing Field and a new community hall were opened to the east of the village, the latter replacing the original 'Hut' from the 1920s. In 1999, a new post office and shop opened on the forecourt of Lodge Coaches to the east of the Conservation Area. Around this time the Cock and Bull public house was converted to residential use.

1.41 The parish population of 777 in 1811 had risen to 1043 in 1851, dropped back to 566 in 1931, and then rose to 722 in 1951.

1.42 Figure 2 illustrates the century in which the village's existing stock of buildings originate. Dates are based on records, where available, and visual assessment.

1.43 St Mary's Church is the oldest known surviving building dating back to the 12th century, though including Roman bricks in some of its walls. This is followed by the High Eastbury (the old manor house) which is from the 13th century, possibly earlier. There are a further 16 buildings built pre-1700 remaining in the Conservation Area. These loosely focus around St Mary's Church to the west and to a lesser extent related to the Parsonage to the east, with only the occasional building in between. Up to 1700, the village would have still seemed relatively dispersed within its rural setting.

1.44 Growth and infilling appears to have continued quite gradually during the 18th century, before increasing through the 19th and 20th centuries, the busiest period being since the Second World War. This development has bound development into the defined settlement area we see today. Despite recent development, the Conservation Area remains predominantly historic in character.

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Character Analysis

1.45 For the purpose of this study the present conservation area has been divided into three character areas, each with a map and a key common to all. Text and photographs provide a brief description of each area. The extent of the character areas is shown in Figure 3. These are:

- Historic Core
- Mid The Street
- Parsonage Area

1.46 The set of parameters used to analyse each character area are identified below, together with cross-cutting analysis of traditional materials and details:

1.47 *Individually listed buildings:* Listed buildings have been identified from English Heritage's on line source and have been carefully plotted. These buildings are protected by the Planning (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings Act 1990. Each individual area analysis indicates the number of listed buildings as a percentage of principal buildings in that area.

1.48 *Separately identified buildings within the curtilage of listed buildings:* Such buildings, if they are pre-1948, are subject to the same controls as listed buildings. Historic railings or walls of quality within the curtilage of listed buildings are separately identified.

1.49 *Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area:* The basic criteria used to identify buildings falling into this category are: (a) the non-designated building is of architectural or historic interest whose general external appearance has not been altered to such a degree that such qualities have been lost; (b) it exhibits a sufficient level of original features and materials; (c) it retains its original scale without modern inappropriate extensions that visually destroy the visual appearance of the building; and (d) it is visually important in the street scene.

1.50 *Important open spaces:* Open space of landscape quality or historic importance has been included where it contributes to the visual importance and quintessential variety of the Conservation Area or a valued scene.

1.51 *Tree Preservation Orders:* These are identified according to the latest records held by Uttlesford District Council. They include specific trees as well as particular areas, groups and woodland.

1.52 *Other important trees:* The basic criteria for identifying such trees are (a) trees must be in good condition; (b) they are visible, at least part, or as part of a group, from viewpoints; and (c) specific identified specimens should make a significant contribution to a scene.

1.53 *Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution:* These are features which are not covered by the classifications above.

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1.54 *Detracting elements:* Features such as poorly designed buildings, intrusive signs, together with poor quality surfaces and fences have been identified on maps. Detracting elements and possible improvements are addressed in Management Plan.

1.55 *Key views:* The analysis of the area includes key views to/from landmark features, gateway points, buildings and countryside, including street scenes and panoramic views. Development proposals would need to retain and enhance these views.

1.56 *Traditional materials and details:* Traditional materials and details make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The limited palette of building materials from the pre-industrial era, is derived from the range of local resources available. Buildings were most commonly constructed from oak or elm timber frame and infilled with wattle and daub panels. Lime render from local chalk was the predominant plastered finish, more commonly with plain rather than pargetted decoration. Sadly, on some properties this has been replaced by modern render. Weather boarding is prevalent on outbuildings, barns and some cottages, including feature and plain edges, and sometimes with black tar finish.

1.57 Before the 18th century bricks were typically only used for foundations, fireplaces and floors, except on higher status properties. These are generally handmade reds, occasionally with buff brick detailing and with cambered to gauged arches to openings. Brickwork was generally laid in either English or Flemish bond, up to the advent of cavity walls. The only building predominantly of gault brick is the mid 19th century former Congregational chapel (now The Chantry).

1.58 Pre-industrial era roofs are predominantly of handmade red clay peg tiles, which are flat, in reddish brown colour laid steeply (47 to 50°), sometimes hipped or half-hipped. Orange clay pantiles are also used to a lesser degree, having been introduced to England from the early 17th century. Natural blue-grey slate is common on 19th and early 20th century development, associated with better transport links. Thatch, although once more common, is now only found on two properties within the Conservation Area. Red brick single or multiple chimney stacks are a feature of the village's roofscape. Except for a few elaborate examples, these are of simple construction with an element of corbelling and generally they are squat and of simple form. On cottages, dormer windows often penetrate the roofline at 1st floor level, generating roofscape interest, minimising the building's massing and without visually dominating the roof.

1.59 Windows on pre-1948 buildings are largely traditional; in painted timber with either flush or recessed casements, occasionally horizontal sliding sashes, or vertical sliding sashes in later or re-fronted properties. Pentice boards are common above flush fitted windows. The area has a limited amount of inappropriate window replacements and from some modern windows on otherwise traditionally-styled new homes. However, since conservation area status was awarded replacements have usually been good timber copies of the original or are in a period style.

1.60 Doorways are typically framed with porches and pediments. These range from simple flat canopy board with brackets to elaborate moulded surrounds with frieze and pediment. Jetties can also provide a degree of weather protection.

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1.61 Boundary treatments and the landscaped edges of properties are important elements in helping define street scenes and settlement edges. Hedge planting is common, which along with the occasional mature tree helps bring the countryside into the settlement area and is helpful in screening some relatively modern development. Lawned gardens in front of some traditional properties are an asset of the area by virtue of their width and semi-enclosure, whereas front gardens from the 20th century are generally relatively narrow and driveway dominated. There are some walls which generally complement the materials of the building behind. Historic railings are generally well produced and fit their context, whereas some recent copies appear too generic and clash with the styling of the property behind. Picket fencing has been used appropriately only fronting modest dwellings and to the rear of properties. This contrasts with the growing trend for modern timber fencing with concrete posts, which has undermined the character of the Conservation Area, especially when seen from the public realm.



Picture 1.5 Red brick front boundary wall to Tye Cottage and granite kerbing, The Street

1.62 Carriageways and pavements are predominantly finished in tarmac. Granite kerbing adds visual appeal, though much has now been replaced with inappropriate concrete ones. Street furniture is of mixed quality and suitability. Concrete street lighting columns and garish highway signage/bollards are unsympathetic to the local context.

Area 1 - Historic Core

1.63 The Historic Core is defined by the early village which was centred on St Mary's Church, still its dominant landmark, and the closely aligned manor house, High Easter Bury.

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Picture 1.6 The grounds of St Mary's Church

1.64 Today, this character area forms the west side of a much enlarged settlement area. Apart from the two aforementioned buildings, all properties are closely related to The Street as it winds into the heart of the village from surrounding countryside.

1.65 The eastern approach along The Street is characterised by a mix of agricultural buildings, with the older ones included in the Conservation Area. Thereafter the intensity and age of development generally builds, past the grounds of High Easterbury and the church, through detached gardened properties of mixed age and reaching a crescendo of relative urbanity at the key junction with School Lane, where half of the Conservation Area's listed buildings are within just 60m (all within the character area). This junction arguably defines the heart of the existing village. The fork up School Lane quickly dissipates back into a rural lane, whereas the majority of the extended village elongates beyond the right angled bend of The Street.

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Picture 1.7 Relatively intensive development toward the junction of The Street and School Lane

Individually listed buildings

1.66 12 of the Conservation Area's 18 listed buildings are within the Historic Core, equating to 44% of all properties in the Character Area.

Parish Church of St Mary, The Street (Grade I)

1.67 This is the oldest and dominant building in the Conservation Area dating from the 12th century with alternations/additions in the 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th and 19th centuries. It consists of nave, north aisle, chancel, south porch, tower and 19th century vestry. It is a collage of materials: walls are of flint rubble with Roman brick and tiles in coursed herringbone and as quoins. Dressings are mostly of Reigate stone and clunch. The clerestory and south porch areas are of red brick. The roofs are of lead screened by battlemented parapets. Graded for architectural, historic and landscape value.

