

Stansted Mountfitchet Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals, Approved April 2007



Contents

Contents

1 Part 1 - Appraisal	5
Introduction	5
Planning Legislative Framework	6
Planning Policy Framework	7
General Influences	7
General Character of Stansted Mountfitchet	8
Origins and Historical Development	9
Character Analysis	11
Area 1 - Bentfield End	13
Area 2 - Silver Street, Recreation Ground and Chapel Hill north of St John's Road	18
Area 3 - Chapel Hill, south of St John's Road, Lower Street, Grove Hill and Station Road	25
2 Part 2 - Management Proposals	37
Revised Conservation Area Boundary	37
General Planning Control and Good Practice in the Conservation Area	37
Potential Redevelopment Sites	37
Planning Control and Good Practice - Listed Buildings	38
Planning Control and Good Practice in respect of other Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution	39
Planning Control and Good Practice - Important Open Spaces, Trees and Groups of Trees	39
Proposed Control of other Distinctive Features that make an Important Visual or Historic Contribution	40
Possible Speed Reduction Plan	40
The Potential Need to Undertake an Archaeological Field Assessment	40
Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements	40
3 Maps	42

Contents

Fig.1 - 1877 O.S. Map with Conservation Area	42
Character Analysis Key	43
Fig.2 - Area 1	44
Fig.3 - Area 2	45
Fig.4 - Area 3	46
Management Plan Key	47
Fig.5 - Management Plan	48

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

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 historic economic and social influences 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 when 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 vistas 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 management proposals.

1.4 The purpose of undertaking this conservation appraisal is to

- Identify and justify the special character of the area
- Identify elements that should be retained or 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. Stansted Mountfitchet is a vibrant community with a diverse range of local organisations. These include an active parish council, a local history society, a gardening club, brownies, guides, cubs and scouts, a women's institute, a seniors club,

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

a sports association, various clubs including a music club, Rotary, Lions, a sports association, the Royal British Legion, political parties and others. A village magazine, The Link, is produced to disseminate local news and events.

1.6 Essex County Council first designated the conservation area in 1970 with boundary revisions in 1977 and 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

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

1.8 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 or enhance'.

1.9 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 areas accord with the above statutory description, that rational and consistent judgments 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.

1.10 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.

1.11 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.

1.12 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 cladding, the erection of satellite dishes fronting a highway and a reduction in the size of extensions, require planning permission in a conservation area.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

1.13 However there still remain many other minor developments that do not require planning permission, even in a conservation area. To provide further protection to the built environment, councils may introduce additional controls. Examples of such controls include the erection or removal of chimneys, some developments fronting a highway or open space such as an external porch, 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 porches and windows or walls and railings to non-listed properties could be specified in a such a direction known in law as an 'Article 4 Direction'. The use of such directions can only be used in justified circumstances and where a clear assessment of the conservation area's qualities has been made. In conducting this exercise we will establish whether or not such additional controls are appropriate for Stansted Mountfitchet.

Planning Policy Framework

1.14 The current local plan is the 'Uttlesford Local Plan' that was adopted in 2005 in which Stansted Mountfitchet is described as a local service centre. The plan defines the conservation area, much of which lies within the 'Development Limits' where there is a general presumption in favour of appropriate development, including housing infilling on suitable sites.

1.15 A particularly relevant policy in the adopted local plan that relates to the design of development within conservation areas is Policy Env1. This states that development will be allowed where it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the essential features of a conservation area. 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 Stansted Mountfitchet's conservation area.

1.16 The Council is currently working on the new form document that has to replace the current adopted plan, namely 'The Local Development Framework' and this will supersede the current adopted plan when it has been completed.

1.17 This conservation area appraisal, once it has been subject to public consultation and consideration and when the District Council has formally adopted it, will become a 'Supplementary Planning Document'. Such an adopted document will be important in the process of determining planning applications and also for implementing management proposals in Stansted Mountfitchet.

General Influences

1.18 The settlement is close to Stansted Airport, the influence of which exerts economic and transportation influences throughout the region. Additionally it is close to the M11 motorway and the London Cambridge rail network, being situated some 30 miles north of the city of London. Junction 8 of the M11 to the south also provides access to Stansted airport, Great Dunmow and Braintree via the fast and efficient dual carriageway of the recently constructed A120. Stansted Mountfitchet, because of its key location and close proximity to these major national economic factors and transportation links, will continue

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

to be influenced by them in the future which highlight the need to provide maximum protection to its historic environment. In terms of local retailing and services, the large town of Bishop's Stortford, some 3 miles to the south, is a magnet. The community on its southern and south-eastern and south-western flanks is protected from urbanisation by the Metropolitan Green Belt. The population is currently about 5,500 but will rise significantly when the additional development at Rochford Nurseries has been completed.

General Character of Stansted Mountfitchet

1.19 Setting. The village lies in the Stansted Brook. The greater part is to the north of the railway line although this will shift to some extent when the urban extension at Rochford Nursery adjacent to Forest Hall Road is complete. The community is surrounded by open countryside and much of the agricultural quality of that abutting the built up area is grade 3. The grounds of Stansted Hall, laid out by Humphrey Repton, overlook the village and are particularly important when looking out from the village from Chapel Hill for example.

1.20 General character and plan form. Stansted Mountfitchet has grown significantly during the 20th century, principally due to its location in relation to proximity to good communications. The extent of the existing conservation area is a mirror reflection of the community as it existed in the late 19th century and as shown on the 1877 Ordnance survey map (see Figure 1). The community then, as the conservation area today, consists of three distinct historic areas, namely Bentfield End, Silver Street and Chapel Hill and the Lower Street area (formerly known as Stansted Street). Although the conservation area is surrounded to the north, west and south by housing development where standard mid – late 20th century types predominate, it still retains its distinctive qualities and is visually unaffected by these large additions to a large degree.

1.21 There are about 140 individually listed buildings in the extensive parish of Stansted Mountfitchet of which 52 are in the designated conservation area. The majority of these (over 40%) are from the 19th century. The 17th century is well represented with about 30% of listed buildings whilst there are about 20% from the 18th century. The remainder are from the 16th century and earlier.

1.22 One very important architectural features of the village is the use of boundary railings dating principally from the 19th century. There are also some walls of quality.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1



Picture 1.1 Railings of C19 origins forming an important feature

1.23 Throughout the conservation area there are trees in abundance, some of which have been made subject to Tree Preservation Orders in the past.

Origins and Historical Development

1.24 Prehistoric. No known prehistoric deposits have been identified within the conservation area. However to the south of the railway, quantities of Bronze Age finds have been made. No evidence of an Iron Age fort has been found on the site of the castle.

1.25 Roman. Roman occupation has been identified during gravel extraction to the east of the Motte and Bailey where quantities of Roman pottery have been recorded which indicates occupation in the immediate area of the castle. Finds of major roman significance were discovered near to the settlement in what was then countryside, during construction work at Stansted Airport.

1.26 Saxon. No Saxon remains within the conservation area have been found to date.

1.27 Medieval. The Domesday Book records that in 1066, Stansted was granted to Robert de Gernon, forming one part of his large estates in Essex. By 1086 it was a reasonably large holding of 6 hides with 30 households and a priest. There was a large amount of woodland, but also sufficient arable for 13 plough-teams (a large number in comparison to other places). There were hay-meadows, a mill and grazing for cattle,

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

sheep, goats, horses and donkeys. At that date Manuden formed part of Stansted Mountfitchet holding. The addition of 'Mountfitchet' to the place-name is first recorded in 1288.

1.28 The conservation area of Stansted Mountfitchet is dominated by the nationally important Scheduled Monument of the Motte and Bailey Castle situated on ground north of the Stansted Brook. The ringwork includes a circular platform surrounded by a rampart containing the lower course of a flint rampart that is surrounded by a twenty metre wide dry ditch. Projecting south from the ringwork there is a short length of visible flint rubble wall surviving to a height of over 2 metres which has been interpreted as indicating the presence of a defensive tower. Overall the castle is probably 11th century, built by Robert de Gernon, Duke of Bologne who arrived in Britain with William the Conqueror. Robert de Gernon's son and heir changed his name to Mountfitchet, which continued to be used by his descendants. As a result of Richard II de Mountfitchet's opposition to King John in the early 13th century, the latter is believed to have destroyed the castle in 1212 and it was never rebuilt.

1.29 The medieval market place would have been located in the area of Lower Street. Development occurred throughout the medieval and post medieval period with residential properties developing along Lower Street, Chapel Hill and Cambridge Road.

1.30 Post medieval. The census population in 1801 was about 675 and a century later in 1901, it has risen to about 2,200. This is an increase of about 325% representing an average annual increase of over 3%. The largest 10 year increase in the 19th century, according to census figures, was between the years 1871 – 1881. The number of listed buildings and other buildings dating from the 19th century track the population growth at this time and the construction is at least partly associated with growth brought about following the construction of the railway in the 19th century in 1845. The Imperial Gazetteer of 1870-72 describes Stansted Mountfitchet as having a population of 1,769 with a post office a railway station a literary institution and reading room and a fair on the 1st of May. In addition to the church beyond the village, there was an independent chapel in the Lombardo-Venetian style, built in 1865, a Quaker's chapel and a parochial school. The community would have been very self-contained at this time with many trades and professions catering for the varied needs of the expanding population.

