

# Audley End Conservation Area Appraisal and Draft Management Proposals, 2015



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## 1 Part 1: Appraisal

### Introduction

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

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

**1.3** Uttlesford has a particularly rich built heritage, with 36 Conservation Areas and approximately 3,700 listed buildings displaying a variety of styles representative of the best of architectural and historic designs from many centuries. Generally and very importantly the clear distinction between built form and open countryside has been maintained. This is the case at Audley End where the historic house still sits within its formal parkland and the associated village, discretely tucked away to the south, is strung out between the road and the ancient St Mark's College.

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

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

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

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

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

**1.9** This Conservation Appraisal will:

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

**1.10** The document has been prepared in partnership with the local community and the Council would like to record its thanks to Saffron Walden Town Council and to the members of the local community who provided useful information to officers when the survey was being undertaken. Particular thanks are due to Saffron Walden Museum for detailed historical information and to the Saffron Walden Blue Badge Guides.

**1.11** In 2012 the civil parish of Saffron Walden was designed as a Neighbourhood Plan Area under Section 5-7 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. It is understood that a Neighbourhood Plan for Saffron Walden is currently being formulated by Saffron Walden Town Council with support from other local groups. The majority of the Audley End Conservation Area falls within the parish of Saffron Walden, whilst a small but significant portion, principally comprising the ancient stable block and walled kitchen garden for Audley End House, fall within the parish of Littlebury.

**1.12** In undertaking an exercise such as this, one aspect that is too easily forgotten is the community itself and the people who live locally and contribute to its cohesion and social success. Audley End House is one of the region's premier tourist destinations attracting over 143,000 visitors in 2013<sup>(1)</sup>. It plays host to numerous historical events throughout the year as well as the perennially popular series of summer open air concerts which take place on the back park. Many visitors also enjoy the Audley End Miniature Railway, a delightful 1.5 mile ride on Lord Braybrooke's private 10.25 gauge track

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1 Actual figure: 143,046 supplied by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions

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through the Estate woodland just to the west. The village of Audley End itself is a compact community which, until recently, still boasted its own post office. The major facility is the 17th century St Mark's College which, since 1993, has been run by the Diocese of Chelmsford as a well used youth and conference centre. It is also a popular venue for wedding parties and smaller corporate events.

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

### Planning Legislative Framework

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

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

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

**1.17** Planning permission is 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 relevant to other non listed buildings in the Conservation Area above a threshold size as set out in the legislation<sup>(2)</sup>. Looking for and identifying such buildings is therefore a priority of this Appraisal.

**1.18** 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.

**1.19** 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 as previously agreed delete word 'front' roof slopes, various types of cladding, satellite dishes fronting a

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2 The demolition of a building not exceeding 50 cubic metres is not development and can be demolished without planning permission. Demolition of other buildings below 115 cubic metres are regarded as 'Permitted Development' granted by the General Permitted Development Order, subject to conditions that may require the Council's 'prior approval' regarding methods of proposed demolition and restoration

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highway and a reduced size of extensions, all require planning permission in a Conservation Area. delete 'whereas they would not require permission beyond' as previously agreed.

**1.20** 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.

**1.21 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.

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

### Planning Policy Framework

**1.23 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.

**1.24** 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.

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

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- There should be a positive strategy in the Local Plan for the conservation of the historic environment and up-to-date evidence used to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make.
- Conservation Areas. Such areas must justify such a status virtue of being of '*special architectural or historic interest*'.
- Heritage assets. A Heritage asset is defined as '*a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listings)*'.
- Considerable weight should be given to conserving such heritage assets and the more important they are the greater the weight. For example the effect of an application affecting a non- designated heritage asset should be taken into account and a balanced 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.

**1.26 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.

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

**1.28** The Audley End Inset of the Uttlesford Local Plan shows the existing Conservation Area and the Development Limits. Also shown is the extent of the Historic Park of Audley End, the Ancient Monument and the numerous stands of trees comprising important

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woodland. There are also four County Wildlife Sites identified of which one abuts the Conservation Area to the south and another, being the wide verges along the northern side of Audley End Road, impinges on the Conservation Area at its western extent.

**1.29 Essex County Council Buildings at Risk Register.** The County Council has a 'Buildings at Risk Register'<sup>(3)</sup>. In relation to Audley End no such buildings have been identified and neither has this Appraisal identified any.

**1.30 Assets of Community Value.** There are no Assets of Community Value registered in relation to Audley End.

**1.31 Audley End Conservation Area date of designation.** Audley End Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 and revised in 1977.