High Easterbury, The Street (Grade II*)

1.68 This is the old manor house. The building is large and well landscaped on a moated site, with a rather understated outward appearance. It dates from the 13th century, possibly earlier, with 14th and 16th century alterations/additions. It is timber framed and plastered with peg tile roofs. It is predominantly two-storey and of complex plan form. The frontage is long, with a hipped west end and late 16th century gabled cross-wing to the east. The rear has two hipped roof blocks and two single-storey lean-to outshots.

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Picture 1.8 High Easterbury approached through generous grounds

Wild Oaks, The Street (Grade II)

1.69 A detached mid 16th century house, which is side facing toward the front gardens of The Lanterns. It is timber framed and plastered with half hipped pantile roof. The gable to the street is characterised by its jetty which has an exposed and heavily warped timber frame.

Lanterns, The Street (Grade II)

1.70 At present a detached building, this was formerly two houses dating from the early 15th century and 17th century as delineated by differing ridge heights. 20th century alterations include the garage block, front porch and leaded light casement windows. The north west end bay is the former cross-wing. The building is timber framed, plastered and has a clay peg tile roof. It is set back behind landscaped gardens on the outer bend of The Street.

The Old Post Office, The Street (Grade II)

1.71 The building dates back to the 15th and 16th centuries. It mainly consists of two distinct cross-wing like structures, which together with their jettied east elevations provides an interestingly composed marriage of form. These are timber framed and plastered.

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Penvites, The Street (Grade II)

1.72 This house, dating from the early to mid 15th century is joined to other listed buildings on either side and to the rear. It is a long walled jettied house, which is timber framed and plastered with a peg tiled roof and 20th century pargetting. A carriageway leads through to Little Penvites.

Little Penvites, The Street (Grade I)

1.73 The building is attached to the rear of Penvites overlooking a small courtyard, being a later 16th century addition. It is timber framed, with long wall jetty, painted weatherboard cladding and a peg tile roof.

Cock and Bell, The Street (Grade II*)

1.74 A distinctive former pub dating from the 15th and 16th centuries. It is timber framed and plastered, with character-defining frame exposed to the street. The main building is two-storeys and has a 'H' plan with jettied cross-wings at north and south ends (the latter from the 16th century), and a central hall block now partially concealed by single storey infill to the street. To the rear are a range of attached buildings and outbuildings.



Picture 1.9 Streetscene showing The Cock and Bell on the left, with The Old Post Office and The Punch Bowl on the right

The Punch Bowl, The Street (Grade II)

1.75 A 16th century house, which is now a restaurant and flat. It is timber framed and plastered, with peg tile roofs. The main blocks are two-storeys, including a gabled cross-wing late 16th century extension at the south distinguished by tall stacks, jetty and exposed timber to the street.

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Elm House, The Street (Grade II)

1.76 An early 17th century house, which is timber framed and plastered, with peg tile roof hipped to the east. Bay windows and a 20th century porch add interest to the front elevation, which has a prominent location on the corner of The Street and School Lane

The Cottage, School Lane (Grade II)

1.77 A side-facing, small and charming cottage, dating from the 18th century. It is timber framed with a half-hipped thatched roof, with a pantiled single storey lean-to extension. Walls are part weatherboarded and part plastered.

Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution

1.78 These consist of a range of building types spread across the sub-area.

Barley Barns Cartlodge, The Street

1.79 A circa 18th century, seven bay, open fronted cartlodge, still in use as such, which has black weatherboarding, low brink plinth and hipped pantile roof. It contributes to the rural character of the area and allows for views over to St Mary's Church.



Picture 1.10 Barley Barns Cartlodge

Homely, The Street

1.80 A circa 18th century (possibly earlier) traditional artisan cottage. It has a dominant thatched roof, rendered walls and distinctive bay windows. It appears that the house once had had a simple form which has become more complicated by various extensions.

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Picture 1.11 Homely

Former Memorial School, The Street

1.81 The former non-conformist school, now being converted to a dwelling, was built in 1893. It is typically Victorian in style, with good quality detailing including stone sills, buff brick arched lintels, feature clock and strongly formed chimneys. Replacement windows are based on traditional casement style. Ongoing works have sadly involved the loss of traditional metal railings and removal of some ridge tile decoration.



Picture 1.12 Former Memorial School, with works ongoing

Newberry Cottage, The Street

1.82 This was the school house associated with the Memorial School and built around the same time (1893). It is typically Victorian, with red/orange brickwork, buff brick detailing, a half timbered gable detail and clay plain tiled roof. It is similar in appearance to Newell Cottage, alongside the former Congregational chapel.

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Newberry Cottage

Cock and Bell Cottage, The Street

1.83 Built around the turn of the century on a corner site, this is arguably the most successful vernacular development since the war. Its curved form neatly corners The Street, uplifted by numerous dormers to the first floor attic space. It has rendered walls above brick plinth with clay plain tiled roof. On a minor note, it is let down by some modern detailing, for example bellmouth drips instead of timber pretence boards.



Picture 1.13 Cock and Bell Cottage

Important trees and open spaces

1.84 The grounds to St Mary's Church provide a tranquil setting, with its elevated location providing country views out to the east facilitated by benches at key vantage points. With numerous access points, the grounds act as a node and key gateway point for walkers. Mature and semi-mature trees help enclose space and provide

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interest, with a woodland path to the south, though this is poorly defined and only provides glimpses of the adjoining Ware Ponds. Verges and front gardens containing trees and hedgerow help bring a sense of the countryside into the village along The Street. However, gardens to late 20th century housing sometimes appear driveway-dominated and suburban in character. There are currently only two trees with Tree Preservation Orders, being a walnut tree in the garden of Homely and a horse chestnut in the rear garden of Cock and Bell House. There is a sense of space at the central junction of The Street and School Lane. However, this is dominated by roads, apart from a green verge adorned with traditional village sign.



Picture 1.14 The grounds of St Mary's Church provide an attractive vantage point looking out over surrounding countryside

Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution

1.85 A distinctive early 20th century cast iron guide post made by Maldon Iron Works, is located on the verge attached to the junction of The Street and School Lane. It was installed by Essex County Council sometime between 1920 and 1940.

Key views

1.86 St Mary's Church is the village's main landmark and provides the attractive focus for a variety of views within the village and from surrounding countryside. These include glimpses between development and views over low-rise buildings. The Street also provides a series of important street vistas. These are generally attractive, though some terminate on elements identified as detrimental to the Conservation Area.

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1.87 Gateway or access points to the village benefit from views of St Mary's but otherwise lack definition and appropriate signage.



Picture 1.15 Garish signage and road markings defining the School Lane gateway point

Detracting elements

1.88 Within the Conservation Area, the main view down the street terminates disappointingly on a semi-redundant bus shelter, built in 1970, which is attached to the blank walled extension of The Punch Bowl Restaurant.

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Area 2 - Mid The Street

1.89 Mid The Street is primarily based on the straight run of The Street, which historically connected the Historic Core with the Parsonage, through largely undeveloped land. There are a small number of listed buildings along the route, though these merely contribute to what is now a relatively cosmopolitan streetscene, arising from widespread infilling over the years, particularly during the 19th and 20th centuries. Although not listed, a number of other buildings and features make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area. The linearity of The Street is softened and further enclosed by tree, hedge and ground cover planting, adorning the predominance of gardened properties and remains of a green verge.



Picture 1.16 The Street looking eastwards

1.90 The straightness of The Street here and relatively discreet townscape mean its interest is perhaps appreciated more in passing than the other two character areas which it strongly links.

Individually listed buildings

1.91 There are only two listed buildings within the conservation area here, equating to 7% of all properties in the character area. Another listed building, Cherry Cottage and Chestnut Cottage, is also described as it is on the opposite side of The Street and as such has material impact on it.