1.31 The extent of development at the end of the 19th century is illustrated at Figure 1 -1887 Ordnance Survey map. The existing conservation area has been plotted on this map for information. At this time the structure of the conservation area as it exists today was mainly in place with development being centred at Stansted Street (now Lower Street) and Silver Street. Bentfield End was less developed at that time although the construction of properties to the north of Bentfield End Causeway followed very shortly thereafter. St John's Church and the Peter Kirk School were constructed after 1877 in the period up to the start of the 20th century. At about this time the recreation ground was established and landscaped with conifers on its northern boundary and deciduous on its southern. The settlement was more open than today with extensive tree cover in many places.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

1.32 The railway and its station and nearby gas works were well established by this time. The effect of the railway on Stansted Mountfitchet was significant as it rapidly replaced the coach services and local coaching inns. Income from the toll roads operated by the Highways Trust fell from £104 per week in 1844, the year before the railway opened, to just £22 per week in 1846. Coal for fuel and slate for roofing, which had previously been brought by sea to London and thence by barge to Bishop's Stortford, now arrived by rail in the heart of Stansted Mountfitchet after 1845. Similarly farm produce and livestock from the nearby rural hinterland, were dispatched to London markets by rail shortly afterwards. The Great Eastern Counties Railway in fact soon found it had insufficient locomotives and rolling stock to deal with the expanding businesses.

1.33 Population continued to rise rapidly in the 20th century reaching about 2,900 in 1951; 3,400 in 1961, and following a significant rise in the 10 year period, 1961 – 71, reached 4,700 in that latter year. Thereafter population percentage increases declined, principally through planning control. In 2001 the population had reached 5,500. It was during the mid 20th century that the three distinct areas of Bentfield End, Cambridge Road/Silver Street and Lower Street really merged to create the community we know today.

1.34 Thus, the role of Stansted Mountfitchet has changed dramatically and there is little doubt that it will continue to be subject to significant pressures. Whilst it would be impossible and indeed undesirable to attempt to recreate past nostalgia, there is a clear duty to preserve and enhance what remains, principally the buildings, the spaces between them and their settings. The two reasons for doing this are easily understood. Firstly because the environment is historically important and visually pleasing and secondly such action will benefit posterity and enable future generations to appreciate, enjoy and learn from the past. The character analysis below assesses these qualities.

Character Analysis

1.35 The conservation area has been divided into 3 zones, each with a map and key common key with text and photographs to provide a brief description of each area. Historical photographs have been provided by John Salmon to whom the council is very grateful. The areas are: Area 1 – Bentfield End; Area 2 – Silver Street; Recreation Ground and Chapel Hill north of St. John's Road and Area 3 – Chapel Hill south of St. John's Road, Lower Street, Grove Hill and Station Road.

1.36 Potential redevelopment sites. The identification of such sites is not an acceptance of the principle of redevelopment but an indication of potential pressure in relation to the individual site.

1.37 Individually listed buildings. The listed buildings have been individually identified from English Heritage's on line source and have been carefully plotted. Each individual area analysis indicates the number of listed buildings as a percentage of principal buildings in that area.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

1.38 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 curtilages of listed buildings are separately identified.

1.39 Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the conservation area.

1.40 The basic criteria used to identify buildings falling into this category are (a) the non-listed 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.

1.41 Scheduled Ancient monuments. There are two such designations, namely Stansted Castle and the Windmill.

1.42 Important trees and open spaces. The basic criteria for identifying such trees are (a) trees must be in good condition; (b) they are visible, at least in part, or as part of a group, from public viewpoints and (c) individual specimens selected should make a significantly dominant contribution to the street scene. It may also be appropriate to identify less mature trees, particularly if they appear as a group. The positions marked on the maps are indicative only.

1.43 Open spaces of landscape quality or of historic importance that contribute to the visual importance and add to the variety of the street scene or the conservation area generally, have been included.

1.44 Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution. One local characteristic of the conservation area is boundary railings and walls. Many of the former are fine examples and are normally associated with 19th century buildings. Due to the scale of the maps the position of such railings and walls are approximate.

1.45 Important views. Only the finest views of landmark features or buildings have been shown. Development proposals that would significantly alter them will not be appropriate.

1.46 Neutral buildings. The uncoloured buildings on the plans are neutral in character and neither enhance nor detract from the street scene. Some are from the late 20th century and attempt to reflect the principles set out in the 'Essex Design Guide', some less satisfactorily than others.

1.47 Detracting elements. Features such as confusing poles of road signs, features in poor repair and broken fencing, have been identified on individual maps.

1.48 Proposed revisions to the conservation area. A few areas are proposed for inclusion that are now considered to positively add to the quality of the conservation area. Conversely many areas are proposed for exclusion. Proposed changes are made where arbitrary boundaries exist.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

Area 1 - Bentfield End

1.49 The details described below are shown on Figure 2.



Picture 1.2 Bentfield End Causeway 1950's

1.50 Bentfield End is removed from the main conservation area to the west of the village. Bentfield Road and Bentfield End Causeway are the principle access roads and these are well used by domestic and commercial vehicles alike to access destinations to the west, such as Manuden. Despite a combination of density and movement of traffic, sometimes travelling at excessive speeds at peak times and parked cars that detract from the street scene, the overall impression is that of an area with considerable charm. In this respect there is a very wide range of traditional materials, including thatch. The varying scales, shapes and heights provide street scenes of pleasing visual appearance and of considerable architectural interest. Buildings dating from the 17th century to the 19th century provide historic interest and variation.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal



Picture 1.3 Thatched properties, Bentfield End

1.51 Many buildings abut the two streets whilst the wide range of 19th century terrace dwellings that provide significant historic interest from this period to the north side of Bentfield End Causeway, are set back a short distance parallel from it. The listed buildings and barns at Bentfield Place, successfully converted to residential and commercial uses, provide additional variation of architectural scale.

1.52 Individually listed buildings. Those located closer to the junction of Bentfield Road and Bentfield End Causeway are the oldest, dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. Three listed buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries are located at the western extremity of the conservation area.

1.53 Bentfield Place, dating from the 17th century together with its range of former barns and stables has been successfully converted to residential and commercial uses. The scale of this group, some with large sweeping peg tiled roofs is in complete contrast with the diminutive thatched properties of nos. 1 and 17 nearby.

1.54 The listed dwellings on the eastern side of Bentfield Road are principally timber framed plastered with tiled roofs from the 18th century although no. 28 is 19th century brick with slate roof. A similar range exists at the western extremity of the conservation area at Bentfield End Causeway.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

1.55 There are 13 individual buildings or groups of buildings that are listed and this represents about 35% of the principle buildings and groups of buildings in this area. All are Grade 11.

1.56 Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the conservation area. There is a significant range of buildings principally from the 19th century that add considerable richness to this area both in terms of architectural quality and historic interest.

1.57 No. 20 Bentfield road is an unusual 18th/19th century flint and brick dwelling with dormer and original windows to street frontage, tiled roof with single chimneystack and lean to. Window openings to rear have brick arches. The garden is in a state of dereliction.

1.58 No.38 Bentfield Road 'The Willow' is of similar age, two storeys and rendered with hipped slate roof and two chimney stacks. Quality vertical sliding sash windows to first floor with original distinctive bay window, ground floor window range and door with canopy. Formerly The Willow PH.

Bentfield End Causeway, north side.

1.59 No 2. Simple 19th century brick dwelling two storey with slate roof and two chimney stacks, formerly the White Bear PH. Bay window with slate roof to front. Within its curtilage there is a single storey barn with hipped slate roof with 1950's addition to the front.

1.60 No's. 4 –8. Simple 19th century brick two storey with slate roof and two chimneys with some pots missing. There are two original porches with simple wooden detailing and slate roofs.

1.61 No's. 10 –14. 19th century gault brick two storey with slate roof and three chimney stacks with some pots missing. Red brick window dressings. Three bay windows, recessed doorways and rear access with brick arches. Two plaques, one with letter 'S' and other with letters 'AS' being the initials of builder Arthur Snow. Two original doors.

1.62 Nos.16 –20. 19th century red brick two storey with slate roofs and two chimney stacks with some pots removed. Decorative brick detailing, three bay windows with decorative detailing and slate roofs, two with original decorative slates.

1.63 No.22. Simple two storey 19th century render with slate roof and two chimney stacks. Two bay windows with slate roofs. Three range vertical sash windows and central doorway recessed.

1.64 No's. 24 –26. 19th century two storey with slate roof and two chimney stacks. Unusual decorative black and white brickwork detailing. Recessed doors. Date plaque 1891.

1.65 Rose Cottages. 19th century two storey red brick with slate roof, 2 chimney stacks, some pots missing. Similar decorative detailing, but of lesser quality to no's. 24 –26.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

1.66 No's. 32 –34. Interesting early 20th century two storey pebble dash with tiled roof and central chimney. Interesting window detailing with simple wooden decoration above.

1.67 This whole range of 19th/20th century buildings are representative of a number of styles of the period, varying from simple to ornate. Although many windows have been replaced the overall impression is one of architectural rhythm representing an interesting range and development of 19th century terrace housing.



Picture 1.4 Range of C19 and C20 dwellings displaying simple architectural rhythm

Bentfield End Causeway, south side.

1.68 No's. 5 –7. No. 5 'The Sloop' is a small two storey red brick and slate cottage tucked to the rear of no. 7 'Clifton Cottage' of 18th century origin. The pair retains sufficient qualities to be included in this grouping whilst the heavily modified no.3 does not qualify.

