

Great Easton Conservation Area Appraisal and
Management Proposals, Approved June 2014



Contents

1 Part 1: Appraisal	3
Introduction	3
Planning Legislative Framework	4
Planning Policy Framework	6
The General Character and Setting of Great Easton	7
Origins and Historic Development	9
Character Analysis	11
Great Easton village	14
1 Part 2 - Management Proposals	29
Revised Conservation Area Boundary	29
Planning Controls and Good Practice: The Conservation Area	29
Planning Controls and Good Practice: The Potential Need to Undertake an Archaeological Field Assessment	29
Planning Control and Good Practice: Listed Buildings	29
Planning Controls and Good Practice: Other Buildings that Make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution	29
Planning Controls and Good Practice: Other Distinctive Features that Make an Important Architectural or Historic Contribution	30
Planning Control and Good Practice: Important Open Spaces, Trees and Groups of Trees	30
Proposed Controls: Other Distinctive Features that make an Important Visual or Historic Contribution	30
Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements	31
1 Maps	32
Figure 1 - 1877 Ordnance Survey Map	32
Fig 2 - Character Analysis	33
Character Analysis Key	34
Figure 3 - Management Plan	35
Management Plan Key	36
1 Appendices	37
Appendix 1 - Sources	37

Part 1: Appraisal 1

Introduction

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

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

1.3 Uttlesford has a particularly rich built heritage, with 36 Conservation Areas and approximately 3,700 listed buildings displaying a variety of styles representative of the best of architectural and historic designs from many centuries. Generally and very importantly the clear distinction between built form and open countryside has been maintained.

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

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

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

1 Part 1: Appraisal

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

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

1.9 This Conservation Appraisal will:

- Identify the special character of Great Easton
- Identify detracting elements
- Review the existing boundary
- Put forward practical enhancement proposals

1.10 The document has been prepared in partnership with the local community and the Council would like to record its thanks to the Parish Council.

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

Planning Legislative Framework

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

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

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

1.15 From October 2013 planning permission is now required for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area but is subject to certain exceptions. For example, it does not apply to Listed Buildings which are protected by their own legislation but is

Part 1: Appraisal 1

relevant to other non listed buildings in the Conservation Area above a threshold size set out in legislation (115 cubic metres). Looking for and identifying such buildings is therefore a priority of this Appraisal.

1.16 Another exception relates to certain ecclesiastical buildings which are not subject to local authority administration provided an equivalent approved system of control is operated by the church authority. This is known as the 'ecclesiastical exemption'. Importantly in such circumstances, church authorities still need to obtain any other necessary planning permissions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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

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

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

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

1 Part 1: Appraisal

Planning Policy Framework

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

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

1.23 The new National Planning Policy Framework advises as follows:

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

Part 1: Appraisal 1

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

1.25 The Uttlesford Local Plan was adopted in 2005 and can be viewed on the Council's website⁽¹⁾ or a copy can be obtained from the Council. In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is currently preparing a replacement Local Plan that will, in due course, contain the relevant Council planning policies.

1.26 The Great Easton Inset of the Uttlesford Local Plan shows the existing Conservation Area and the Development Limits. Also shown is the important Scheduled Ancient Monument to the east of Great Easton Hall (described later in this document) and 'Protected Lanes' abutting the western extremity of the Conservation Area at Cox Hill.

1.27 Essex County Council Buildings at Risk Register. The County Council has a 'Buildings at Risk Register'. In relation to the latter document, it has not identified any such buildings within the Parish. Similarly this appraisal has not identified any such Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area as being potentially 'At Risk'.

1.28 Assets of Community Value. One Asset of Community Value is registered in relation to Great Easton and Tilty, this being the Great Easton playing field which is situated just beyond the Conservation Area boundary at its western extent.

1.29 Great Easton Conservation Area date of designation. The revised Conservation Area boundary was designated in 1978.

The General Character and Setting of Great Easton

1.30 Setting. Great Easton is a rural community in open countryside to the north of, and relatively close to, the expanding market town of Great Dunmow. The Conservation Area lies to west of the B184 the principal access between Great Dunmow and Saffron Walden.

1.31 In the Parish there are 48 Listed Buildings or groups of Listed Buildings whilst in the existing Conservation Area itself there are 16 Listed Buildings.

1.32 General character and plan form. Of the above 16 Listed Buildings/groups of buildings identified on the English Heritage list, all but two are designated Grade II. The exceptions are the Grade II* church of St John and St Giles and the Grade II* property, 'Bridgefoot' near the River Chelmer towards the western end of the Conservation Area. About 20% of the Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area date from the 14th century

1 <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/localplan>

1 Part 1: Appraisal

with the same percentage from the 15th, 16th and 19th centuries. The 12th, 17th and 20th centuries are also represented; the latter 20th century building being The Garth, described as formerly having been a children's home.

1.33 There are several unlisted buildings of architectural and historic interest that add to Great Easton's overall quality which are described later in the document.

1.34 Within the Conservation Area, the central open spaces consisting of the churchyard and the small triangular green and grassed areas nearby, jointly provide the focal point for the main part of the historic core and a setting for the Grade II* church and the many important Listed Buildings grouped around.

1.35 The River Chelmer cuts through the western end of the Conservation Area. Here where the road crosses the river there are views along the gently meandering valley floodplain, which are framed in places by small patches of woodland. A large grassy recreation ground, outside the Conservation Area, bordering the water provides a valued local facility.

1.36 The historic core of the Conservation Area represents groupings of buildings of diverse architectural and historic interest. The presence of an important Scheduled Ancient Monument, open spaces and mature trees and hedgerows add to its historic and visual qualities. The high quality of the Conservation Area warrants its formal designation, notwithstanding the presence of a deteriorating and untidy builder's yard adjacent to Brocks Mead. However the impact of the latter on the Conservation Area is reduced by a frontage hedge.