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Tye Cottage, The Street (Grade II)

1.92 Dating from the 14th and 16th centuries, this relatively squat cottage, was formerly two cottages and also recorded as a workhouse at least during the early 19th century. It is timber framed and predominantly plastered, with a peg tile roof. It is made up of a one and a half storey hall bay with hipped dormer and a gabled cross-wing. The latter is visually dominant due to its relative proximity to the street, two-storey height and main entrance. The front garden is attractively demarcated by a quaint old brick wall.

Anvil House, The Street (Grade II)

1.93 This house was built in the 17th century possibly earlier. It is timber framed and ashlar plastered with two parallel hipped peg tile roofs. It is formally arranged to the front with symmetrical windows centred on the door which features a pedimented early 19th century doorcase with pilasters.

Outside the Conservation Area:

Cherry Cottage and Chestnut Cottage, The Street (Grade II)

1.94 The main two-storey part of this building was a substantial house from the 17th century with a former cross-wing at the west end. It has a timber frame and clay peg tile gabled roof. The property was altered in the late 18th century to form a poorhouse and is now two semi-detached homes.



Picture 1.17 Cherry Cottage and Chestnut Cottage

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Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution

1.95 These buildings make up a significant proportion of the buildings in the character area and are essential to the area's architectural and historic character.

1-3 Parsonage Cottage, The Street

1.96 A quaint 19th century terrace in red/orange brick, which are well-preserved and simply detailed to good effect, including vertical-sliding sash timber windows. It has a modern but discreet extension to the rear with parallel pitched roof.



1-3 Parsonage Cottage

The Manse, The Street

1.97 A 19th century two-storey cross-wing with single storey neo-vernacular hall, set back behind a garden featuring mature trees and hedgerow. The hall has a dominant clay plain tile roof and large oak framed open porch. The cross-wing has rendered over brickwork.

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Picture 1.18 The Manse

The Chantry, The Street

1.98 Built in 1847 this is a former Congregational Chapel converted to a two-storey dwelling in the 1970s and with subsequent sensitively designed side garage. It is classically designed with gault brickwork and stone detailing. Distinctive features include the pilasters, parapet roof, glazing bar pattern and metal railings.



Picture 1.19 The Chantry

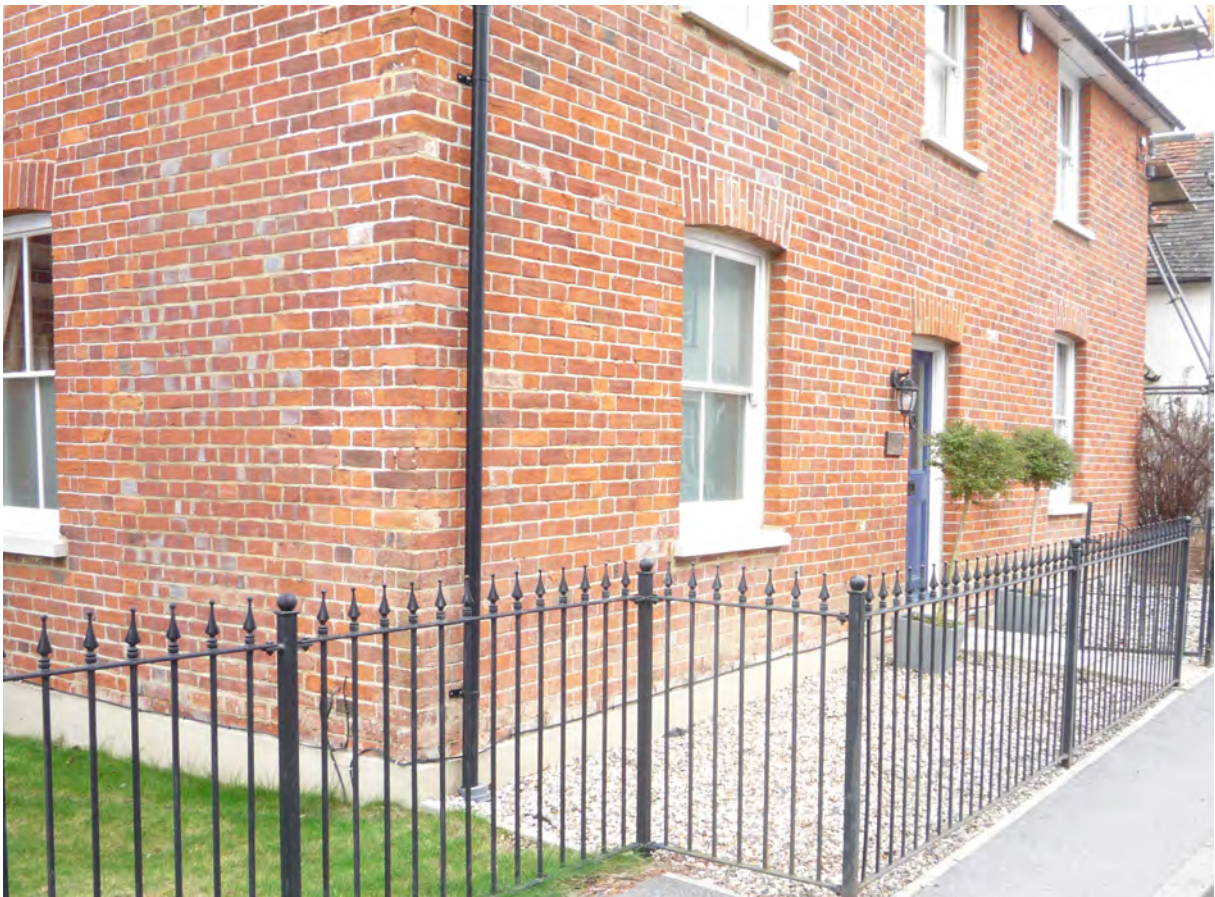
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Newell Cottage, The Street

1.99 It is presumed this was developed around the same time as Newberry Cottage (built in 1893) given their comparable design and close associations with the Congregational Church. It is typically Victorian, with red/orange brickwork, buff brick detailing, half timbered gable detail and clay plain tiled roof.

Chapel Fields House, The Street

1.100 Another 19th century, two-storey house of 'polite' architectural character. It has a symmetrical façade with gabled chimneys (either end) and four paned vertical sliding sash windows with horns. To the rear are extensive grounds, including an old orchard protected by Tree Preservation Order.



Picture 1.20 Chapel Fields House

The Old Surgery, The Street

1.101 A detached, 19th century, two-storey house of 'polite' architectural character, with symmetrical façade and central chimney stack. It has a hipped slate roof, four paned vertical sliding sash windows with horns and simple bracketed porch.

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Picture 1.21 The Old Surgery

Pyms, The Street

1.102 Built in the 18th century, the current house appears to have been formed from a linear terrace of units. It is two-storey with rendered over brickwork and clay plain tile roof forming a catslide to the rear. To the rear are glimpsed auxiliary former agricultural buildings.

Important trees and open spaces

1.103 In front gardens and on verges, occasional trees and lines of hedgerow help break up and soften the linearity of The Street, with the more substantial specimens protected through Tree Preservation Orders. This greening of The Street contributes to the rural qualities of the Conservation Area.

1.104 A Tree Preservation Order is also attached to an old orchard in the grounds of Chapel Field House, which extends to the rear of a number of properties.

Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution

1.105 The present War Memorial was unveiled in 1921, in memory of the 21 villagers who had fallen in the First World War. It is well maintained but now appears somewhat lost in amongst the residential area that has grown around it. Nearby on the opposite side of The Street is a traditional red phone box.

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Picture 1.22 The War Memorial

Key views

1.106 A distinguishing quality of the character area is that this part of The Street forms a strong visual link between the other two sub-areas. Possible local landmarks include the War Memorial and the former Congregational Chapel (now the Chantry), though these are discreetly positioned amongst other development.



Picture 1.23 Footpath link through Pyms

1.107 The only gateway point to the village here is a relatively minor right of way to the north, which is poorly defined and, for some of the route, involves walking through the gated driveway of the property known as Pyms.

Detracting elements

1.108 There are no detracting elements identified within this character area.

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Area 3 - Parsonage Area

1.109 High Easter Cricket Ground on the grounds of the Parsonage, with Pump Green alongside, provides a sense of space and destination helping anchor the east side of the Conservation Area at the key junction of The Street and High Easter Road. Former Parsonage buildings are sandwiched between the cricket ground and Parsonage Brook, forming the north eastern gateway approach into the village. These include the 19th century farmhouse and older former agricultural buildings, all within extensive grounds offering a sense of rural retreat. A mix of historic and villa style properties actively frame the cricket ground on its other sides, contributing to a quintessential village scene. Beyond the Conservation Area, 20th century development has extended the village to the east lining The Street.