1.69 9 – 13. 18th/19th century terrace of charming two storey cottages with tiled roof and two chimney stacks. There is quality brick detailing to all windows and doors and a six window range, two of which are original. Whilst extensions to the rear detract from the original, the elevation to the street remains most attractive.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

1.70 Important trees and open spaces. There are several trees that play an important role in the street scene providing vertical emphasis and visual focal points, most of which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

1.71 Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution. There is an important boundary wall that encloses the street frontage to no.20 Bentfield Road. Original railings and dwarf walls to the fronts of nos.14 –18 and no.22 and to side of no.20 Bentfield End Causeway, provide architectural detailing of historic interest. More recent railings to the front of no.12 Bentfield End Causeway and to no.38 Bentfield Road have been included as they are of good quality and because they perpetuate a distinctive cultural heritage of the village.

1.72 Detracting elements. An ugly metal compound enclosing several metal 'portakabins' exists at Pond Lane.

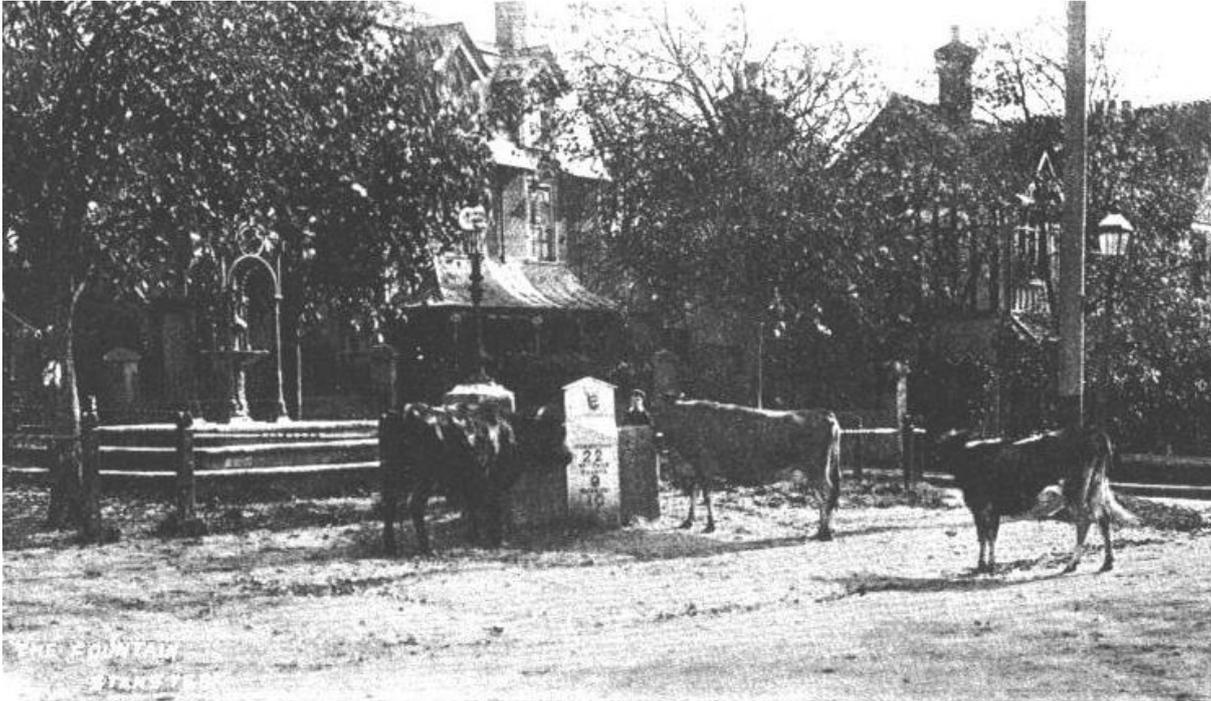
1.73 Possible speed reduction plan. The field worker undertaking this appraisal has noticed on more than one occasion that vehicles travel at excessive speeds along Bentfield Road and Bentfield End Causeway and has spoken to several residents who have offered different opinions. Excessive speeds along Bentfield End Causeway, whose narrowness is accentuated by resident car parking, could be particularly dangerous. Before discussing the technicalities with relevant officers from Essex County Council, feed back on this important issue is sought from both the Parish Council and local residents alike.

1.74 Proposed boundary revisions. Several properties on the south side of Bentfield End Causeway, nos. 23 – 29, add little to the historic quality of the conservation area in this location, and as a consequence a boundary revision is proposed to exclude them. An adjustment to exclude land to the south of Bentfield Place for similar reasons is also proposed. Although the northern boundary may have been drawn in an arbitrary fashion to the north of Bentfield End Causeway, an adjustment to reflect boundaries on the ground would include extensive back gardens that add little to the street scene. No changes are therefore proposed in this location.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

Area 2 - Silver Street, Recreation Ground and Chapel Hill north of St John's Road

1.75 The details described below are shown on Figure 3.



Picture 1.5 The Fountain, circa 1900, Silver Street

1.76 Silver Street is a very busy road to the south of the main commercial area where a number of high density flats have been built. It is predicted that such pressures will continue and other sites could be vulnerable. Difficult decisions, potentially in conflict with environmental considerations, may arise with regard to the provision of affordable housing. In processing any such applications, architectural solutions, more appropriate in scale and harmony than have previously been achieved, should be secured. The Recreation Ground lies to the east of Silver Street and is an extremely important open space close to the centre. The function of this area and the open space it provides will be increasingly important in the future as more people moving to the town, will want to take advantage of its environmental qualities. The finest landmark building is undoubtedly the windmill that dominates the southern part of the conservation area. Its restoration and maintenance is a great credit to all those involved.

1.77 Potential Redevelopment site. The Cock PH with its large car park, being adjacent to high-rise flats currently under construction, could be subject to future redevelopment pressures. The building is 19th century in origin and although pleasant is altered with additions to front, side and rear where there is a later flat roof extension that detracts. Whether or not the existing building should be designated as making an important architectural or historic contribution is in the balance. The site is dominated by modern redevelopment that towers over it to the north. Should redevelopment be proposed, the principle issue to consider through the planning process would be the need to provide

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

cheaper housing in the centre of the town, close to existing services as opposed to the retention of a local pub serving the community and its remaining architectural and historic qualities.

1.78 Individually listed buildings. Most listed buildings date from the 19th century and typically have slate roofs. The Windmill is a notable exception and was built in 1787 for Joseph Lindsell. It last worked in 1910 and in 1929 was bought and restored by Lord Blyth. The mill is in good condition and currently used as a visitor attraction being open to the public during spring and summertime.

1.79 There are 17 individual buildings or groups of buildings that are listed and this represents about 20% of the total number of principal buildings in this area. All are listed grade 11 with the exception of the Windmill, which is grade 11*.

1.80 Other buildings that make an important architectural or historical contribution to the conservation area.

Silver Street, west side.

1.81 No. 68 is an unusual early 20th century brick and timber mock 'Tudor' two storey building with slate roof, decorative chimneystack and a five window range. A dilapidated wall to the front would benefit from repair.

1.82 No. 50, Mill Cottage is a simple 2 storey render and slate roof building with central decorative chimneystack with two range original casement windows. There is also a painted brick single storey extension to the north with slate roof and original windows.

1.83 No 48 is a two storey 19th century brick and slate roof with two bay windows to front. The large plaque and black lettering 'The Windmill' and decorative

1.84 Iron- work for former hanging sign denotes its previous use as a PH. Central original entrance with replaced windows to front. It is now flats and heavily modified to the rear.

1.85 Building to north of no.48, Leisure Plan. A late 19th/early 20th century two storey building now in commercial use, formerly a chapel, with arched windows with original glass and double arched windows at ground floor and decorative entrance to front.

1.86 No. 40 Mason's Court. Two storey brick with slate roof, now converted to flats. Ground floor rendered with modern windows; first floor brick with some original windows. Two original dormers in roof with decorative ridges and two chimney stacks.

1.87 No. 8 – 10 is a three-storey gault brick building with double gabled roof, one slate and the other re roofed in tiles. Quality decorative red brick quoins and detailing to windows and doors. Bay windows to ground floor, two doors recessed, arched windows to windows on third floor, ornate barge board to front.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

Silver Street, east side.

1.88 No.1 is a very interesting 19th century house with 'gothic' style windows to third floor dormers in mansard roof with three chimney stacks. 20th century parquetry dated 1954 incorporating the words 'St. Stephens' exists. There is an interesting original porch with recessed door to side with gothic style pointed windows at first floor above. Some windows are modern replacements. There are 19th century railings to front.

1.89 Linden House, currently an antique salesroom for sale is of late 19th century brick construction to ground floor with part jettied upper storey. Original windows in heavy wooden frames, decorative wooden timbers and interesting decorative brickwork with decorative ridge tiles to tiled roof and dormers make this a building of significant interest. There is a plaque with initials JG and dated 1884 to front elevation and quality 19th century boundary railings.