Picture 1.1 Great Easton as shown on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Town Library)

Part 1: Appraisal 1

Origins and Historic Development

1.37 Historical background data has been extracted principally from the *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report*⁽²⁾ and the *Essex Historic Environment Record (HER)*⁽³⁾.

1.38 Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval. The *Uttlesford Environment Characterisation Project* of 2009 advises that the historic settlement pattern of this area "comprises the village of Great Easton, smaller hamlets, such as Duton End [sic], dispersed church/hall complexes, manors, moats and dispersed farmsteads. Great Easton is centred on its Norman motte, which is scheduled, and the adjacent listed church; the motte is located on the southern side of a small green, whilst the church appears to have been sited on the green itself. Little excavation has been undertaken within this zone. Evidence of prehistoric occupation is indicated from some of the cropmarks and field names. Evidence of Roman occupation is very limited; however, a Roman cup is recorded at Tilty. A Motte and Bailey Castle is located at Little Easton, now protected as a Scheduled Monument. During the medieval period the settlement pattern comprised church/hall complexes, moats, manors and dispersed farmsteads".

1.39 A flavour of the hierarchy of ownership and society shortly after the Norman Conquest is set out in *A History of the County of Essex, Victoria History of the Counties of England* 1903, which describes the Domesday Book entry thus:

The Land of William de Warrena:

Estanes (Great Easton, i.e. the manor of Blamsters) was held in King Edward's time, by Duna, a free woman, as a manor and as 2 hides. Now William holds it in demesne. Then as now 2 ploughs on the demesne. Then 4 ploughs belonging to the men; now 2. Then as now 4 villeins. Then 3 bordars; now 8. Then 3 serfs, now 2. Then woodland for 200 swine; now 150. 52 acres of meadow. Then 1 rouncey, and 7 beasts and 60 swine, and 60 sheep. Now 1 rouncey, 23 beasts, 20 swine, 70 sheep, 4 hives of bees. It is worth 100 shillings.

And the land of Mathew of Mortagne:

Estanes (Great Easton) which was held by Achi, a free man, as a manor and as 5 hides in King Edward's time is held by Mathew in demesne. Then 5 ploughs on the demesne, and when he received it, 4; now 3. Then 10 ploughs belonging to the men; now 7. Then 11 villeins, and 1 priest; now 15 villeins and 1 priest. Then 10 bordars; now 16. Then 10 serfs, now 9. Woodland then for 200 swine; now for 150. 67 acres of meadow, then as now 1 mill, and 1 rouncey, and 8 beasts, and 120 swine, and 60 sheep, and 10 goats, and 3 hives of bees. It was then worth 10 pounds; and when received, the same; it is now worth 15 pounds.

2 *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report*, Essex County Council, 2009

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

1 Part 1: Appraisal

Glossary of terms: A 'Hide' was a standard unit of land measurement interpreted to be about 120 acres. A 'villein' was a peasant legally tied to land he worked on; a 'bordar' was similar to a villein who rendered service for his cottage') a serf occupied a low position of bondage approaching slavery. 'Demesne' essentially means land belonging to the lord of the manor.

1.40 Post Medieval. In Victorian times, *Kelly's Post Office Directory for Essex, 1878*,⁽⁴⁾ describes Great Easton as being "an ancient village and parish...The church of St John is an ancient structure, built chiefly of flint...Miss Maynard is Lady of the Manor and as heiress to the late Viscount Maynard, principal landowner. The soil is various. The chief crops are wheat, barley and oats ...and the population in 1871 was 931".

1.41 In addition to the farmers the same Directory lists the following commercial activities: shopkeeper, beer retailers (3) hurdle and rake maker, carpenter (2), bricklayer, shoemaker, blacksmith (2), basket maker, butcher, farmer and miller.



Picture 1.2 The Swan, Great Easton, as shown in an early 20th century postcard. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

1.42 During the Second World War the River Chelmer formed part of the General Headquarters Defence line and many of the monuments associated with this survive within the zone. The area around Easton Lodge was also used as off-site storage and buildings associated with the Second World War Airfield of Little Easton.

1.43 *The Place Names of Essex* by Reaney⁽⁵⁾ advises of a selection of the following names: (Great and Little East): Eistanes, Estanes (1086), Eyston (1219), Estane (1235), Extanis (1280), est Stanes at the Hyll (1518). The name possibly derives from 'Aega's stone'.

1.44 The existing Conservation Area boundary is plotted on late 19th century mapping at Figure 1. It shows The Mount (site of the scheduled ancient monument), a School (Girls) just beyond the Conservation Area boundary on what is now the site of the Village

4 *The Post Office Directory of Essex* Edited by E. R. Kelly, London: Printed and Published by Kelly and Co. 1878

5 REANEY (Percy Hyde) *The Place Names of Essex*, Cambridge University Press, 1935

Part 1: Appraisal 1

Hall, another school (on the site of The Garth?), The Bell PH, a Post Office and a Smithy beyond the Conservation Area at Cox Hill. Also what are interpreted as being two sites of allotment gardens are shown, one named Gunn's Field to the east and the other at Cox Hill. There is also a small gravel pit opposite The Mount.