Picture 1.24 The cricket ground, overlooked by housing including the Old Rectory on the right

Individually listed buildings

1.110 Four of only five properties in this character area are listed, i.e. 80% of all properties here.

The Parsonage Farmhouse

1.111 Built in the 19th century, the two-storey house is timber framed and plastered with hipped slate roof. The frontage is to the east, facing High Easter Road. This has three bays of double hung sash windows, with a central open pedimented doorcase with panelled pilasters and original six panel door. The building also relates to the cricket ground, contributing to its attractive backdrop. 20th century changes include the rear extensions.

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Picture 1.25 The Parsonage Farmhouse from the road to Bishop's Green

Cottage (Hilly Ley) 40m North West of the Parsonage Farmhouse

1.112 Dating from the 17th and 19th centuries, the cottage is timber framed with weatherboarding. The main two-storey block has a pantile roof which grades into a slate roofed single-storey lean-to extension on the north side. Features include a 19th century yard pump. A range of implement sheds are attached to the east, being timber framed, weatherboarded and with peg tile roofs.

Barn 50m North East of the Parsonage Farmhouse

1.113 Built in the 16th century and later, the barn is timber framed with weatherboarding and peg tiles. It has 9 bays with two gabled midstreys on each long side. To the south east corner is attached a four bay cartlodge with brick rear wall, and weatherboarded outbuildings, both with pantile roofs.

Cottons Cottage, The Street

1.114 A 16th century cottage on a prominent corner plot, it primarily consists of a two bay former in-line open hall house, which is a remarkable example of a small hall house. A 20th century extension has been added to the east. The eaves height has been raised, with dormers accommodating the first floor on the south side. The cottage is timber framed and plastered with gabled peg tile roof.

Separately identified buildings within the curtilage of listed buildings

1.115 Within the old Parsonage site, there are a number of pre-1948 auxiliary buildings in the curtilage to the three listed buildings. The most prominent, lining High Easter Road is a 19th century, or earlier, former agricultural building which is timber framed

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and narrow-span, with black weatherboarded walls above a red brick plinth. It is made up of two sections, a longer section with pantile roof and a taller section with plain tile roof and brick chimney.



Picture 1.26 The detached building (rear left) is the 19th century former agricultural building described above

Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution

1.116 A number of buildings make an important contribution to the valued setting of cricket ground: These are predominantly on the opposite side of The Street to the Conservation Area, but have a material impact on it.

The Old Vicarage

1.117 The imposing two and a half storey former vicarage was built in 1850 for Reverend Gepp of St Mary's Church. It was designed by Kendall and Pope in the Tudor Gothic style. The bulk of the house is double pile with an eastern cross-wing providing a feature entrance porch facing the cricket ground. In 1887 a west-side projecting wing of similar style was added, with secondary entrance to Vicarage Close. This was designed by Frederic Chancellor, a notable Essex architect. The house is in red/orange brick, with fine brick and stone detailing, including canted bay window, crenellated parapets and large ornate chimneys.

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Picture 1.27 The Old Vicarage seen from the Street

Outside the Conservation Area:

The Cottage, The Street

1.118 A modest 19th century two-storey cottage, with slate roof. The pargetted render walls hark back to an earlier era, though has used modern materials rather than traditional lime render.



Picture 1.28 The Cottage

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Rosedene Villa

1.119 A 19th century house with pargetted render and slate roof, though uses modern render, rather than traditional lime render, and has uPVC replacement windows.



Picture 1.29 Rosedene Villa on the right and Fir Tree Cottage on the left

Fir Tree Cottage

1.120 A diminutive cottage from the 18th century. It has rendered walls, clay plain tile roof, traditional casement windows and porch. A pediment adorns the ground floor window.

Harrington House

1.121 Built in the 18th century, this property appears to have been formed from two units set back behind a generous garden. The main section has a Georgian frontage of long linear range, alongside which is a half-hipped cross-wing. The property is rendered with clay plain tile roof. It features a porch and multiple paned sliding sash windows.

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Picture 1.30 Harrington House

Archers

1.122 A detached house from the 19th century, with render over brick, hipped slate roof, central chimney to the original front-facing building and extensive extensions to the rear. It is noted the property has had uPVC replacement windows.

Important trees and open spaces

1.123 The cricket ground is currently sited on the grounds of The Parsonage. At its edges are trees protected by a group Tree Preservation Order, ground cover native plants, a ditch to The Street and informal knee-high hedgerow to all roads. The space is generally well maintained, though in the south western corner, some seating and estate railing at the entry point are in a poor state of repair.

1.124 Pump Green, alongside the cricket ground, was historically an important part of village life, having the village's main water pump and being a focus for social events. Sadly, its use is now curtailed by being an island in the road junction. At the heart of the green is a lime tree, planted to mark the coronation of George V in 1911, and now neatly adorned with a circular seat.

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Picture 1.31 Pump Green

1.125 The above spaces form the focus to a wider green corridor linking open countryside through into the village. There are the remains of a green verge on the southern side of The Street, though this appears to be diminishing due to development creep. Mature tree and hedge planting also line High Easter Road. Group Tree Preservation Orders are attached to trees in the grounds of the Old Vicarage and The Parsonage Farmhouse, with other gardens also contributing to the leafy scene.

Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution

1.126 The pump on Pump Green has recently been restored and now provides historic interest and a focal point to the space.

Key views

1.127 The cricket ground offers excellent panoramic views and despite its leafy edge, exchanges extensive views with surrounding development, bringing mutual benefits with regard to attractive outlook and good natural surveillance. Pump green, landmarked by its pump and central lime tree, is the focus for street vistas. The Old Vicarage and Parsonage Farmhouse are also identified as local landmarks given their prominence and relative grandeur.

1.128 A key gateway to the village is where High Easter Road crosses over Parsonage Brook, though the brook itself is hidden from view. There is also a minor southern gateway point which is formed by a footpath link to open countryside. Modern fencing with concrete posts now lines one side of this route.

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Picture 1.32 Looking past Parsonage Barns toward the valley bottom which defines the village gateway point on the road to Bishop's Green

Detracting elements

1.129 Pump Green features a range of street furniture (e.g. highway bollards, signage and protective fencing), some of which appears to distract from the visual quality of the space.

Overall Summary

1.130 High Easter is a small and tranquil rural village, though is still the largest in the Parish of High Easter. It lies on relatively high ground though amongst very gently undulating land. Linear in character, development typically hugs The Street with a rear aspect of open countryside.

1.131 There is evidence of occupation in the area from the Bronze Age, through the Roman and Saxon eras, with the village also mentioned in the Domesday Book. Its history thereafter appears quite typical of many rural villages in the area, being heavily influenced by the power and custodianship of its manors and the church, with significant change arriving in the industrial era and growth peaking during the 20th century.

1.132 The village retains a good proportion of historic buildings and is well represented from the 12th century onwards. Its oldest remaining buildings are appropriately St Mary's Church and the former manor house which is High Easterbury. There are 18 listed buildings within the Conservation Area, all but one originating from pre-1700.

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1.133 Other buildings that positively contribute to the Conservation Area are generally from the 18th to 19th centuries. These are wide ranging, including a classically designed former chapel, a Victorian school building, a weatherboard cartlodge, thatched artisan cottage, an old Tudor-gothic style vicarage, grand houses and humble cottages.

1.134 A key theme of the Conservation Area is the way its landscape setting feeds in to characterise the settlement area. This is achieved through key spaces including the cricket ground and church grounds, and through streets often provided with green verges and front gardens. These are generally well established with mature trees, hedgerow and ground cover.

1.135 Other distinctive features, such as the War Memorial, restored pump and red phone box, provide essential memories of the village's past.

1.136 Traditional buildings are typically timber framed, lime rendered and with clay plain tile roofs, though configurations and details are varied, and other materials include weatherboarding, thatch and orange clay pantile. The industrial era brought with it greater use of brick and slate. Windows remain largely traditional though there have been some modern replacements. The village's public realm treatment tends to be rather simple and of mixed quality.