1.90 Nos. 23 –39 are an interesting range of 19th century buildings of mixed types and scales. The elevations are a mixture of brick and render, all with slate roofs, some being mansard and some having decorative ridges. Most are two storeys but no. 39 is three storey. Some windows have been replaced whilst others are original. Clearly some windows at ground floor were once those of shops that for historical reasons should be retained. Most chimney stacks remain whilst a few have been lost. The group is a diverse range that provides historic interest and architectural variety to the street scene.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1



Picture 1.6 Development of Silver Street. Above 1905, below 1920. Note additional shops

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

1.91 No 43 is an imposing rendered two storey dwelling converted to flats with vertical sliding sash windows and a large bay window and interesting window detailing above. There are four dormers of later date inserted in slate mansard roof. There is a single storey 19th century range to south side with slate roof, some original windows and some replacements.

Chapel Hill

1.92 Nos. 47- 49. Two storey 19th century building painted brick with slate roof, partly hipped and two chimney stacks. Original three range vertical sliding sash windows. 19th century railings to front and curious brick wall with arches filled with flint to Woodfield Terrace boundary.

1.93 No. 51, corner of Chapel Hill and Recreation Ground. Two storey rendered to front with slate roof, chimney stacks and three range original windows with decorative surrounds. Central porch and decorative barge board. 19th century railings to front.

1.94 Nos.53 –55. A tall residential pair, rendered with slate roof and two decorative chimney stacks to principle structure. A four window range, original two bay windows and two original doors with arched detailing. 19th century railings to front.

1.95 The Post Office is a 19th century building on a site that is identified as 'Post Offices' on the 1877 OS map. This brick building with tiled roof of later date has two chimneys with decorative features and a distinctive window range with large arched windows and central arched doorway with original door to ground floor. Original barge boarding and other decorative features beneath eaves to front elevation. Simple industrial railings to part of west boundary. It is an interesting part of the historical cultural heritage of the town.

Woodfield Terrace.

1.96 Nos. 4 –8 is a 19th century imposing three storey rendered building with slate roof and three chimney stacks, two of which are decorative. Bay window feature extending to first floor. Two arched windows at third floor. Whilst windows have been replaced, other essential architectural elements remain.

1.97 No.10 is a 19th century two storey render with slate roof and two chimney stacks. Two distinctive bay windows with slate roofs and decorative canopy over central door. Original windows.

Recreation Ground.

1.98 Nos. 5 – 7. Late 19th/early 20th century two storey rendered building with slate roof. Four vertical sash window range and two recessed doors, some original windows to front although replacements are currently being provided to no.7.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1



Picture 1.7 Recreation Ground circa 1920

1.99 Nos. 9 –15. Mid 19th century terrace with slate roof and two chimney stacks (one lost). Range of eight windows all replaced except no.15. Fine railings to front and as dividers to property curtilages.

1.100 No.17. Late 19th century rendered and slate roof and two chimney stacks with recessed door to front and bay windows extending to upper floor. Original window openings but all windows replaced.

1.101 Nos. 25 – 27. An early 20th century building of brick construction with tiled roof and two highly decorative chimney stacks. There are two decorative dormers with exposed timber detailing extending to similar detail at first floor. Two large arched entrances to recessed doors and two decorative bargeboards make this group, now converted to flats, a most interesting group despite window replacement. Some vertical hung tiles to front elevation in part. A row of cones to prevent parking detracts.

1.102 Nos. 31 –33. Early 20th century two storey brick construction with tiled roof and two decorative chimney stacks. Bay window detailing extends to first floor. Fine original window detailing and recessed doorways with original doors. Solar panels to rear detract slightly but benefit the environment in other ways. Quality railings to front.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

1.103 Nos. 35 – 37. Early 20th century two storey houses of brick construction with tiled roof and three chimney stacks. Two bay window detailing extend to first floor and quality brick arches to recessed doors. Some windows replaced, some original. Quality railing to front in part.

1.104 No.41. Two storey early 20th century brick construction with slate roof, rendered to front and west side. Central recessed doorway and two fine bay windows with tiled roofs and three window range to upper floor, all original.



Picture 1.8 Recreation Ground. Fine unspoiled early C20 houses

1.105 Nos. 43 – 57. Fine groups of two storey early 20th century dwellings of brick construction with tiled roofs, mostly original. They are largely unaltered in nearly all respects, displaying unusual and distinctive chimneystack shafts, recessed doorways with wooden detailing, decorative bay windows with tiled roofs, original casements window ranges and simple bargeboards to front.

Mill Side.

1.106 Nos. 2 – 6. 19th century two storey rendered cottages with two slate roofs and one later tile replacement. There are two gault brick chimney stacks. There are some inappropriate window replacements, some original.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

1.107 Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution. There is an extensive range of 19th century railings at several locations as shown on Figure 3. Of particular note are railings to properties at Chapel Hill and Recreation Ground and at the corner of Chapel Hill and Silver Street. There is also a distinctive flint and brick arched wall to no. 47 Chapel Hill at Woodfield Terrace boundary worthy of special mention.

1.108 Important views. There are fine views of the Recreation Ground from the road of the same name that defines its eastern and southern boundaries and also fine views of the windmill from Mill Side particularly.

1.109 Scheduled Ancient Monument. The windmill is so designated.

1.110 Detracting elements. The wall to the front of no 68 Silver Street is in need of repair as is a recently collapsed wall on private drive to the north of Mill Cottage. The commemorative fountain to Edward V11, dated 1902 at the corner of Chapel Hill and Silver Street suffers from a small degree of neglect or vandalism where a corner slab is in need of repair and where there is a profusion of signs, both highway and other information signs, a redundant post and flower tubs that would benefit from rationalisation and simplification. Cones outside 25-27 Recreation Ground also detract.

1.111 Proposed Boundary revisions. It is suggested that the area to the rear of the Quaker meeting house where interesting Quaker gravestones exist should be included. The boundary to the north of Blythwood Gardens at its junction with Silver Street cuts across the rear gardens in an entirely arbitrary manner. Whilst some quality trees exist in this location and indeed on both sides of Silver Street nearby, they are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. The late 20th century development of Windmill Close is not considered to be sufficiently sympathetic in terms of form and scale to the conservation area. For a combination of these reasons it is suggested that the area as shown on Figure no. 3 be excluded.

Area 3 - Chapel Hill, south of St John's Road, Lower Street, Grove Hill and Station Road

1.112 The details described below are shown on figure 4.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal



Picture 1.9 Remarkable dwelling, junction of High Lane and Gall End. Phot circa 1907

1.113 This area contains the railway station, a mixed commercial area with shops, pubs and offices and is adjacent to a car park that was built in the 1990's by Uttlesford District Council. The area is only moderately busy in terms of activity and business and despite hard times in the relatively recent past and some empty premises, this may change in the future as a result of new housing development elsewhere in the settlement. Castle Walk to the east of Lower Street has not been a commercial success and the upper floors are now residential. Although the commercial status of Stansted Mountfitchet as a whole will remain in the shadow of Bishop's Stortford, it is encouraging to note that new offices have recently replaced the former garage site on Station Road and a few new shops have opened in the recent past. Local Policy SM1 promotes the retention of the commercial elements by presuming against change of use to residential unless existing commercial uses are surplus to requirements. The Castle site that is an attraction, particularly for school parties, supports the commercial centre with the visitors it attracts. In visual terms the latter dominates the area and is highly visible from nearby, particularly from within the car park.

1.114 Potential redevelopment site. The Peter Kirk school site consists of three buildings, (a) a late 20th century gymnasium and kitchen which is a modern and well appointed building but of no architectural or historic merit; (b) a low slung eyesore of a building with asbestos roof and windows that are boarded up, the removal of which would be of great benefit to the conservation area and (c) a 19th century building of quality that must remain. The latter provides classrooms for the current adult education facilities. Essentially this building is of importance because of its architectural qualities and because it is a typical representative structure of its period and original use. It is single storey of red brick construction with fine original windows, tall decorative chimneys and a central decorative metal cupola. Internally there are some 19th century detailing

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

including doors and classroom partitions. It remains largely unaltered apart from a relatively small flat roof extension and some internal suspended ceilings. Ideally should redevelopment occur the opportunity should be seized to remove these features.

1.115 Additionally there is another smaller but similar building to the southeast that used to form part of the school complex and this is being marketed separately. This building is also from the 19th century and has distinctive original windows ranges, dormers, chimneys and some curious inverted 'v' decorative brickwork detailing. It too must be retained and ideally should be considered as part of the overall comprehensive development.

1.116 The land between Chapel Hill and the complex of buildings is an overspill car park and overgrown with dilapidated ugly fencing enclosing it on three sides. Subject to traffic capacity and access and parking considerations, this area has redevelopment potential.

1.117 Access onto Chapel Hill is difficult and St Johns road has its limitations. Any redevelopment proposal needs to assess these considerations imposed by traffic, parking and access.

1.118 Individually listed buildings. There is a very wide range of buildings spanning the 11th –19th centuries. The earliest is a small fragment of the Castle. Savages and Tudor House on Lower Street, in which location can also be found The Queen's Head and Dog and Duck PH's and other buildings from the 17th and 18th centuries, represent the 16th century. Several buildings including No.1 Lower Street with its shop front, pilasters and cornice, represents the 19th century. The buildings vary considerably in their styles and materials and despite the presence of traffic, commercial activity and parked vehicles; continue to make a significant architectural and historic contribution.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal



Picture 1.10 Savages and Tudor House, Lower Street

1.119 There are 22 individual buildings that are listed and this represents about 25% of the principle buildings and groups of buildings in this area. All are grade 11.

1.120 Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the conservation area.

Chapel Hill, north side.