### General Influences

**1.32** The Audley End park can be found straddling the River Cam just under a mile from Saffron Walden. Nearby, Audley End village, comprising a cluster of estate cottages, the Abbey House and historic complex of St Mark's College, all sits just to the south of the main Audley End House. The old A11, now the B1383, bisects the historic park and running alongside the Cam it provides links to Cambridge, the M11 and to Bishop's Stortford and Harlow. The main Cambridge to London railway line can be accessed from Audley End Station some 1.25 miles distant. Scheduled bus services bypass the village proper although it is possible to pick up those routes principally serving the station from a stop located at The Fulfen on Wenden Road. A cycle route along this road linking the town and station is planned for the near future. For those wishing to walk, a pleasant leafy path along Audley End Road provides access into Saffron Walden.

**1.33** Local services are limited. The village post office closed in 2009 and there now remains only the public phone box and letter box. For visitors to Audley End House there is a tea room and well-stocked shop selling gifts and produce from the kitchen garden. St Mark's College, formerly an almshouse to the old Audley End Estate is now an education centre run by the Diocese of Chelmsford. It offers residential and day courses for a wide range of groups including students undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh award. It is also a popular venue for wedding and other social functions.

**1.34** Because of the lack of local opportunities and the ease of access to good communication routes, out-commuting is high and has led in the past fifty years to a change in the residential make up of the village. There are few opportunities for immediate local employment other than in agriculture or as seasonal workers at the Audley End House and the adjacent miniature railway. The proximity of the major settlement of Saffron Walden provides some local opportunities, but its is to Cambridge and London that many residents travel.

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3 *Heritage at Risk in Essex Register 2011*, Essex County Council October 2011

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**1.35** Historically, agriculture was the main source of employment and although still an important local activity, its prominence is not as marked as it once was. The Audley End Estate <sup>(4)</sup> manages a number of farms which remain as working enterprises in the surrounding parishes and there is a small area for commercial businesses at Abbey Farm providing facilities for, amongst others, a marquee hire company and a period architectural materials salvage workshop. Within the park and historic site, managed by English Heritage, many of the buildings, such as the stables, kitchens and laundry have been successfully restored and are now shown operating in their original roles.

**1.36** Designation of the immediate vicinity of Audley End House and its associated parkland as both a Scheduled Monument and a Historic Park recognises the importance of the area and its sensitivity to change. The surrounding Audley End Estate lands to a certain extent provide a buffering effect from development elsewhere in Saffron Walden but this does not mean that the area will not in the future be subjected to development pressures and so now is an appropriate moment to be considering how to best protect its built and open space environment.

### The General Character and Setting of Audley End

**1.37 Setting.** The outstanding Jacobean manor of Audley End House is set in its 18th century 'Capability' Brown landscape park through which the Cam gently meanders. This Landscape Character Type is classified as 'Cam River Valley' <sup>(5)</sup>, and is predominantly park-like in character with wide expanses of mown sward. On its approaches the river corridor is fringed by trees which delineate its shape within the patchwork of pasture and plantation woodlands that line the valley floor. Buildings are principally associated with the main house either directly as service areas or indirectly as mellow red brick stables and barns. Others such as the former head gardener's residence, Abbey House and the varied lodges are much more formal, the latter marking the various entrances to the park. In the village white-washed houses with dormers are more intimate in scale where they closely line the narrow thoroughfare leading down to St Mark's College.

**1.38** Very tall brick walls border the park all the way from the outskirts of Saffron Walden giving way to more formal iron railings at the Lion Lodge. The very few modern buildings are generally discrete and there are some old outstanding barns in black weatherboard or flintwork now often converted to storage space or used as small office units. Audley End House itself, sitting just back from the river as the land rises towards the town, is of great antiquity and makes a visible impression from many points in the settlement. Although busy roads do cut through the area there is still a sense of tranquility and timelessness particularly in the farthest reaches of the park, though remnants of modern conflict are still just occasionally visible in the remains of the Second World War pillbox and bridge defences.

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4 The current Audley End Estate is a separate enterprise from the English Heritage owned Audley End House and park

5 *Landscape Character Assessment of Uttlesford* Chris Blandford Associates, September 2006, Fig. 7.1

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**1.39** The wider topography is that of steep sided valley slopes covered in arable farmland descending almost to the water's edge where trees line the valley floor as the river meanders upstream to Shortgrove Bridge. Views from the higher ground are often framed by distant patches of woodland and scattered copses. Strong hedgerows and well-maintained verges dominate, though commercial arable farming has left a legacy of broken field boundaries and solitary trees on the horizon. To the north and further along the valley the area is primarily rural, characterised by a noted absence of major towns. Great Chesterford, built near the site of an important Roman town, is the only large village in the valley corridor and other settlements are for the most part small and self-contained. The nearby ancient market town of Saffron Walden with its distinctive church spire can be seen from many directions due to its position on the higher slopes. Ancient footpaths cross the area, which, together with winding lanes and tracks, form a complex network that links Saffron Walden and outlying settlements.