1.137 Although not all buildings are true to the quintessential traditional character of the area, there are few detracting elements and these mainly relate to highways design and paraphernalia.

1.138 St Mary's Church is the village's dominant landmark and the attractive focus for a multitude of views, whilst the cricket ground and Pump Green provide visual focus at the opposite end of the Conservation Area. Street vistas are generally well framed but some terminate on detracting features. There are a number of gateway points to the village, though these tend to be poorly defined.

1.139 Some areas adjoining the Conservation Area have a material impact on it, including properties which face on the opposite side of The Street within the Historic Core.

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Revised Conservation Area Boundary

2.1 The revised boundary is shown on Figure 7.

2.2 It is recommended that, in line with best practice, the boundary is extended across The Street in the Historic Core, given the relevance of facing properties. This would incorporate an additional four properties. It is also proposed that the boundary is extended to include the full extent of a number of rear gardens, again in line with best practice. In particular this will guard against the potential for inappropriate boundary treatments affecting the visible settlement edge.

2.3 It is suggested that Old Vicarage Close, consisting of seven properties, is excluded given these are a discreetly located group of new dwellings at the periphery of the Conservation Area.

General Planning Controls and Good Practice in the Conservation Area

2.4 The general controls and national legislative framework has already been described. Against this background the Council's Development Management staff process planning applications assisted by the Council's Conservation Officer.

2.5 Planning applications are currently considered against policies set out in the Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 that can be seen online at the Council's Local Plan and Local Development Framework homepage.

2.6 One particular relevant policy, Policy ENV1 – Design of Development within Conservation Areas says *'Development will be permitted where it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the essential features of the Conservation Area, including plan form, relationship between buildings, the arrangement of open areas and their enclosure, grain or significant natural or heritage features. Outline applications will not be considered. Development involving the demolition of a structure which positively contributes to the character and appearance of the area will not be permitted.'* This policy was a main consideration for developing management proposals set out below.

2.7 Good practice advice for applicants wishing to submit an application is to carefully consider the wording of the above policy and enter into discussions with the Council before submitting the application to avoid delay and hopefully achieve a satisfactory outcome.

Planning Control and Good Practice, Listed Buildings

2.8 There are currently 18 individually listed buildings within the Conservation Area and these are shown in figures 4-6.

2.9 Policy ENV2 – Development affecting Listed Buildings says *'Development affecting a listed building should be in keeping with its scale, character and surroundings. Demolition of a listed building, or development proposals that adversely affect the setting, and alterations that impair the special characteristics of a listed building will not*

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be permitted. In cases where planning permission might not normally be granted for the conversion of listed buildings to alternative uses, favourable consideration may be accorded to schemes which incorporate works that represent the most practical way of preserving the building and its architectural and historic characteristics and its setting.'

2.10 The listed buildings in the Conservation Area are indicative of local character. Their origins span several centuries and many have been modified over time and display a variety of architectural styles, methods of construction and use of materials. Good practice advice to applicants is to acknowledge this essential fact when submitting an application and recognise that the Council's overall objective is to ensure that proposals accord with the above policy especially in determining scale and the use of materials. The former must always be subservient whilst the latter should always be of the highest quality. A pre-application discussion with the Council's Conservation Officer is advised to establish such parameters.

2.11 Listed buildings in High Easter traditionally have roof finishes in clay tiles, though sometimes slate or thatch is used. These traditional natural materials should be used for repairs or new construction as appropriate for the building's period of construction or style. Imitations in new composite materials will not be acceptable. Similarly, the use of plastic windows on listed buildings is entirely inappropriate. The Council will use its powers of enforcement in appropriate situations if unauthorised works are carried out.

Planning Controls and Good Practice in respect of other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution

2.12 This report identifies a number of buildings in High Easter Conservation Area which although not listed make an important architectural or historic contribution. Such buildings are identified in the Character Analysis section and shown on figures 4-6.

2.13 The above buildings are covered by Policy ENV1 of the local plan which relates to the design of development in conservation areas. As set out earlier, buildings in conservation area cannot be demolished without consent. Any application involving the demolition of buildings making an important architectural or historic contribution will normally be refused because of their value.

2.14 A small number of windows and doors have been replaced in some of these buildings by modern ones. Elsewhere replacement roofing has occasionally used modern materials that is visually jarring. It is therefore intended to introduce an additional control to prevent this from happening in the future, under the mechanism known as an Article 4 direction (under 1990 Planning Act). The Council therefore proposes to make an Article 4 direction to remove the right to alter windows and doors and roofing materials on selected dwellings and appropriate consultation will take place in due course.

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2.15 The government advises that such powers should be used sparingly and this advice has been heeded. Notwithstanding the proposed Direction, other quality features such as chimney stacks and pots, decorative brickwork and barge boards will remain unprotected in law. Good practice by responsible owners will be to maintain and retain these features. The Council's Conservation Officer will offer advice on request.

2.16 It is recommended that the boundaries for the Article 4 Direction are the same as the Conservation Area boundaries.

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

2.17 Policy ENV3 Open Spaces says *'The loss of traditional open spaces, other visually important spaces, groups of trees and fine individual tree specimens through development proposals will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs their amenity value'*.

2.18 The essential rural character of the Conservation Area is part-defined by its open spaces, verges, trees and hedgerow, which have individual and collective merit deserving of protection.

2.19 The Conservation Area is adorned with three key publicly accessible spaces which are intrinsic to its character, these being St Mary's Church grounds (including adjoining woodland), the cricket ground and Pump Green. Development on any of these sites would be entirely inappropriate. It also possesses a number of other spaces which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area and where development would also be inappropriate. These are discussed in the Character Analysis section and include valued forecourts/gardens, orchards and courtyard spaces framed by groupings of buildings.

2.20 All the trees in the Conservation Area are afforded protection and owners have to notify the Council if they wish to undertake work to them. Many of the trees are additionally protected by Tree Preservation Orders with the general position of these shown in figures 4-6. Other important trees deserving of further consideration are identified in the character area plans, including those characterising verges on approach roads, good examples in the grounds of St Mary's Church and prime specimens in front gardens.

2.21 Good practice guidance for owners includes making regular inspections of trees to check for dieback and potential danger from falling branches. The Council's Landscape Officer will offer advice in appropriate circumstances.

Proposed Controls in Respect of Other Distinctive Features that make an Important Visual or Historic Contribution

2.22 There are some historic brick walls and railings which, although dispersed, collectively make an important contribution to the Conservation Area. There are also hedges which play a vital role in softening the boundaries and reinforcing the rural nature of the village. Only some of these boundaries are within the curtilage of listed

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buildings. All boundaries are important when facing the public realm or when forming the visible edge of the settlement area. Boundary treatments should therefore be protected in the Article 4 Direction.

2.23 Other important features are the pump on Pump Green, the War Memorial and a traditional red telephone box, which are identified in figures 5 and 6. These should be afforded the same level of protection as buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution.

The Potential Need to Undertake an Archaeological Field Assessment

2.24 There appear to be few opportunities for new development within the Conservation Area. However because of the historical significance and archaeological importance of High Easter any proposals should adhere to Policy ENV4 – Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological importance. This policy states that *'In situations where there are grounds for believing that sites...would be affected developers will be required to arrange for an archaeological field assessment to be carried out before the planning application can be determined...'*

Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements

2.25 The following proposals should be considered in partnership with key stakeholders as appropriate (e.g. Highways Authority, Parish Council, relevant owners, public utility companies):