Character Analysis

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

1.46 Non-listed buildings of quality and worthy of protection from demolition. This Appraisal has identified a small number of non listed buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area. The basic questions asked in identifying such buildings/structures are:

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

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

1.48 Lime render, either finished plain or with pargetted decoration is the predominant finish at the historic core of the village where buildings are most commonly constructed from oak timber frame. Bricks, used for principal construction from the eighteenth century, are handmade reds, occasionally with black stock brick detailing. Other features such as flintwork panels and applied moulded window copings are typically found on better quality buildings dating from the 19th and early 20th century, such as Stone Cottage. Brickwork is most commonly found in Flemish bond although English bond is also used on earlier buildings or garden walls. Barns and outbuildings are usually constructed in timber frame with feather edge weatherboarding which was historically preserved with black pitch, though now most often painted black.

1.49 In the historic core buildings roofs are sometimes of double cambered handmade red clay plain tiles or for 19th century and later additions, natural blue-grey slate. Clay pantiles are usually confined to outbuildings only.

1 Part 1: Appraisal

1.50 Windows are largely traditional, in single glazed painted timber, with either symmetrical flush or recessed casements, vertical or horizontally sliding sashes. Although UPVC windows are to be found on a number of later properties, surprisingly few historic houses have been assailed by this blight. Where replacement windows are in evidence they are usually good copies of the original or are in period style.

1.51 Roofscapes provide a rich variety of architectural detail, form and shape. Interest is drawn from the single or multiple red brick chimney stacks, some of very elaborate design. On low 1 ½ storey cottages dormer windows penetrate the roofline where they typically provide contour and interest. On grander buildings smaller pitched roof dormers are typically narrow openings sometimes partly concealed behind a parapet. Decorative barge boards, pierced and elaborately carved are a feature of some of the Maynard Estate cottages. These buildings are often identifiable by the incorporation of a monogrammed plaque into the front elevation.

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

1.53 Trees and Hedgerows. There are trees that contribute to the quality of the Conservation Area. The basic criteria for identifying such important trees are:

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

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

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

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

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

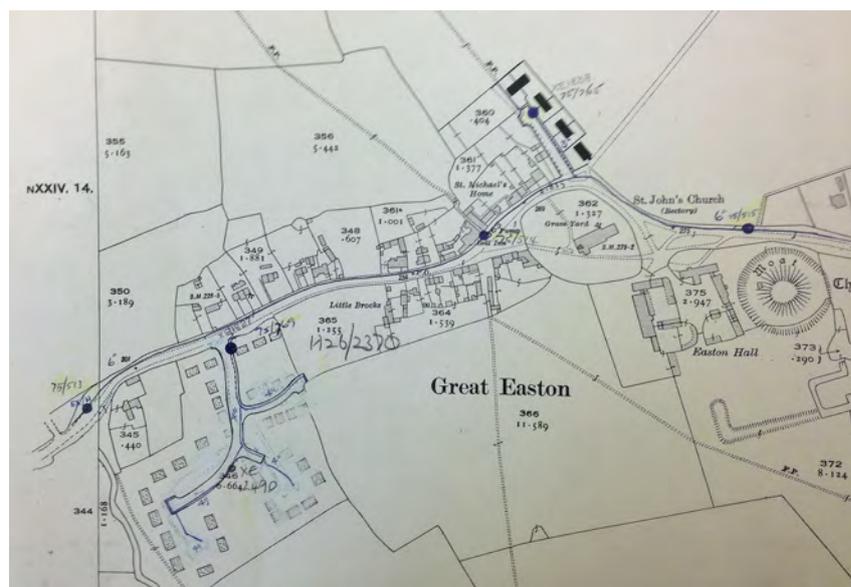
1.57 Article 4 Directions. Reference has previously been made to the potential of introducing Article 4 Directions in justified circumstances and the criteria for their selection in relation to features associated with selected non listed properties is as follows:

- In relation to retention of chimneys, these need to be in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property, prominent in the street scene and

Part 1: Appraisal 1

generally complete with chimney pots. Exceptionally chimney stacks of particular architectural merit without pots may be selected.

- In relation to retention of selected windows, these need to be on front or side elevations, fronting and visible from the street/s, contemporary with the age of the property and where the majority of windows of respective elevations retain their original characteristics and have not been replaced by modern glazing units.
- In relation to retention of walls or railings, those selected need to be below the prescribed heights (walls including a footpath or bridleway, water course or open space 1m fronting a highway or 2m elsewhere require prior consent for their demolition), be prominent in the street scene and make a positive architectural or historic contribution to its visual appearance.
- In relation to retention of other features, these may include good quality architectural detailing to non-listed buildings, constructed of wood, metal or other materials.
- It may also be appropriate to introduce Article 4 Directions to retain quality buildings below the prescribed threshold where consent for demolition is not required or to prevent the erection of inappropriate additions such as porches to terraced properties of historic interest.



Picture 1.3 Great Easton as shown on the Ordnance Survey of 1921. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Town Library)

1.58 Detracting elements. Any features that detract or are in poor repair and any proposed enhancements will be identified and appear in summary form in the Table set out in Part 2.

1.59 Important views. Such views are identified and are briefly described.

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

1 Part 1: Appraisal

Great Easton village

1.61 General overview. Entrance to the village from the B184 is by a pleasant lane, tree lined road with occasional glimpses of the gently sloping fields at either side. The historic church of St John and St Giles is the first building. Great Easton Conservation Area is a linear grouping of buildings and structures of architectural and historic importance that can be divided into three groupings. Firstly there is the area in the east, centred on the Scheduled Ancient Monument, Easton Hall and the parish church; secondly there is a grouping of buildings of historic and architectural interest (some listed, others not), centrally grouped around the War Memorial and extending on north side of The Endway; thirdly the separate grouping of Listed Buildings close to the River Chelmer. The modern developments of Brocks Mead and housing opposite this estate lies beyond the Conservation Area. A large builder's yard adjacent to Brocks Mead is currently within the Conservation Area and is an unattractive and untidy site.