**1.40** In 1874 Kelly described the "present mansion" of Audley End as being "a notable building in the Tudor and Gothic styles ... The grounds are well laid out, and the park large, in which the river Cam, by being widened, forms a fine sheet of water: through the park, which is pleasantly diversified by hill and dale, are two public walks, one northward, towards Littlebury, and the other leaning to the village of Audley End ..."<sup>(6)</sup> The quality of this landscape has now led to it being designated as a Grade I Registered Park and Garden<sup>(7)</sup>.

**1.41** Surrounding the park the fieldscape consists of irregular fields of ancient origin, probably of medieval or earlier date, interspersed with areas of former common fields, some of the Cambridgeshire and Midland type, a field-type that is rare in the rest of Essex. Many of these were enclosed in a largely piecemeal fashion throughout the 17th to the 19th centuries, forming large fields with irregular outlines and grid-like internal subdivisions. Historically, the surrounding landscape formed the greater Audley End estate, extending at its height of prosperity to some 10,000 acres (4047 hectares). Audley End House itself occupies the site of the 12th century Benedictine Priory of Walden, although the present house dates mainly from the 17th century .

**1.42** The modern park is under the care of English Heritage and extends to an area of approximately 36 hectares representing the immediate and most sensitive historic environ of Audley End House. Notably the landscape as seen today is the result of a transformation undertaken in the 18th century by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in which the old formal gardens were reformed into one of the most successful pastoral landscapes of his career. The *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report*, 2009, notes that "later features include a restored Parterre garden, a rose garden and fountains, and the restored 19th century walled kitchen garden, originally constructed in the 18th century, now in use as a working kitchen garden". Buildings were placed strategically throughout the parkland including the 'Adam Bridge' over the

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6 *Post Office Directory of Essex*, London: Printed and Published by Kelly and Co., 1874, p.189

7 *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England*, English Heritage, List entry Number: 1000312

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Cam, the Temple of Victory on the site of the old Ring Hill fort, the Temple of Concord and, now in the middle of the Saffron Walden Golf Course, Lady Portsmouth's Column. The grounds are divided by the River Cam, which is crossed by several ornate bridges.

**1.43** The historic village of Audley End lies to the south of the park; it contains a former school (latterly the post office) and the Abbey Farm. A range of almshouses were built in the early 17th century, and are Grade I listed; these have been shown to stand on the site of a medieval building, potentially the hospital of Walden Abbey dating to 1258. "There is a large ancient woodland at Springwood in the northern part of the zone, and many of the hedgerows are of considerable antiquity"<sup>(8)</sup>. Ancient lanes leading to the area are sunken and winding, though none in the locality are of sufficient quality to warrant Protected Lane Status<sup>(9)</sup>.

**1.44 General character and plan form.** The developments that have occurred in Audley End over the past two centuries reflect the social and economic changes that the locality has undergone. Changes in agricultural methods are reflected in the morphing design of farm complexes with the development of the 'Victorian High Farming' tradition. This resulted in new ideas culminated in significant alterations in the design and layouts of farm buildings as identified in the buildings at Abbey Farm to the south of the park<sup>(10)</sup>. These have now been converted to units for business use. Declining returns on agricultural land and the impact of death duties led to Audley End House being sold to the nation in 1948. Subsequent development of the site, first under the Ministry of Works/Department of Environment and latterly by English Heritage has reflected changing attitudes to the presentation of historic properties and the needs of visitors with the installation of a new information centre and enhancement of cross site facilities.

**1.45** The village of Audley End has changed little since the 19th century other than the development and conversion of former agricultural buildings on the periphery of the area and the closure of the school and post office. 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). Abbey Farm House and Lion House sit back from the road behind formal lawns and white-washed estate cottages line the narrow street running down to the cloistered precincts of St Mark's. Within the village the scale is intimate, with channelled views out through gaps in the buildings and over open spaces and trees to the descending countryside as it drops away to the River Cam in the west or the Wenden Road in the south. Throughout the area there is the sound of water - the lane down to St Mark's crosses the Fulfen Slade and drains and ponds abound. To the front of Audley End House the Cam flows gently whilst adjacent to the walled kitchen garden it is more contained flowing rapidly through a series of sluices and over a weir to the 18th century Water Garden.

**1.46** The National Heritage List for England records some 35 individually listed buildings, groups of buildings and other structures in the vicinity of Audley End, of which 20 are to be found in the designated Conservation Area. These vary widely from the grand Jacobean Grade I listed Audley End House to the mainly 18th century run of

8 *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report*, 2009, p. 105

9 *Uttlesford Protected Lanes Assessment*, Essex County Council, March 2012

10 *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report*, 2009, p. 28

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houses along the village street and the varied 19th century red brick lodges guarding the entrances to the park. Numerous other features are included - walls, railings, steps and the 20th century K6 telephone kiosk at the entrance to the village. Materials are varied: Clunch, Burwell and Ketton stone used for the principal elevations of Audley End House, mellow red brick on better quality buildings and boundary walls, pargetted plaster over timber framing and peg tiled roofs on the estate cottages.