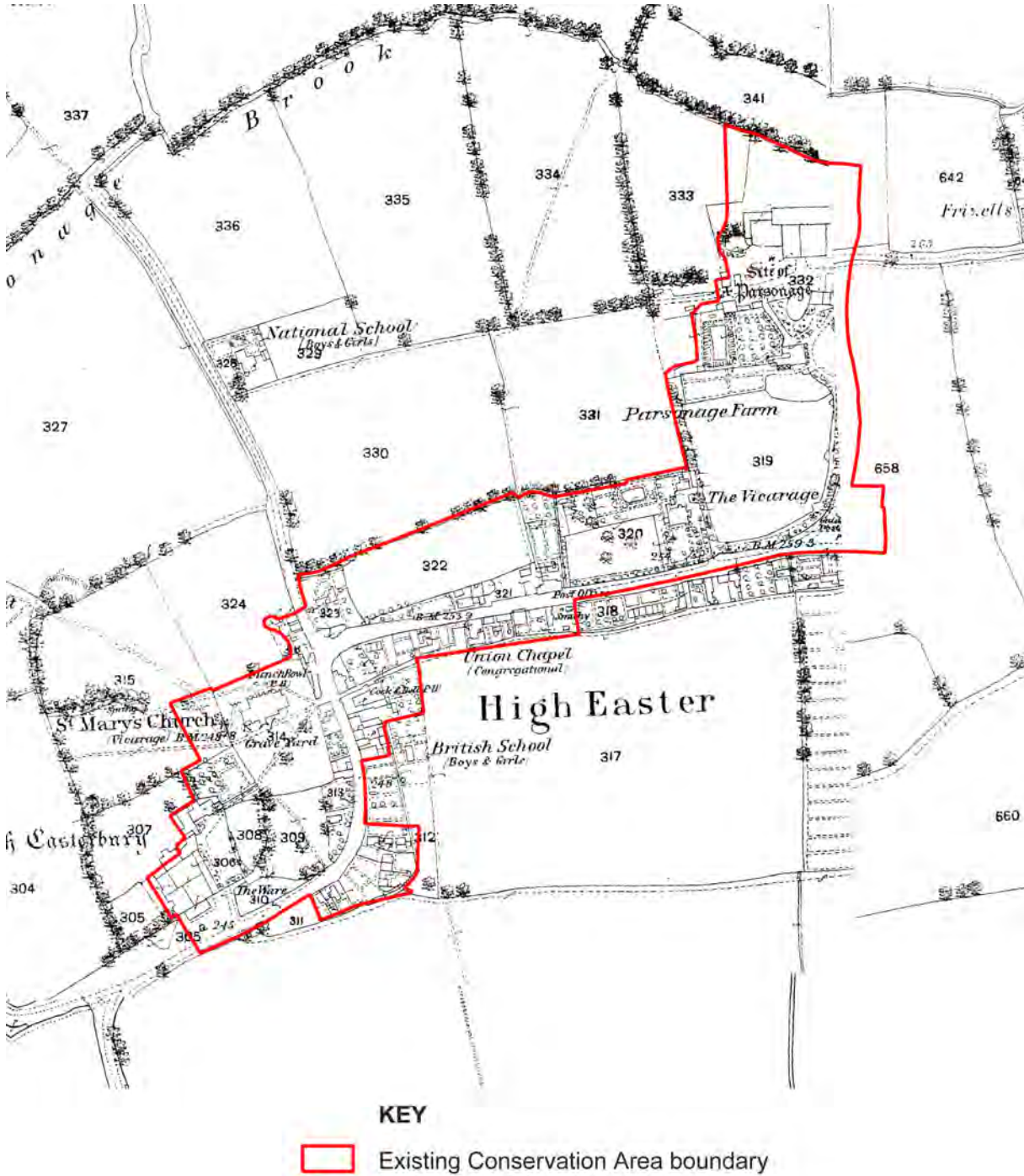
| Detracting/ underutilised element | Location | Proposed Action |
|---|---|---|
| Visual clutter impacting on use and visual appeal of Pump Green | Junction of The Street and High Easter Road | Explore signage rationalisation, replacing bollards with a more appropriate design and removing / replacing pump fencing |
| Disappointing public realm at the heart of the village | Junction of The Street and Church Lane | Explore potential for creating a more distinct and pedestrian prioritised space including change of surfacing and seating |
| Unattractive highways signage and road markings at key 'gateways' to the village | The west-end of The Street (outside Barley Barns), High Easter Road and School Lane | Explore replacing signs and 'gateway' surfacing to better complement the Conservation Area. |
| Timber telegraph poles and associated overhead wiring | Across the Conservation Area | Explore placing services underground |
| Extension to The Punch Bowl backing onto the street with an attached seatless shelter | Junction of The Street and School Lane | Discuss improvement options with owners considering heritage issues and the |

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| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | prominence of site, e.g. shelter removal, redevelopment etc |
| Concrete finger posts indicating footpaths | Outside Aldbury Lodge and Pyms, and opposite Wild Oaks | Consider suitable replacements |
| Concrete lampposts | Across the Conservation Area | Explore possible replacements |
| Replacement concrete kerbing | Across the Conservation Area | Explore potential for replacement kerbing to be in granite to match existing |
| Poorly maintained footpath links | Through woodland alongside Ware Ponds and footpath beyond Pyms | Consider design and management improvements |
| Dilapidated bench and estate railing | Southern-eastern corner of cricket ground | Consider options or proposals for repair to be discussed with the owners of The Parsonage |
| Publicly inaccessible Ware Ponds and poorly maintained woodland footpath. | South of St Mary's Church, between it and The Street. | Consider footpath improvements including opening up a gateway clearing to appreciate Ware Ponds, though without compromising the privacy of High Easterbury. Any proposals should be carefully considered with the owners with appropriate input from Essex County Council |