1.62 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Great Easton Motte Castle. (The following description is an abbreviated version of the scheduling text). "*Motte castles are medieval fortifications introduced into Britain by the Normans. They comprised a large conical mound of earth or rubble, the motte, surmounted by a palisade and a stone or timber tower. In a majority of examples an embanked enclosure containing additional buildings, the bailey, adjoined the motte...*



Picture 1.4 Great Easton Motte. Excavation has indicated that this was built during the period of civil war 1139-44 known as 'The Anarchy', a period which saw the construction of numerous small fortifications in the region to protect manorial lands from hostile factions, a problem which became increasing acute after the Earl of Essex, Geoffrey de Mandeville, rebelled against the king in 1143. The area to the south may contain evidence of a small manorial complex believed to have continued in use until the 15th century. Surrounded and surmounted with trees this important structure is visually very attractive.

Part 1: Appraisal 1

1.63 *"The medieval motte castle at Great Easton is very well preserved. Despite some later disturbance, the summit of the mound will retain buried evidence for the structures which stood there, and the undisturbed silts contained within the surrounding ditch will contain both artefacts and environmental evidence related to the period of occupation. The old ground surface buried beneath the mound is particularly significant as it will retain further evidence of activity on the site preceding the castle's construction which was indicated by the discovery of an earlier ditch immediately to the south of the mound in 1965. Excavation has indicated that the motte castle was ...built during the period of civil war 1139-44 known as 'The Anarchy'. This period saw the construction of numerous small fortifications in the region to protect manorial lands from hostile factions, a problem which became increasingly acute after the Earl of Essex, Geoffrey de Mandeville, rebelled against the king in 1143. Great Easton castle and other surviving fortifications from this period illustrate the response of the nobility to this period of unrest, and provide insights into the localised nature of medieval warfare...The castle mound, or motte, is approximately 6.4m high and roughly conical in shape, measuring 35m in diameter at the base and 13m across the flattened summit. Buried indications of the timber palisade and keep which would have crowned the summit are thought to survive. Further excavations in the area immediately to the south of the castle revealed the remains of a small manorial complex, which immediately post-dated the civil wars and continued in use until the 15th century; these features were subsequently damaged by ploughing and are not included in the scheduling ..."*⁽⁶⁾.

1.64 Archaeological sites. The field in part to the south of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) is an archaeological site where Bronze Age pottery, Roman pottery and Saxon (?) pottery have been found. Within this area and lying within the Conservation Area is the site of a small manorial complex as previously identified in the SAM description.

1.65 The church and churchyard is an archaeological site relating to Saxon and subsequent churches. A Roman tile was found here.

1.66 Not all sites are of equal importance and the Council will decide a course of action that may vary from archaeological investigation and recording to protecting such sites from development, when determining planning applications. There will generally be a presumption in favour of preservation in situ.

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

1.68 The Garth, The Endway – Grade II. Former children's home, early 20th century, rendered brick with peg tile roofs. Long, 2 storey range, parallel with the street, with one storey and attics, 'cross-wing' at west end, possibly originally three cottages. Front has large, semi-circular bay, containing spiral stairs. It was previously owned by the Countess of Warwick and its name would suggest some ecclesiastical association.

6 Source: English Heritage schedule description - Scheduled Monument 1017468: Great Easton motte castle

1 Part 1: Appraisal



Picture 1.5 The Garth, a distinctive 20th century Listed Building in a prominent position, described as once having been a convent. Is there any additional local information on this subject?

1.69 The Bell - Grade II. Former public house, early 16th century 2 storey timber framed and plastered house with peg tile roof. There is a 1½ storey gabled brewhouse extension on west end and a long, hipped rear extension in clay peg tiles with lean-to at the end. At the rear is a cast iron yard pump.

Part 1: Appraisal 1



Picture 1.6 The Bell, dating from the early 15th century and used until recently as a public house.

1.70 Church of St John and St Giles – Grade II*. Church, probable early 12th to 13th century and restored in the 19th century. Built of flint and pebble rubble with lacing courses of roman tile and dressings of limestone and clunch. North and gabled peg tile roof. The chancel is 13th century with 2 repaired lancet windows and a 19th century east window of 3 lancet lights. The nave is of supposed 12th century origin with 4 blank round arched recesses in the east part, the remains of a probable crossing tower. The south doorway is early 12th century. The south wall has 3 windows - a 14th century window, a 16th century 2 light window and a blocked 12th century light high in the wall. The 7-cant roofs over nave and chancel are 19th century. At the west end is a red brick early 19th century bell tower mounted on the original W wall and with a contemporary brick supporting wall.

1 Part 1: Appraisal



Picture 1.7 The Grade II* Church of St John and St Giles, graded at this level for its architectural, historic, topographical and townscape value.

1.71 Croys Grange – Grade II. House, late 16th century and mid 19th century timber framed, with external plaster with ground floor partly encased in red brick. Gabled peg tile roofs. The rear has remnants of 2 stair towers and a 19th century gabled 2 storey extension. Front is 19th century, refaced with ground floor red bricks and imitation timber framing.



Picture 1.8 Croys Grange an impressive building near the River Chelmer whose front is 19th century with imitation timber framing.

Part 1: Appraisal 1

1.72 Great Easton Hall - Grade II. 15th and 16th century, timber framed and plastered. Main block has gabled peg tile roof. Two diagonal shafted red brick stacks, both rebuilt. Front has 19th century gabled porch with decorative bargeboards. Windows are a mixture of some old casements and 19th century casements with glazing bars in moulded surrounds. The RCHME⁽⁷⁾ records that the interior has remains of crown post roofs and a late mediaeval doorhead. Moated site with Mound and Bailey castle (see above).