1.121 No.42, Stansted Carpet Shop, corner of St. Johns Road. This 19th century two storey red brick with slate roof and chimney and some decorative brick banding is in commercial use. Shop fascia detailing includes decorative column heads and original entrance.

1.122 Nos. 38 – 40. 19th century two storey brick (one painted) with slate roof and chimneys has a four vertical sliding sash window range to first floor. There are two bay windows with decorative slate roofs and two recessed doors with arched brick entrances. Railings, probably 20th century to front.

1.123 Peter Kirk school site. See 'potential redevelopment site' above.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

1.124 Stansted Free Church. This 19th century gault brick building with slate roof has original arched and circular windows with stone lintels and cills and other decorative features and brickwork, including an original door in need of repair. For comments on graveyard, see below.

Chapel Hill, south side.

1.125 Nos. 43 – 45. This 19th century two/three storey fine gault brick dwelling with slate roof and central chimney has a two window range with original vertical sliding sash windows and simple stone lintels. Other features include overhanging eaves detail and two circular arched windows to third floor on elevation to Woodfield Terrace. There are quality railings to front in part.

1.126 No. 39. This 19th century two storey red brick with slate roof and chimneystacks has a three original vertical sliding sash window range to front with two bay windows with decorative slate roofs in part. Also there is a central original door with porch and slate roof. Railings to front are probably 20th century.

1.127 Nos. 35 – 37. This 19th century two storey red brick has a hipped slate roof and central chimneystack, a three range of vertical sliding sash windows to first floor and delightful porches to ground floor.

1.128 Nos. 31 – 33. This 19th century simple two storey brick (half painted) has slate roof and central chimneystack. There are original windows and door to no. 31; replacement windows and porch to no.33.

1.129 Nos. 23 – 29. This 19th century group of rendered cottages has slate roof and two chimneystacks. Although most windows and doors have been replaced and the porch to no.29 detracts, the overall scale and quality, different to neighbouring properties led the field officer to include this building in this category by a narrow margin.

1.130 Hillside Dental practise and no.4 Woodfields. This 19th century gault brick has hipped slate roof and central chimneystack and a three window range sliding sash windows. There is a flat roof extension but to the rear. Quality flint and brick capped wall to Chapel Hill.

1.131 Barley Mow. This 19th century two storey render with slate roof was previously a PH of the same name. There is a three window range with vertical sliding original sashes and central doorway with canopy.

1.132 Nos. 15 – 17. This 19th century two storey rendered group with slate roof and chimneystacks has a delightful five range original metal windows to first floor spoilt only by one modern replacement to ground floor.

1.133 Nos. 7 –13. A range of 18th/19th century commercial properties. No. 7 is a single storey brick with tiled roof and curved eastern elevation. Nos. 9 – 13 is a two storey brick with tiled roofs group with fine decorative brickwork to all window and door surrounds. Some original windows, some replacements.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

Lower Street, west side.

1.134 No. 37. This two storey 19th century red brick building with tiled roof and chimney has a three window range, mostly replaced. Its decorative wooden detailing and retention of form and materials enables the building to be included in this category, despite the replacement windows.

1.135 No. 41. 19th century two storey rendered to front with tiled roof and chimney stacks. There is timber detailing to first floor and a distinctive window range consisting of two boxed windows at first floor. Windows are mostly original. Recessed door and one window to ground floor was probably that of a shop originally.

1.136 Nos. 49 – 55. 19th century two storey red brick with slate roof and chimneys. Four window range to first floor. Four bay windows with slate roofs. Some windows original, some replaced. Recessed doors with gault brick detailing, lintels and decorative banding. Extensions to rear have original chimneystacks.

Lower Street, east side.

1.137 The Youth Centre and Alternative Education Unit. Mid 19th century former school red brick with slate roof stone lintels and many original windows and doors of quality. There is a decorative tall cupola with bell housed internally. Also two commemorative tablets, one acknowledging the start date of construction, being 1838 and those who made financial contributions whilst the other offers a stern Victorian moral message stating 'Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it'. Despite a modern addition to the rear, this is a very fine building of its period contributing to the cultural architectural and historic heritage of Stansted Mountfitchet. A number of slates are missing that detract.

1.138 Nos. 68 – 76. 19th century two storey red brick and tiled roof and three original chimneys. Six window range to upper floor. Some windows are original others have been replaced. Four original porches on wooden bracket supports with slate roofs. A replaced porch to no. 68 detracts and emphasises the need to protect remaining original porches. There are decorative dormers with vertical wooden detailing above windows to first floor.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1



Picture 1.11 Late C19 cottages with original porches

1.139 Nos. 60 – 66. Late 19th/early 20th century two storey red brick with decorative banding with tiled roof and two substantial chimneystacks. Four dormers in roof and four window range with many original windows and some replacements. Porches added later to nos.62 – 64 detract however.

1.140 Nos. 54 – 56. A pair of simple 19th century red brick two storey cottages with slate roof and chimneys. Four window range, replaced windows. Two bay windows and two recessed doorways with brick arches. Despite window replacement the pair is considered worthy of inclusion by a narrow margin.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

1.141 Nos. 48 – 50. Late 19th/early 20th century two storey render with tiled roof and two decorative chimneys. Decorative vertical wooden detailing to front. Four window range, some original some replacements. Dormers to two central windows at first floor and an original porch with tiled roof to front.

1.142 Building adjacent and attached to no.40, a listed building. This building is currently being converted along with its listed neighbour to which it is physically attached. It is 19th century red brick with decorative banding and two plaques, one dated 1893 and the other with the initials C.W.C. Original lintels, cills, decorative banding and windows.

1.143 Nos.38 – 38a, a commercial range. Late 19th/ early 20th century tall two storey group with gault brick to ground floor and render with decorative wooden detailing to first floor and two dormers. Six original window range and two bay windows to ground floor.

1.144 Block of commercial properties north of Stansted Mountfitchet Social club consisting of café, Kings Butchers and Elsenham Taxis. 19th century two storey brick with tiled and slate roof and two chimneys. Six window range with stone quoins and surrounds to upper windows. There are two decorative barge boards. There is also a single storey brick with tiled roof to the rear of Elsenham Taxis with a small later addition that slightly detracts. The shop awnings and displays add character.

1.145 No. 12, Stansted Mountfitchet Social Club. 19th century red brick very tall building with decorative brick banding, tiled roof and original windows, some with original decorative glass. Rubbed brick lintels are fine. Vertical hung tiling and unusual protruding window to southern elevation. There is a prominent rendered façade with wooden detailing surmounted by a slate tower with decorative ironwork and weathervane that makes this an important landmark building.

1.146 No. 10 is a two storey residence attached to the Social Club displaying some similar architectural features and has a tiled porch and large decorative chimney. Replaced windows detract. Railings, some in need of repair enclose both properties, nos. 10 - 12.

1.147 Stansted Mountfitchet Castle site. The importance of this Scheduled Ancient Monument and its history, a fragment of which is also a listed building, has been mentioned earlier. Its presence dominates this part of the community. In the late 20th century the site has been developed as a tourist attraction and is very popular with school parties from many parts of the country and has won a number of tourist awards. Clearly the displays and exhibits (including archery, hawking, milling, a ducking stool, a gibbet, a catapult, stocks, gallows, church etc) generally built in wood and thatch, bear little resemblance to what once existed on the site. Whether or not consent would be forthcoming in today's climate where greater accuracy might reasonably be expected remains to be tested. However the current displays are all reversible without damage to the real importance of the site and what may lie beneath it. The exhibits do provide a young visitor's general insight into the more colourful aspects of life in the early medieval times and in this respect many would consider the site to be instructive in this respect.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

Grove Hill.



Picture 1.12 Grove Hill, circa 1914

1.148 Nos. 7 – 27. Three groups of late 19th century cottages of red brick construction with tiled roofs and original chimneystacks. Some original steps. Vertical wooden detailing to dormers. All original porches. A length of flint wall capped with half round brick defines curtilage of nos. 7 – 9. Despite large numbers of replacement windows, these cottages with their porches are very representative of the period and are an interesting element of the community's historic building stock.

Station Road.

1.149 Eddie Ho Fish and Chips and China Garden. A late 19th century two storey decorative red brick building with tiled roof and two chimneys, in commercial use. There is decorative pediment detailing to doors and at first floor above main entrance. Windows are generally original including ground floor shop windows. Large metal tube associated with the restaurant attached to side elevation detracts.

1.150 Station House. Two storey 19th century red brick and slate roof. Gault brick quoins and window surrounds. Original windows and small bay window. Metal security fixtures to ground floor windows detract.

1.151 Station canopies. Two canopies are supported by two decorative arched supports and 13 decorative iron columns, 4 to north side and 9 to south. These are part of the historical and industrial heritage of the town built in association with the railway in the 19th century.

1 Part 1 - Appraisal



Picture 1.13 The War Memorial and St Johns Church

1.152 Important trees and open spaces. The war memorial site is an important open space the central feature of which is the memorial itself, constructed of white stone. Simple railings to the Chapel Hill street frontage enclose the site. Internally there are seats, flowerbeds and structure planting that lack overall cohesion. There is also a confusion of notices. It is considered that the site would benefit from rationalisation and the introduction of a greater sense of formality and planting, particularly on the eastern and western boundaries. It is considered that such an approach would increase the sense of dignity, necessary in such locations. The council would prepare such a landscaping scheme if requested. One solution would be to define the edges with yew hedging whilst maintaining the view of the church

1.153 St. John's churchyard, although small is an important open space, accessible to the public with several important trees and quality obscured railings to St. John's Road.