1 Maps

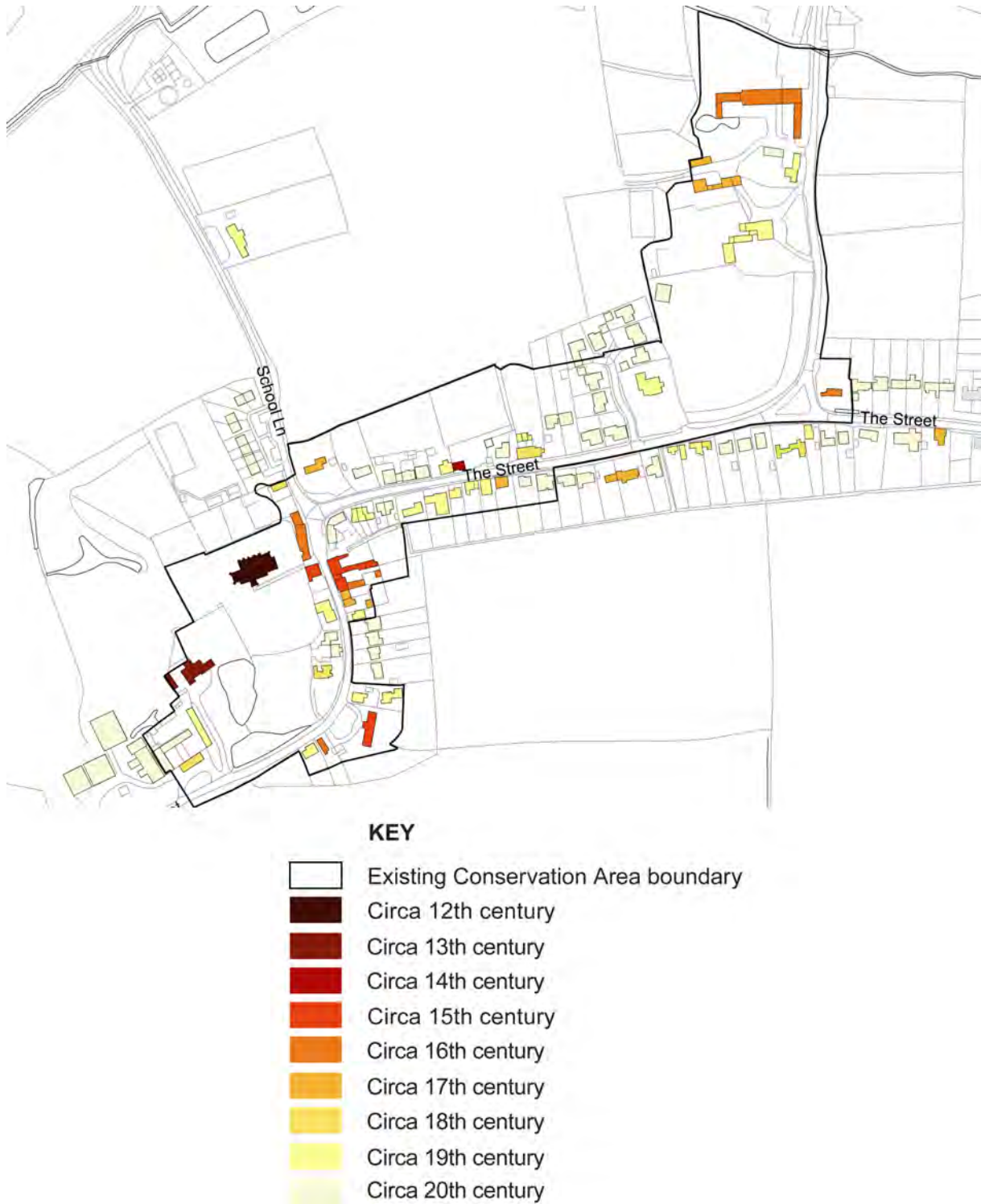
Figure 1 - 1877 Ordnance Survey Map



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Maps 1

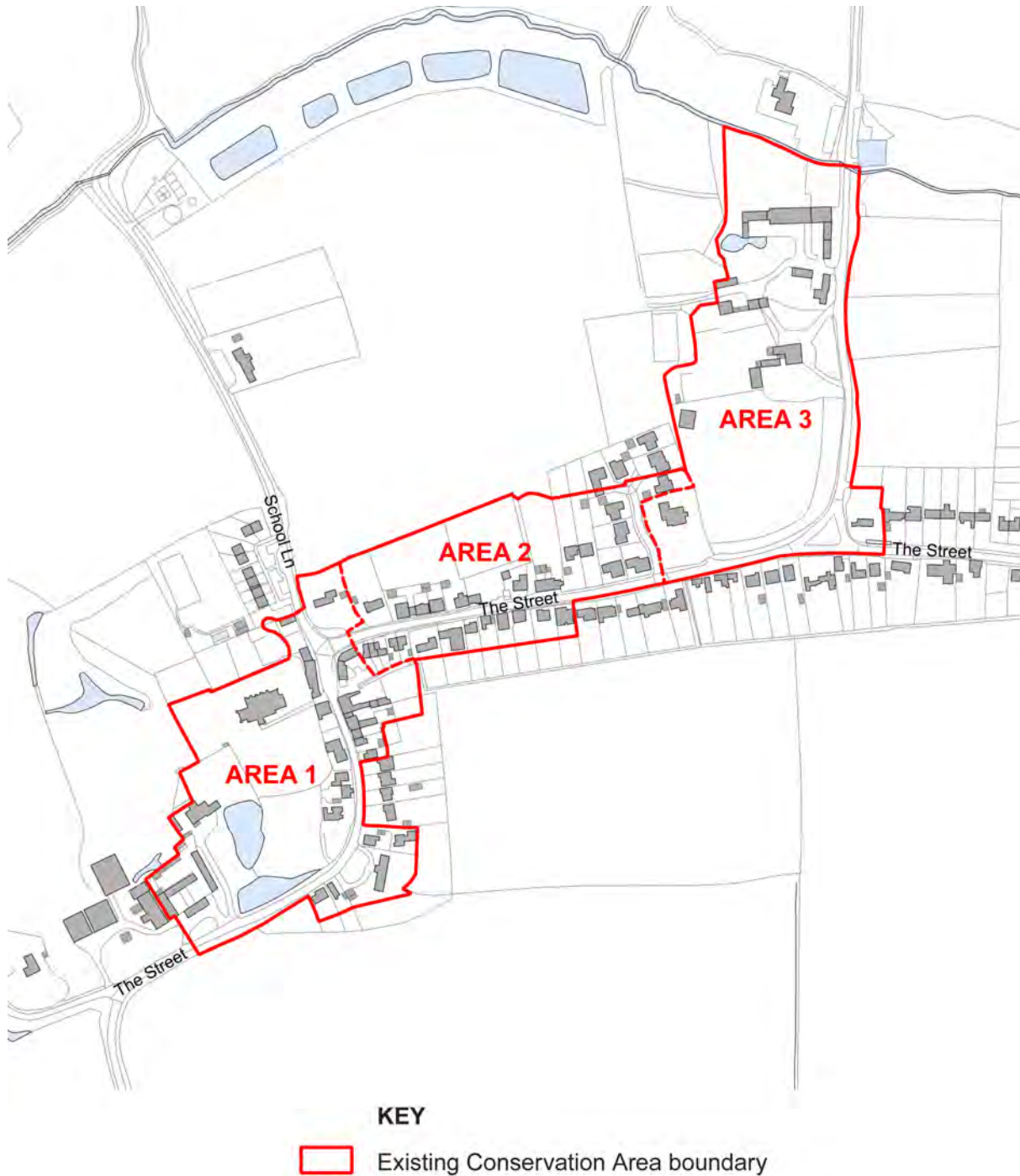
Figure 2 - Century of Development



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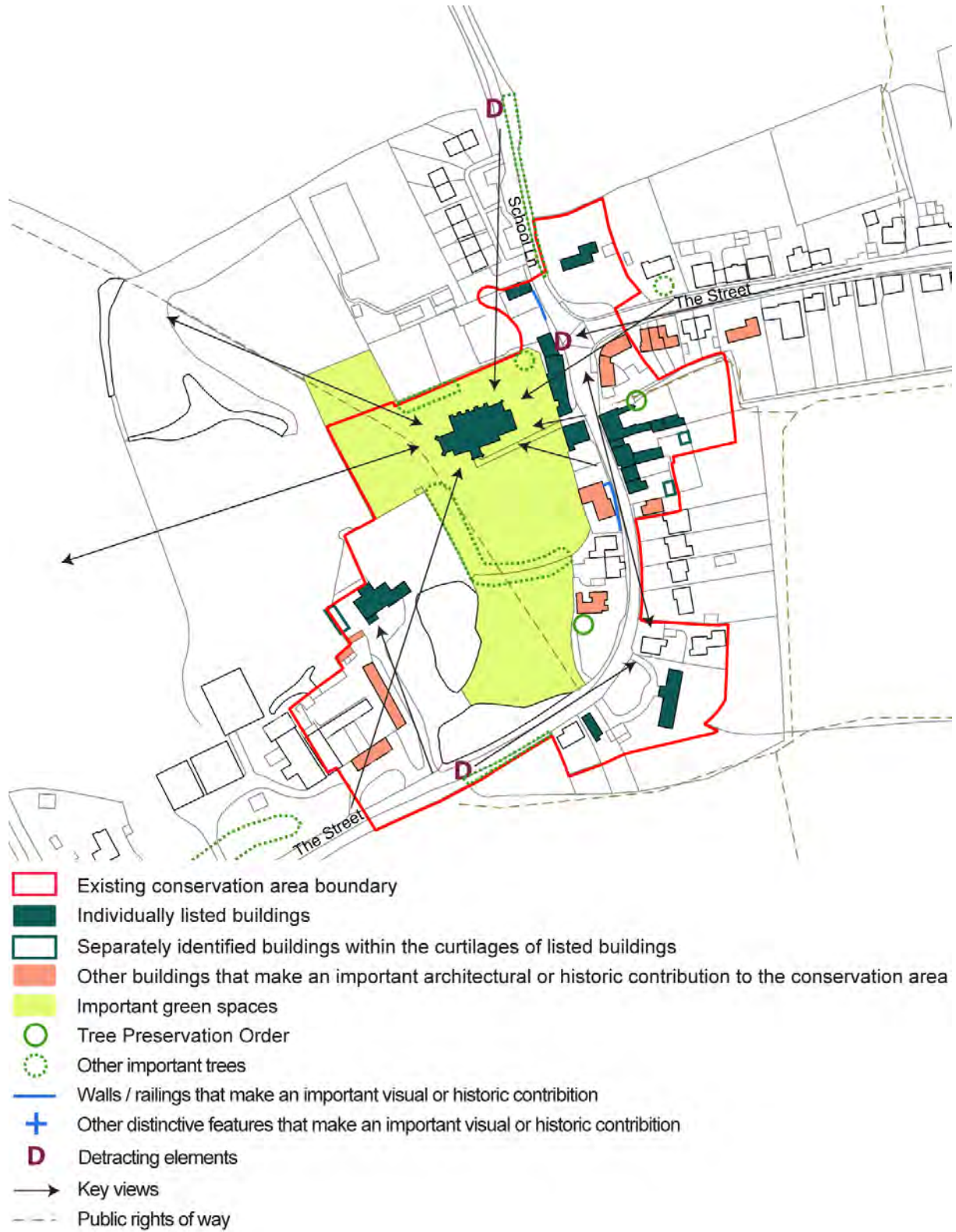
Figure 3 - Character Analysis Areas