Picture 1.9 Stone Cottage a fine 19th century Listed Building whose style and materials adds interest and diversity to the street scene.

1.73 Stone Cottage, The Endway – Grade II. Cottage, dated 1822 on stone plaque on east wall. 2 storeys of flint with red brick dressings and low pitched, gabled slate roof. Central front door, with casement windows either side, with straight pointed arches over. Above the front door, a boulder with central circular hole and a six sided window with radial glazing bars.

7 RCHME. *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Essex, Volume 1: North West* (1916), pp. 125-128

1 Part 1: Appraisal



Picture 1.10 Essex House dating from the 16th century, occupies a prominent and important location.

1.74 Essex House, The Endway – Grade II. Mid 16th century, timber framed and plastered of 2 storeys with a gabled peg tile roof. A 'long-wall-jetty' house with externally exposed timber frame. Timber frame and bracing is remarkably complete.



Picture 1.11 Essex House is just visible across the green in this early 20th century postcard view. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum)

Part 1: Appraisal 1

1.75 Easton Hall Cottage – Grade II. Semi-detached cottages mid 19th century, 2 storeys and of red brick, with half hipped peg tile roof. Central circular plaque, with a coronet and initial letter 'M'. *This denotes the Maynard family - see reference set out in extract from Post Office Directory of 1878 above.* Built as workers' cottages for the Easton Lodge Estate.



Picture 1.12 Eastern Hall Cottage, built by the Maynard estate as workers cottages.

1.76 Bridgefoot, The Endway – Grade II*. A 14th century timber framed and plastered hall house, with peg tile roofs. 2 bay, former open hall. Adjoining the rear is a 2 bay, 16th century kitchen/service block: with gabled peg tile roof. Generally the roofs are gabled. Windows are a mixture of 19th century casements with glazing bars and some old cast iron casements. The hall retains its original roof line but has an inserted 16th century floor and old brick stack. . The original hewn oak ladder stair survives in the back room. Fragments of external and internal pargeting and wall painting survive.

1.77 Barn SW of Easton Hall – Grade II. 14th century and later. Timber framed and plastered with black weatherboarding on east wall over high brick plinth. Peg tile half hipped roof. Aisled on both sides, the arcade has numerous ancient posts, reused from previous structures. *The barn forms part of the site used for car storage by P and A Wood, the nearby car dealer on the B184.*

1.78 **Important buildings or structures within the curtilages of Listed Buildings.** Within the churchyard there are a number of tombstones of interest.

1.79 Wall surrounding graveyard. Of varying heights; of flint construction principally with triangular brick capping detail. A strong and important feature in the local street scene. Generally in good repair although small areas noted as being in need of repair. It is understood that a programme of repairs are currently underway.

1 Part 1: Appraisal



Picture 1.13 Wall surrounding the church graveyard, a strong feature in the street scene.



Picture 1.14 Wall surrounding graveyard, small area in need of repair.



Picture 1.15 Part of boundary wall within graveyard in need of repair.

1.80 Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution. The Annex, The Laurels and Ivy House. A terrace of three cottages dating from the 19th century. Ivy House has date plaque of 1869. Render with slate and tiled roofs with 3 no. chimneys with pots. Although this terrace is much altered and unremarkable in its detail it occupies a visually strategic location overlooking the small central green and its mass and varied roofline is pleasing. On balance it has been assessed as having sufficient qualities to be included within this category. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected architectural features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 1.16 The Annex, The Laurels and Ivy House. A terrace of three cottages dating from the 19th century. Despite modern alterations it is considered on balance the overall pleasing mass and varied roofline with chimneys is worthy of retention and protection.

Part 1: Appraisal 1

1.81 Meadow View. Set at right angle to nearby Ivy House and listed Essex House this simple 19th century cottage rendered with slate roof and 2 no chimney stacks with intricate barge board detailing occupies a strategic position in the street scene adjacent to an important Listed Building. On balance it has been assessed as having sufficient qualities to be included within this category. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected architectural features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.

1.82 Grange Barn and Bridgefoot Barn. Located at the western extremity of the Conservation Area, these two adjacent structures, now converted to residences, have been much altered. Nevertheless their mass and selected features such as the roof to Bridgefoot Barn are pleasing and they add to the quality of the Conservation Area in this location and should be retained.

1.83 Nos. 1-3 Maynard's Cottages. Late 19th century distinctive red brick cottages with half hipped tiled roof and 2 no. prominent red brick decorative chimney stacks with pots. Central gable end to front. Early window range. Single storey range of outbuildings to rear with tiled roof also worthy of retention. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected architectural features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification. Assumed from name to have been built as part of Maynard estate.



Picture 1.17 Nos. 1-3 Maynard Cottages. Distinctive and prominent in the street scene with features worthy of retention.

1 Part 1: Appraisal

1.84 Hillside Cottages. 19th century red brick with tiled roof and 2 no. chimneys with pots and centrally located circular plaque displaying letter M of the Maynard family. Early window range. An Article 4 Direction to provide protection for selected architectural features may be appropriate subject to further consideration and notification.



Picture 1.18 Hillside Cottage, a quality 19th century red brick building with centrally located circular plaque displaying letter M of the Maynard family.

1.85 Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution. War Memorial. Located on the central green to the west of the church this memorial commemorates those who lost their lives in both world wars. Its simple design consists of a tapering octagonal column on an inscribed base and surmounted by cross.



Picture 1.19 The consecration of Great Easton War Memorial in 1918. (Reproduced courtesy of Essex Record Office)

Part 1: Appraisal 1



Picture 1.20 War Memorial located on central green to the west of the churchyard.