1.154 The small but interesting churchyard to the front of the Stansted Free Church contains a number of late 19th and early to mid 20th century gravestones of historical interest. The site lacks boundary definition and would benefit from a simple landscaping solution that the council would prepare if requested. The approach steps and their poor quality 'retaining wall' would benefit from improvements.

Part 1 - Appraisal 1

1.155 Important views. The general openness of the war memorial site provides an excellent view of St. John's church nearby whilst the Castle mound is highly visible from the Lower Street public car park.

1.156 Scheduled Ancient Monument. This consists of a ringwork and associated bailey on which a keep would have originally existed. The owner joined the baronial opposition to King John who reacted swiftly by destroying many of his opponent's castles, including this one. The existing buildings, previously described, are excluded from the scheduling. The undisturbed earthworks will retain important archaeological evidence that hopefully will be properly investigated in the future.

1.157 Detracting elements. The low-slung building with asbestos roof and boarded windows forming part of the Peter Kirk school site is particularly detracting. To a lesser extent similar comments apply to dilapidated fencing elsewhere on the site.

1.158 The approach steps and existing boundary to Stansted Free Church detract from this area that could be improved with minimum effort and expense and where the repair of an original door would be beneficial.



Picture 1.14 Detracting signs and clutter, Lower Street

1 Part 1 - Appraisal

1.159 In the general vicinity of no.27 Lower Street an amalgam of signs affixed to a wall, freestanding signs and mirror products together with litter bin and seat make this a discordant element in the conservation area. The need to promote local commerce is properly recognised but this area would benefit by rationalising advertisements and associated displays.

1.160 A number of slates missing from Essex County Council's Youth centre detract from the quality of this fine building.

1.161 There are two ugly runs of poor quality fencing, one forming the boundary to no 40 Lower Street on the Grove Hill boundary and the other to the eastern boundary of the property corner of Woodfields and Chapel Hill.

1.162 Broken railings to the front of the Stansted Mountfitchet Social Club are in need of repair. Also in this area there is a profusion of signs and redundant pole in need of rationalisation and also a Telephone kiosk with royal crown in need of some glass replacement.

Proposed boundary revisions.

1.163 A small area of residential dwellings at Woodfields is suggested to be excluded from the conservation area. The dwellings have been altered by a combination of render and painting and the insertion of modern windows and doors and satellite dishes. The new boundary represents a more 'natural break' between Chapel Hill and Woodfields.

1.164 Nos. 78 – 84 Lower Street are located to the rear of the street frontage and other properties that abut it. These mid 20th century buildings contribute little in terms of historical or visual interest to the street scene and are therefore suggested for exclusion.

1.165 Similar comments apply to Castle Walk. With the benefit of hindsight the design of this late 20th century development to the rear of the main street frontage adds little to the historic part of the conservation area and as such is suggested for exclusion. It is to be hoped that emerging economic forces in the area will renew commercial interest in the site resulting in filling the empty retail space.

1.166 The new office block on the western side of Station Road, whilst much better than the garage it replaced, makes insufficient architectural or historical contribution to the conservation area and is recommended for exclusion.

1.167 Conversely it is suggested that the conservation area be extended to include both canopies to the railway station and their 19th century decorative iron supports and columns that are part of the industrial heritage.

Part 2 - Management Proposals 2

Revised Conservation Area Boundary

2.1 The revised boundary is shown on Figure 5. Two small areas are proposed for inclusion. These are (a) land to the rear of the Friends Meeting House with interesting gravestones and (b) part of the railway station to include 19th century decorative supports. Both these items represent interesting architectural, historical and cultural associations with Stansted Mountfitchet. Conversely a considerable number of areas are suggested for exclusion because the land or buildings do not make a sufficient valuable contribution to the conservation area or detract from it. These areas are identified on Figures 2, 3 and 4 and their descriptions can be found in the accompanying appraisal texts for the three character areas. .

General Planning Control and Good Practice in the Conservation Area

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

2.3 Planning applications are currently considered against policies set out in the Uttlesford Local Plan that can be seen on line at [planning @ uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:planning@uttlesford.gov.uk).

2.4 One particularly relevant policy, Policy ENV1 – Design of Development in Conservation areas says 'Development will be permitted 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, 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.

2.5 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.

Potential Redevelopment Sites

2.6 The appraisal has identified two such sites that might be susceptible to development pressures.

2.7 The first, that of the Cock PH adjacent to new high-rise flats, is a modest 19th century building in origin with a large car park. In considering any application, should one materialise, the main issues will be assessing the need for additional cheaper housing close to services and public transport as opposed to retaining the social function of the pub and its remaining architectural heritage. Other issues of concern would be scale and access. This will be a finely balanced consideration and as such the council is very keen to obtain local views.

2 Part 2 - Management Proposals

2.8 The second site is the area of land that forms the former Peter Kirk School. Essentially should an application be received, the Council will require the site be looked at comprehensively and the two 19th century school buildings retained. The extent of development and use of the site will be determined to a considerable degree by the capacity and form of the highway infrastructure and access considerations.

2.9 Before considering any application on either site, the council will require a comprehensive appraisal in which the considerations referred to above are set out in detail.

2.10 Other smaller sites may come forward. One such site with a small (and as such not designated as a potential redevelopment site) area of land to its front is the Youth Centre on Lower Street where an additional building might be possible. The original building is fine and must remain.

Planning Control and Good Practice - Listed Buildings

2.11 There are 52 individually listed buildings and these are shown on Figure 5.

2.12 Policy ENV 2 – 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 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.

2.13 The listed buildings in the conservation area are very different in character, span many centuries and display a wide 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 Councils overall objective is to ensure that proposals accord with the above policy especially in determining scale and in the use of materials. The former must always be subservient whilst the latter should always be of the highest quality and frequently involve the use of second hand materials. A pre-submission discussion with the Council’s Conservation Officer is advised to establish such parameters.

2.14 Welsh slate is a traditional material, particularly on 19th century listed buildings and when it becomes necessary to re-roof such buildings, second hand Welsh slate should normally be used. 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.

Part 2 - Management Proposals 2

Planning Control and Good Practice in respect of other Buildings that make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution

2.15 Policy ENV1 referred to above includes such buildings that are identified on Figure 5. As set out earlier buildings in conservation area cannot be demolished without consent. Because of the important architectural or historic contribution these buildings make to the conservation area, any application involving their demolition will normally be refused.

2.16 Not surprisingly a number of windows have been replaced in some of these buildings by inappropriate modern ones. Similarly some original doors and original open porches have been replaced. Occasionally traditional roofing has been replaced with modern material that is inappropriate. New enclosed porches have also been erected that detract from the architectural and historic importance of some properties and the street scene. It is therefore intended to introduce an additional control to prevent this from happening in the future and the mechanism to achieve this is known as an Article 4 Direction as briefly described previously.

2.17 The council therefore suggests an Article 4(2) direction to remove the right to alter windows and doors, porches and roofing materials on selected dwellings be introduced and appropriate consultation will take place in due course. Additionally it is considered appropriate to control the erection or construction of new porches.

2.18 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 chimneystacks and pots, decorative brickwork and bargeboards will remain unprotected in law. Good practise by responsible owners will be to maintain and retain these features. The Council's Conservation Officer will offer advice on request.

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

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

2.20 Stansted Mountfitchet is fortunate indeed to have the extensive area of the Recreation Ground and the War Memorial in the centre of the village. The areas are identified on Figure 5. Both sites would benefit from a landscaping scheme, appropriate to the different functions of the two sites, being drawn up and implemented. The Council would be prepared to prepare such schemes if requested. It goes without saying that development on either site would be entirely inappropriate and represent a considerable loss.

2.21 The general and diagrammatic locations of trees that make a particular contribution to the conservation area are illustrated on Figure 5. Other trees also contribute to the quality of the street scenes. As noted in the appraisal all trees in the conservation area

2 Part 2 - Management Proposals

(subject to exceptions) are afforded protection, as owners have to notify the council if they wish to undertake works to them. Many trees have been made subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

2.22 Good practise guidance for owners includes making regular inspections of trees to check for dieback and danger in the general interests of amenity and health and safety. The Council's Landscape Officer will offer advice in appropriate circumstances.

Proposed Control of other Distinctive Features that make an Important Visual or Historic Contribution

2.23 As the appraisal has demonstrated there are lengths of quality railings and walls that are distinctive to Stansted Mountfitchet. These, the railings particularly, represent an essential component of the village's cultural heritage and must be protected from demolition. The railings and walls of quality are shown on Figure 5 and can be divided into two categories. Firstly there are those within curtilages of listed buildings where listed building consent will normally be refused for any proposal involving their demolition.

2.24 Secondly there are other walls that are not in the curtilage of a listed building. The council proposes to introduce an Article 4 Direction to remove the right to remove selected railings and walls and appropriate consultation will take place in due course.

Possible Speed Reduction Plan

2.25 The appraisal has noted the excessive traffic speeds along Bentfield Road and Bentfield End Causeway. Before entering into technical discussions with Essex County Highways, the council is very anxious for local resident's feedback.

The Potential Need to Undertake an Archaeological Field Assessment

Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements

2.26 The appraisal has identified the following elements that detract from the qualities of the conservation area. The table below identifies them and proposes a course of action in summary form.