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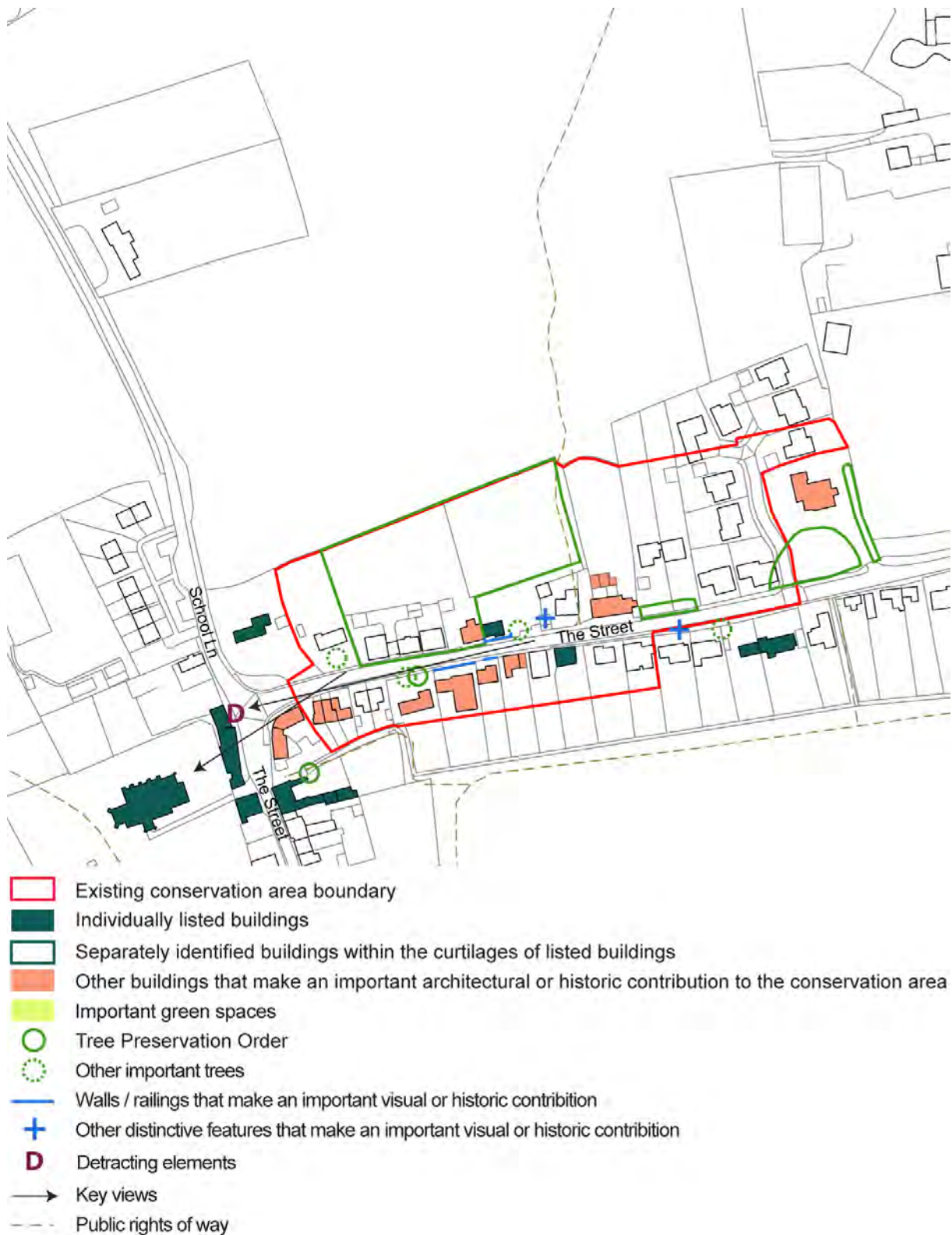
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Figure 4 - Area 1: Historic Core



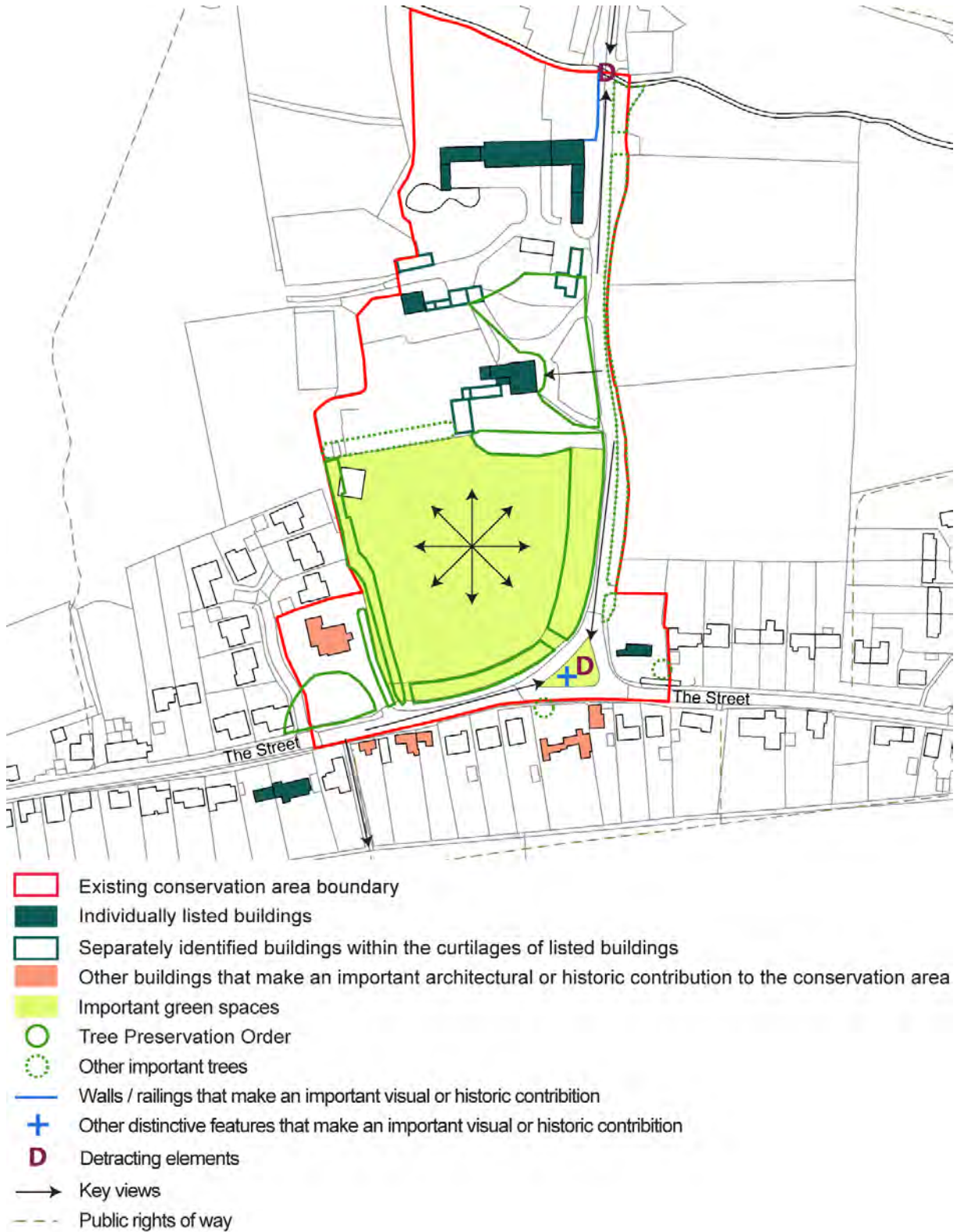
1 Maps

Figure 5 - Area 2: Mid The Street



Maps 1

Figure 6 - Area 3: Parsonage Area



1 Maps

Figure 7 - Revised Conservation Area Boundary



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Appendices 1

Appendix 1 - Sources

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