1.86 Delicately proportioned pedestrian bridge over the River Chelmer with wooden support railings. An unusual and most pleasing feature most worthy of retention and ongoing maintenance and upkeep. At the moment some maintenance and removal of vegetation and application of preservative would be beneficial. Adjacent metal railings to highway boundary in need of repainting.



Picture 1.21 Delicately proportioned bridge crossing River Chelmer. It and metal safety railings would benefit from maintenance and repainting.

1 Part 1: Appraisal



Picture 1.22 Historic photograph of former bridge (all wooden?) over the River Chelmer; date unknown. (Reproduced courtesy of Essex Record Office)

1.87 Important open spaces. Graveyard to Church of St John and St Giles. The graveyard is an important open space setting off the architectural qualities of the Grade II* listed church building and providing an important pedestrian access to the small central village green to its immediate west. Surrounded by an important boundary wall for the most part, this space and its range of tombstones and traditional graveyard trees provide a tranquil and verdant oasis of visual and historic importance.



Picture 1.23 The churchyard - a tranquil and verdant oasis of visual and historic importance.

1.88 Small triangular grassed areas to east of church and fronting Easton Hall provides additional setting for church and Easton Hall but marred by poles and overhead utility cables. One grassed area is planted with several trees.

Part 1: Appraisal 1

1.89 Central green to west of the churchyard. A focal point of the village where the War Memorial, previously referred to, is located. This small green occupies a strategic location in the village and the key to its visual success is its simplicity and uncluttered nature. Frequently such areas can be the recipients of uncoordinated memorial planting and street furniture which is not the case here. However small improvements could be made by rationalising 2 no. footpath signs, a highway sign and a litter bin.

1.90 Small grassed area and adjacent wooded area with paddock to rear and River Chelmer between Croys Grange and Bridgefoot. This small area together with its elegant pedestrian bridge provides a visually important gap separating the western extremity of the Conservation Area from the nearby modern housing estate of Brocks Mead.

1.91 Particularly important trees and hedgerows. Those trees and hedgerows in and around the churchyard and Easton Hall at the eastern end of the Conservation Area together with trees and hedgerow in the vicinity of the River Chelmer leading up to Cox Hill add diversity and value to the high quality of the Conservation Area. As previously identified the boundary hedge to the builder's yard in the centre of the village is important in shielding this untidy and unkempt site.

1.92 Important views. As shown on accompanying plans.

1.93 Elements that are out of character with the Conservation Area. The builder's yard in the centre of the village adjacent to Brocks Mead is a large site that is untidy containing a considerable number of poor quality single storey buildings that are generally temporary in nature and appearance. The site also contains areas of open storage of materials and plant and currently appears to be non operational. The site detracts from the village and Brocks Mead housing site to its west but its impact on the Conservation Area and Listed buildings opposite is limited by a strong boundary hedge to The Endway. Clearly the site does not form part of an area of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be conserved and as a consequence is recommended to be removed from the Conservation Area.

1.94 It is considered that the site adversely affects the amenity of the area and is in urgent need of improvement. It is suggested that the District Council seek to establish the owner's intentions and if the site is to remain in its current use, a programme of improvements and possible additional landscaping, be implemented by mutual agreement.



Picture 1.24 Uncoordinated street furniture on the central green west of the church yard. Cannot the opportunity be taken to simplify this arrangement where 2 no footpath signs, a litter bin and a 30 mph sign each have separate post supports?

1 Part 1: Appraisal

1.95 Redevelopment to an appropriate alternative use is one option worthy of consideration but it is noted the site is not within the Development Limits.



Picture 1.25 The extremely untidy builder's yard in the centre of the village that is in urgent need of improvement and which is proposed to be removed from the Conservation Area.

1.96 Utility poles and their overhead services detract to varying degrees, some significantly. Those close to the church and Easton Hall are perhaps most disruptive. The practicalities and associated cost of achieving real improvements, particularly in this difficult economic climate, is recognised. However it is considered appropriate to draw attention to the visual damage caused and for the Parish Council to discuss the matter with the relevant utility company to explore the potential of achieving incremental improvements now or in the longer term.

1.97 Part of wall within graveyard, western boundary. This wall detracts from the high quality of the graveyard and a section is in need of repair/rebuild as and when finances may permit.

1.98 Opportunities to secure improvements. Undertake selective repairs to boundary wall to churchyard as necessary. Consider rationalising signage and street furniture on central green to west of churchyard. Suggest some ongoing maintenance and removal of vegetation to wooden railings of pedestrian bridge crossing the River Chelmer and also repainting nearby metal railings at highway boundary in same location.

1.99 Suggested boundary changes. Remove builder's yard adjacent to Brocks Mead from Conservation Area.

1.100 Other actions. Inform English Heritage their reference to Listed Building 'The Endway' appears to be wrongly plotted/identified on their information base

Part 2 - Management Proposals 1

Revised Conservation Area Boundary

2.1 Remove area of Builders yard, being the site adjacent to Brocks Mead.

Planning Controls and Good Practice: The Conservation Area

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

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

Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Telephone no. 01799 510510

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

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

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

Planning Control and Good Practice: Listed Buildings

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

2.6 The Listed Buildings and associated structures within their curtilages, including those that have been specifically identified by this Appraisal, are important and are a major contribution to the quality of the built environment of Great Easton. Good practice for applicants proposing alterations or additions to such Listed Buildings will be to carefully consider the content of the policies set out in the Local Plan.

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

2.8 Several such unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area have been identified. The Council will seek to ensure that these are retained. These are as follows: terrace consisting of The Annex, The Laurels and Ivy House; Meadow View; Grange Barn, Bridgefoot Barn, Nos. 1-3 Maynard's Cottages (including range of outbuildings to rear) and Hillside Cottages.