Detracting element	Location	Proposed action
Metal compound of Portakabins	Pond Lane, rear of Bentfield End Causeway.	Establish status and liaise with owner, seeking removal
Crumbling wall	To front of no. 68 Silver Street	Liaise with owner to repair
Commemorative fountain	Silver Street/Chapel Hill	Liaise with Parish Council to seek small repairs and rationalisation and with ECC and others to seek reduction in signage
Cones	25 – 27 Recreation	Liaise with owners seeking removal.

Part 2 - Management Proposals 2

Detracting element	Location	Proposed action
Derelict building	Peter Kirk School site	Liaise with Essex CC to secure removal
Dilapidated fencing	As above	Liaise to seek replacement/ reduce impact
Approach steps and boundary	Stansted Free Church	Liaise with owner to seek improvements
Signs etc	Adjacent 27 Lower Street	Establish status and liaise with owners to reduce impact
Missing slates	Youth Centre, Lower Street	Liaise with Essex CC and seek necessary repairs
Broken railings and confusion of signs etc	Near Stansted Mountfitchet Social Club	Liaise with owners to repair railings and with others to reduce impact of signs etc and repair glass to telephone kiosk
Poor quality fencing	Grove Hill boundary of no.40 Lower Street	Liaise with owners to secure improvements
Poor quality fencing	Corner of Woodfields and Chapel Hill	As above

Maps 3

Character Analysis Key

CHARACTER ANALYSIS KEY

-  Existing Conservation Area boundary
- PR** Potential sites for comprehensive development
-  Individually Listed Buildings
-  Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the conservation area
-  Scheduled Ancient Monuments
-  Important Open Spaces
-  Important Trees
- Other distinctive features that make an important visual or historic contribution:**
 -  Walls
 -  Railings
 -  commemorative obelisk
 -  telephone box
-  Important views
- D** Detracting elements
- Proposed boundary revisions to the Conservation Area:**
 -  Include additional area
 -  Exclude existing area
- SPEED** Possible speed reduction plan

3 Maps

Fig.2 - Area 1

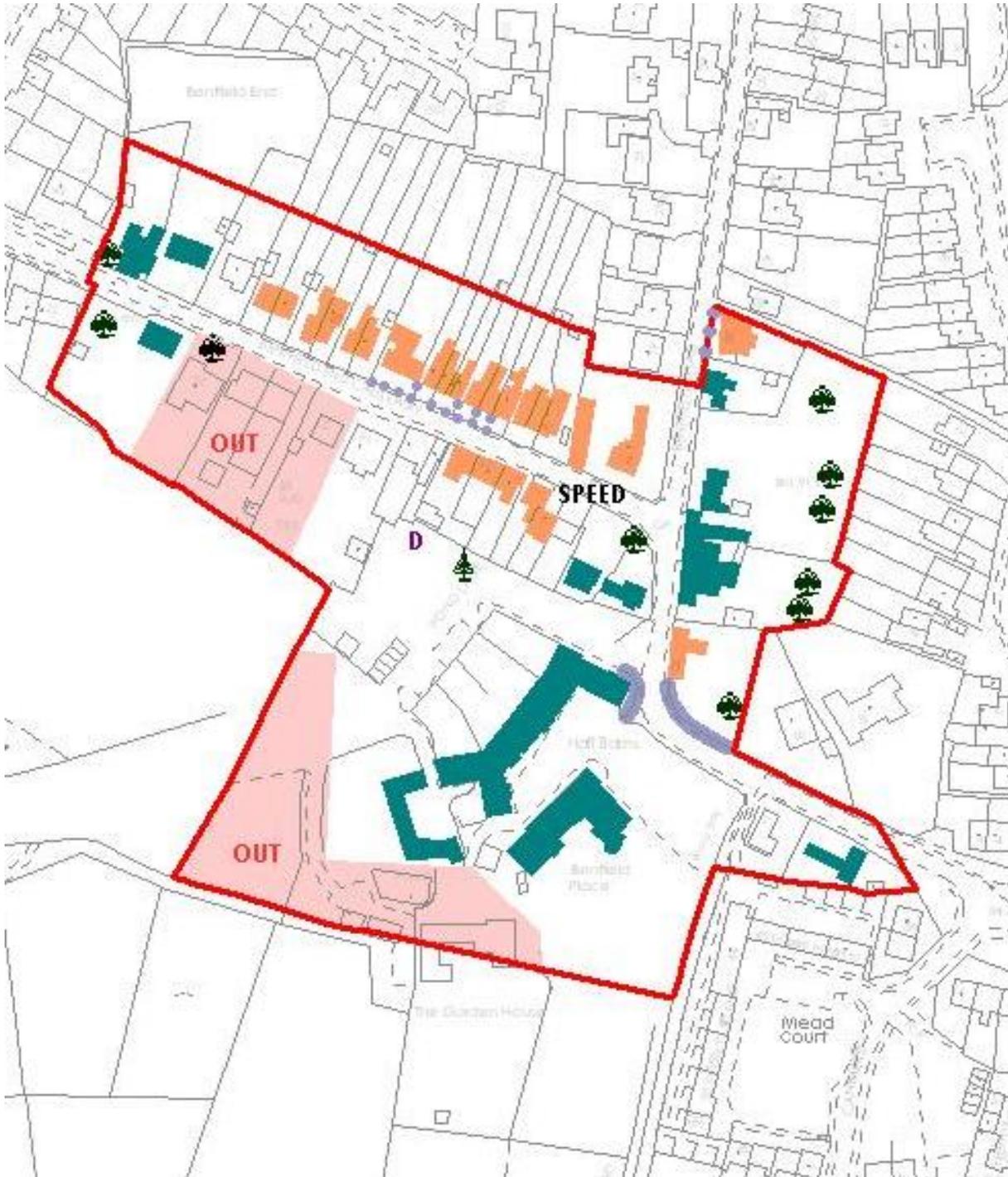


Figure 3.2 Area 1

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the Permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Uttlesford District Council Licence No: 1000018688(2006)

Maps 3

Fig.3 - Area 2

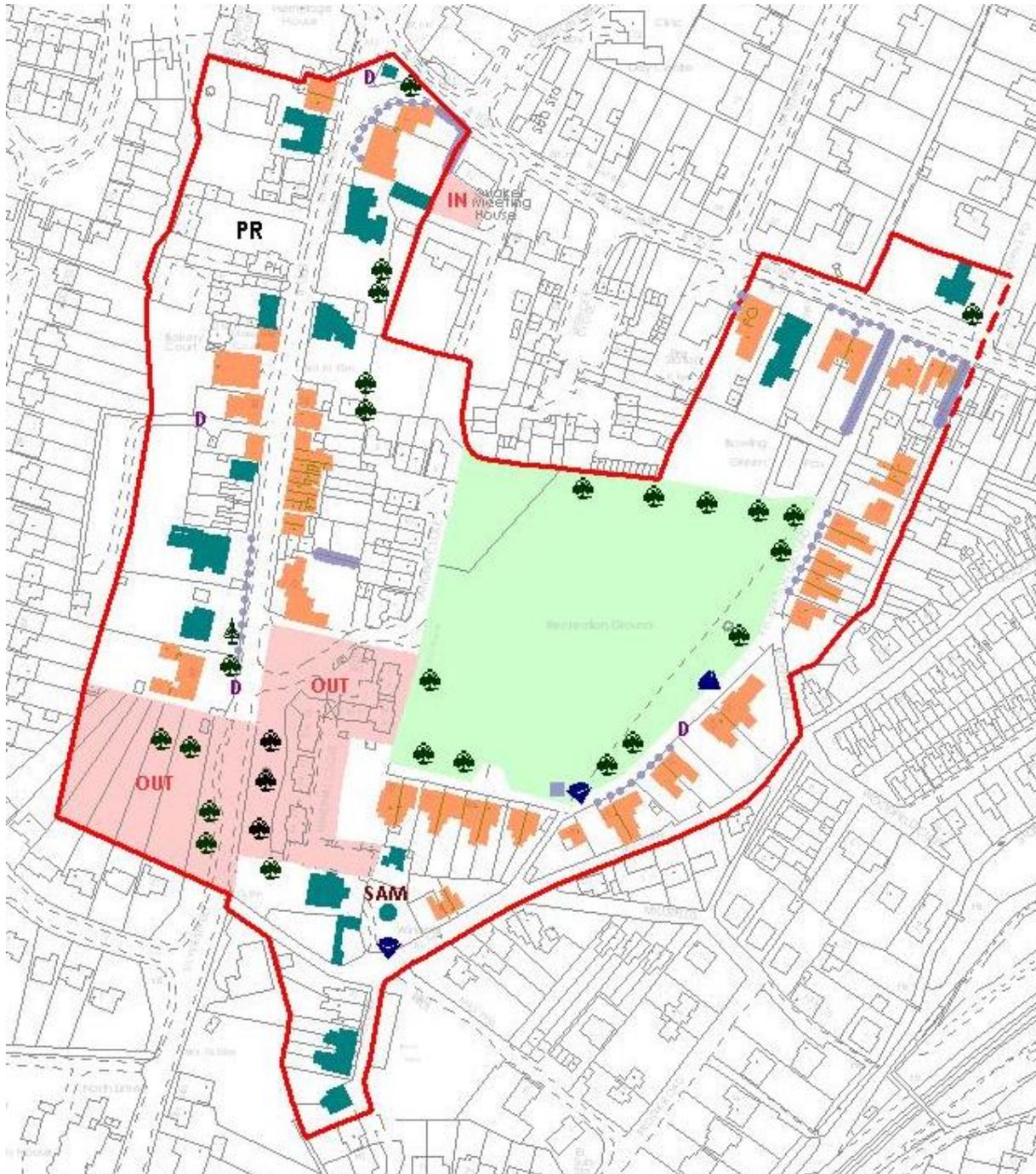


Figure 3.3 Area 2

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the Permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Uttlesford District Council Licence No: 1000018688(2006)