1 Part 2 - Management Proposals

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

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

2.10 This Appraisal has identified several features including walls railings within the curtilages of Listed Buildings that make a particular contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The latter are protected from demolition without prior consent virtue by Listed Building legislation and any proposal involving their demolition is unlikely to be approved.

2.11 The War Memorial on the central green and the pedestrian bridge over the River Chelmer have also been identified as being most worthy of retention.

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

2.12 Important open land, open spaces and gaps. The open spaces as identified and as shown on the plans represent open landscape features that materially contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area which must be protected. As marked on the plans these are: Graveyard to Church of St John and St Giles, grassed areas to east of church and fronting Easton Hall, central green to west of church and grassed area/wooded area with paddock to rear and River Chelmer, being land between Croys Grange and Bridgefoot.

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

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

2.14 A selection of the most important views within the Conservation Area are diagrammatically shown.

Part 2 - Management Proposals 1

Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements

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

The features identified below are shown on the accompanying plans.

Detracting element	Location	Proposed Action
Overhead utility services on intrusive poles	At selected locations within the Conservation Area, particularly around church	Contact appropriate utility company to explore potential replacement of selected overhead services
Builders yard site	Adjacent to Brocks Mead	District Council to initially discuss with owner to ascertain future of site. Environmental quality improvements needed in short term. Appropriate redevelopment may be appropriate in the longer term
Section of internal boundary wall	Western boundary wall to graveyard	Seek owner's cooperation in undertaking essential repairs as and when finances may permit. It is understood that a programme of repairs are currently underway and that many repairs have already been completed.

Other actions

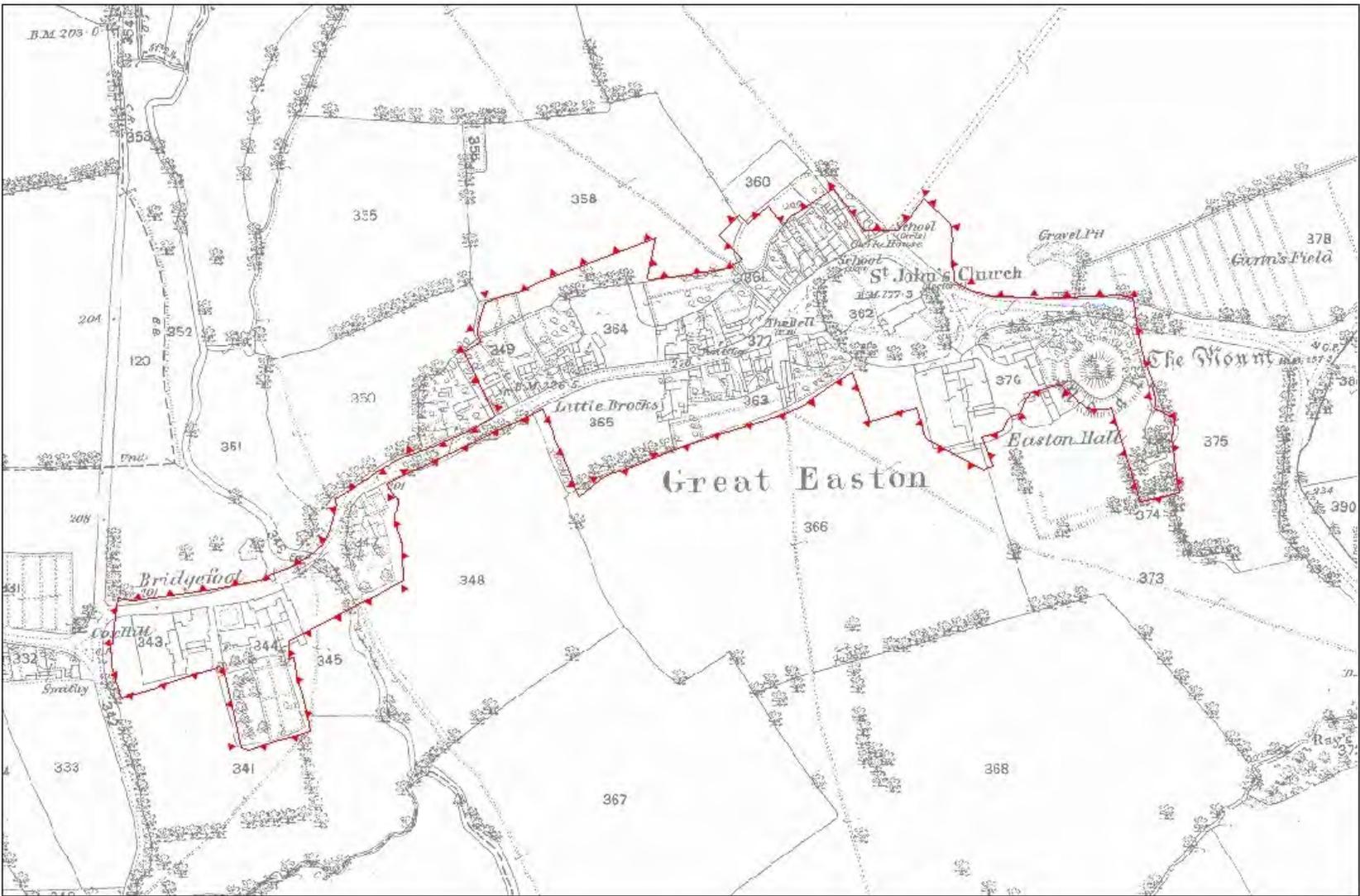
Seek owner's co operation to undertake other minor repair works to graveyard boundary wall as and when finances may permit. It is understood that a programme of repairs are currently underway and that many repairs have already been completed.