3 Maps

Fig.4 - Area 3

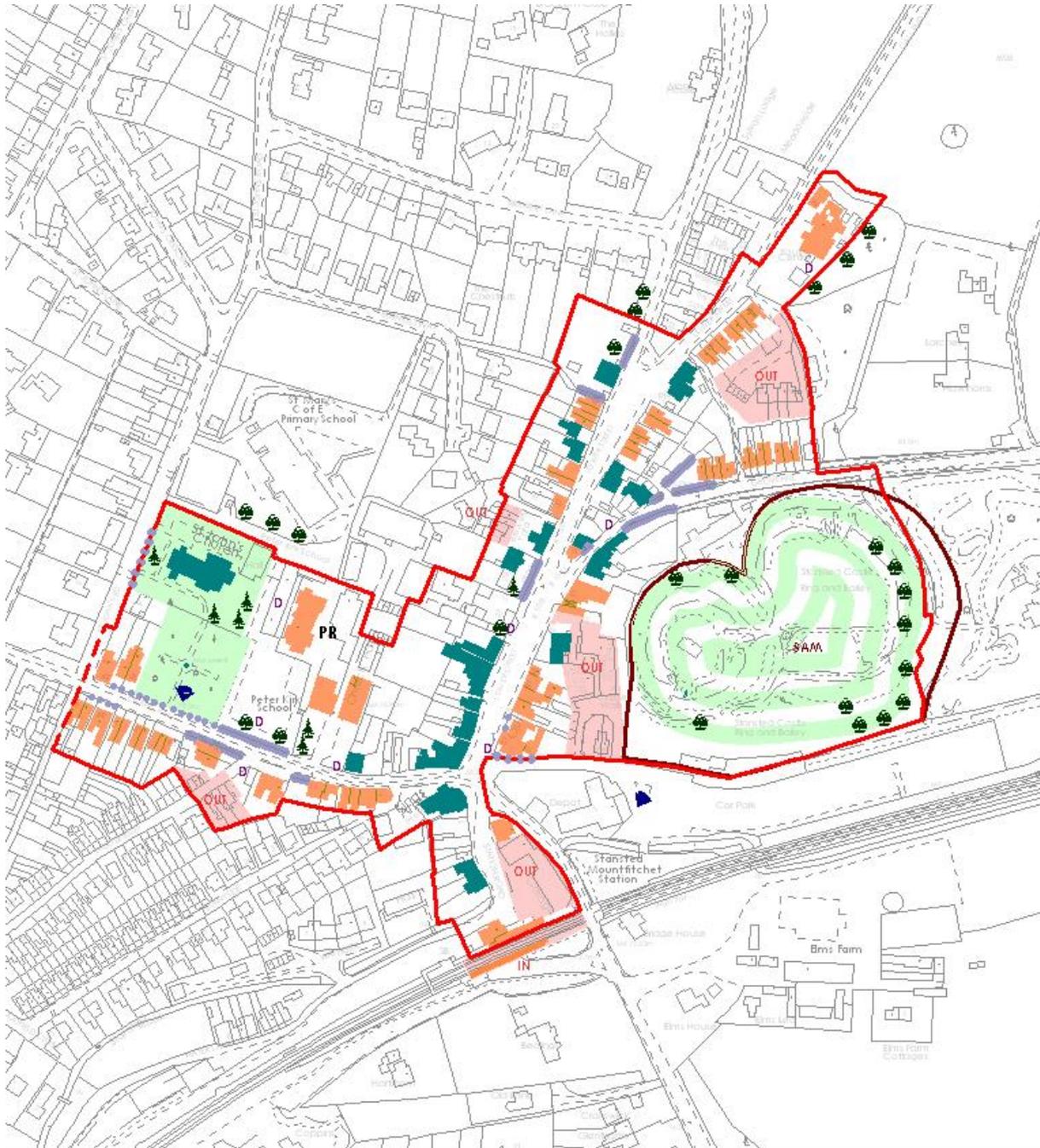


Figure 3.4 Area 3

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the Permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Uttlesford District Council Licence No: 1000018688(2006)

Maps 3

Management Plan Key

MANAGEMENT PLAN KEY



Revised conservation area boundary, adopted Policy ENV 1 applies

PR

Possible comprehensive redevelopment sites



Listed Buildings, adopted Policy ENV 2 applies



Other buildings to be protected from demolition, see policy ENV 1. Additional controls to be introduced for selected buildings



Important open spaces protected from development, adopted Policy ENV 3 applies



General location of important trees/groups of trees



Walls

Other distinctive features to be protected from demolition within parameters of planning law.



Railings

Additional controls to be introduced for selected walls and railings



Obelisk



Telephone box

E

Proposed enhancements

SPEED

REDUCTION

Possible Speed Reduction Plan



Scheduled Ancient Monuments

3 Maps

Fig.5 - Management Plan

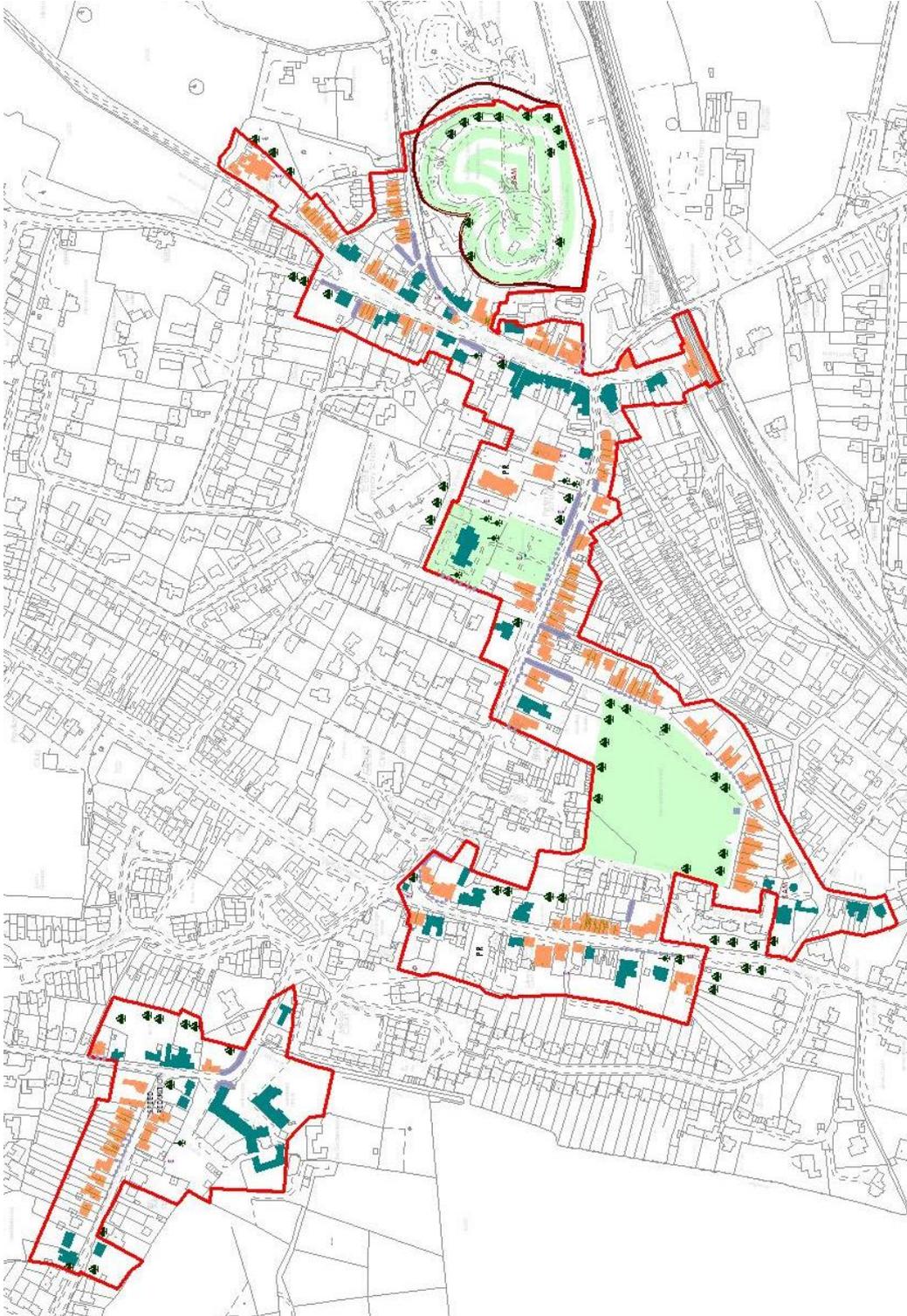


Figure 3.5 Management Plan

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the Permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Uttlesford District Council Licence No: 1000018688(2006)