Contact English Heritage concerning their data base and the incorrect location of a Listed Building referred to as The Endway (now called Busters Cottage in part)

Contact English Heritage concerning their data base and the incorrect titling of a Listed Building referred to as Church of St John and St Jiles (properly Church of St John and St Giles)

1 Maps

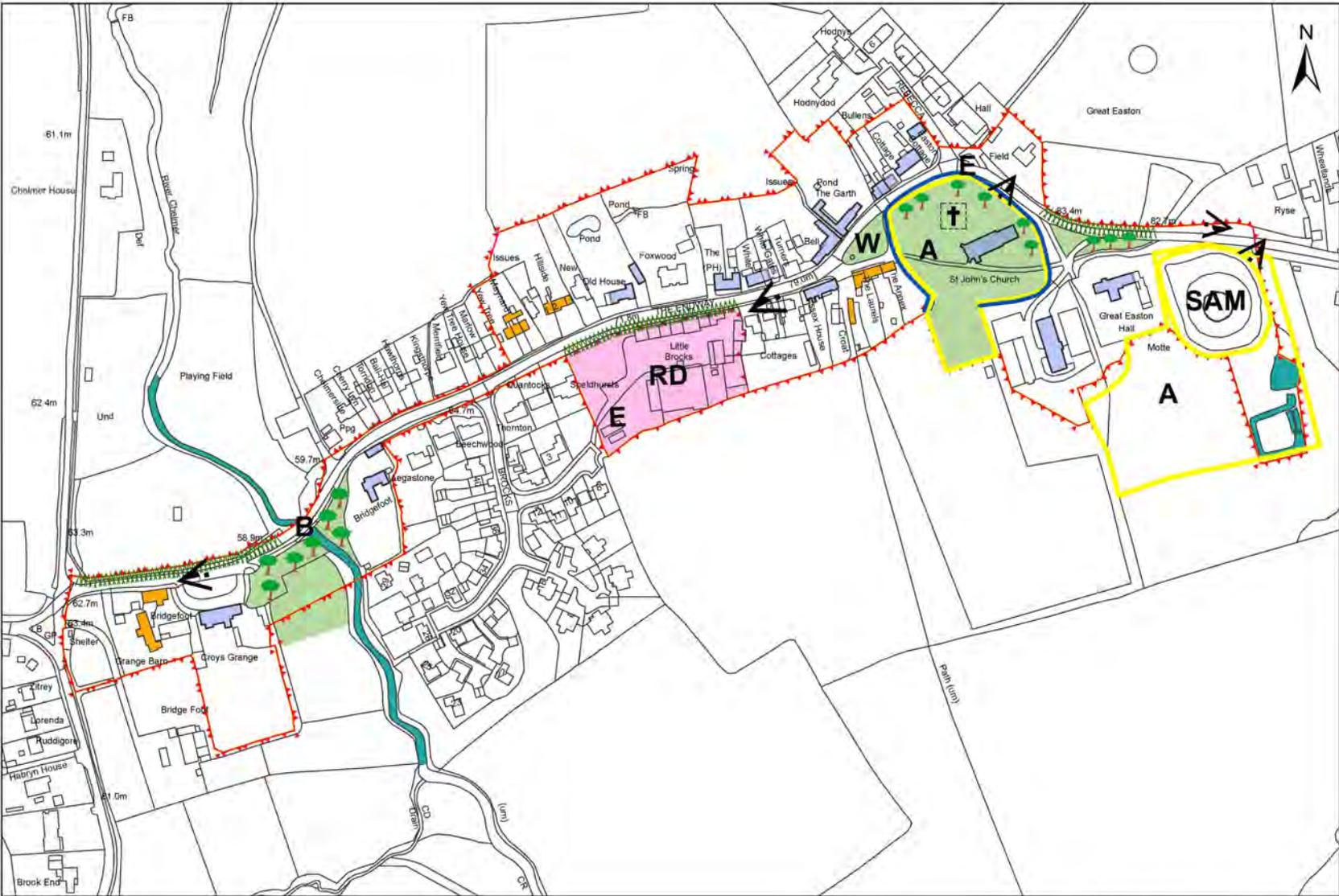
Figure 1 - 1877 Ordnance Survey Map



Great Easton CA
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Fig 2 - Character Analysis



Great Easton CA - Character Analysis

1:2,000

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1 Maps

Character Analysis Key

	Existing Conservation Area Boundary
	Proposed reduction of the Conservation Area
	Scheduled Ancient Monuments
	Archaeological Sites
	Individually Listed Buildings
	Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area
	Important open spaces
	General location of important trees/hedgerows
	Water features. River Chelmer/Moat and pond

**Other distinctive features to be protected from demolition within the parameters of legislation
(including walls and railings within the curtilages of Listed Buildings)**

	Walls
	Tombstones
	Bridge
	War Memorial
	Important Views
	Elements out of character

1 Maps

Management Plan Key

	Conservation Area boundary – adopted Policy ENV1 applies
	Scheduled Ancient Monument – adopted policy ENV4 applies
	Archaeological Sites, adopted policy ENV4 applies
	Individually Listed Buildings adopted Policy ENV2 applies
	Other buildings to be protected from demolition, see Policy ENV1. Additional controls proposed for selected buildings
	Important open spaces and waterfeatures to be protected from development, adopted policy ENV3 and National Planning Policy Framework apply
	General location of important trees/hedgerows to be protected within parameters of legislation

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

	Walls
	Tombstones
	Bridge
	War Memorial
	Proposed Enhancements
	Possible redevelopment site

Appendices 1

Appendix 1 - Sources

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