**1.47** This is a highly historic landscape. Study of the development of the area demonstrates a gradual assimilation of the monastic site into domestic usage followed by periods of both landscape and architectural improvement and re-appraisal. When examined in conjunction with the spread of unlisted constructions and buildings of later date, the indications are of a grand Jacobean mansion in formal landscape evolving into an 18th century/19th century country house with associated service buildings set against picturesque parkland. The village itself mirrors the fortunes of the main house - the 17th century St Mark's, originally the former hospital to the Abbey, then almshouses to the estate, sit at the end of the road lined by village cottages dating from the 18th century but with earlier 16th and 17th century building elements remaining and 20th century amalgamation and renumbering. Audley End House, as the seat of the local nobility and located on one of the principal entrances to the market town, was always going to be in the limelight, whether as fashionable residence, administrative centre for a vast estate or latterly as a visitor destination.

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

**1.49** One very important feature of the Conservation Area is the variety of boundary treatments: high walls constructed of bricks made on the estate, formal railings and long flint and brick walls interspersed with occasional hedges or fences define boundaries and link buildings. The use of these materials reflects the local landscape where flints abound, clay colours the soil and hedged field boundaries form such a visually important part. This appraisal also identifies a number of important walls that are not individually listed but there may also be others not immediately visible from the public realm and or in otherwise inaccessible locations.

**1.50** Throughout the Conservation Area there are trees in abundance, either as groups or as individual specimens located in the formal park where they offer a backdrop to the house, on the horizon as part of the 'Capability' Brown landscape and less formally around St Mark's. Others are to be found in the grounds of the Audley End miniature Railway. They add considerably to the attractive appearance and diversity of the Conservation Area and beyond.

**1.51** Overhead telephone cables on poles detract from the quality of the environment.

**1.52** There are many high quality buildings representative of various periods. Despite some very occasional modern development, the Conservation Area itself represents a nationally significant historic grouping of buildings in a rural setting that warrants its formal designation.

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### Origins and Historic Development

**1.53** Historical background data has been extracted principally from the *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report* <sup>(11)</sup> and the *Essex Historic Environment Record* (HER)<sup>(12)</sup>.

**1.54 Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon.** Evidence of prehistoric occupation has been identified throughout the zone ranging in date from the Neolithic through to the Iron Age, the remains of probable prehistoric burial mounds (ring ditches) and settlement enclosures.

**1.55** Immediately to the west of the zone and still within the historic confines of the Audley End park lies the Early-Middle Iron Age univallate hillfort of Ring Hill<sup>(13)</sup>. It is oval in plan, enclosing an area of 4.3 hectares, with its long axis aligned north-west to south-east. The rampart reaches a height of 4.7 metres on the south-west and north-east sides<sup>(14)</sup>. There are a number of entrances through the ditches which have been used since at least the late 18th century, when parts of the interior and the rampart were adapted as a carriage drive and the hillfort planted with a variety of specimen trees. A 17th century tree avenue and walk appears to have been aligned on the eastern entrance and a 17th century Belvedere to the north-east was replaced as part of the 'Capability' Brown landscape works in the 18th century by the Temple of Victory<sup>(15)</sup> and at the same time a menagerie was constructed in the interiors<sup>(16)</sup> replacing a rabbit warren.

**1.56** The Roman road running south from Great Chesterford bisects the zone. Roman settlement has been identified to the north of the park on the valley slopes above the river. Finds include Roman coins, pottery and a possible pottery kiln that were identified at Audley End House in 1853<sup>(17)</sup>

**1.57 Medieval.** The priory at Brook Walden was founded by Geoffrey de Mandeville in 1139-1143 at about the same time as he was building the castle in Chipping Walden (Saffron Walden proper) and it became an Abbey in 1190. In 1538 the abbey and its possessions were surrendered to the king, who granted them to Sir Thomas Audley who converted the buildings for his house c1538-1544.

**1.58** Using evidence from the Essex Placenames Project<sup>(18)</sup> it is possible to build up a picture of Audley End at this period as a developing estate at the centres of which is the important house. Variations on the name are variously rendered as:

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11 *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Report*, Essex County Council, 2009, Parra. HECA 9 North Eastern Uttlesford

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

13 NMR TL 53 NW 6

14 cf. Oswald, AWP *A hillfort on Ring Hill, Littlebury, Essex* in P Pattison et al. *Patterns of the Past*, 1999 pp. 23-8

15 NMR TL 53 NW 56

16 See TL 53 NW 146

17 SMR 373671. Cf. Royal Archaeological Institute, *The Archaeological Journal*, 1854 p. 214

18 Essex Placenames Project, Audley End portal

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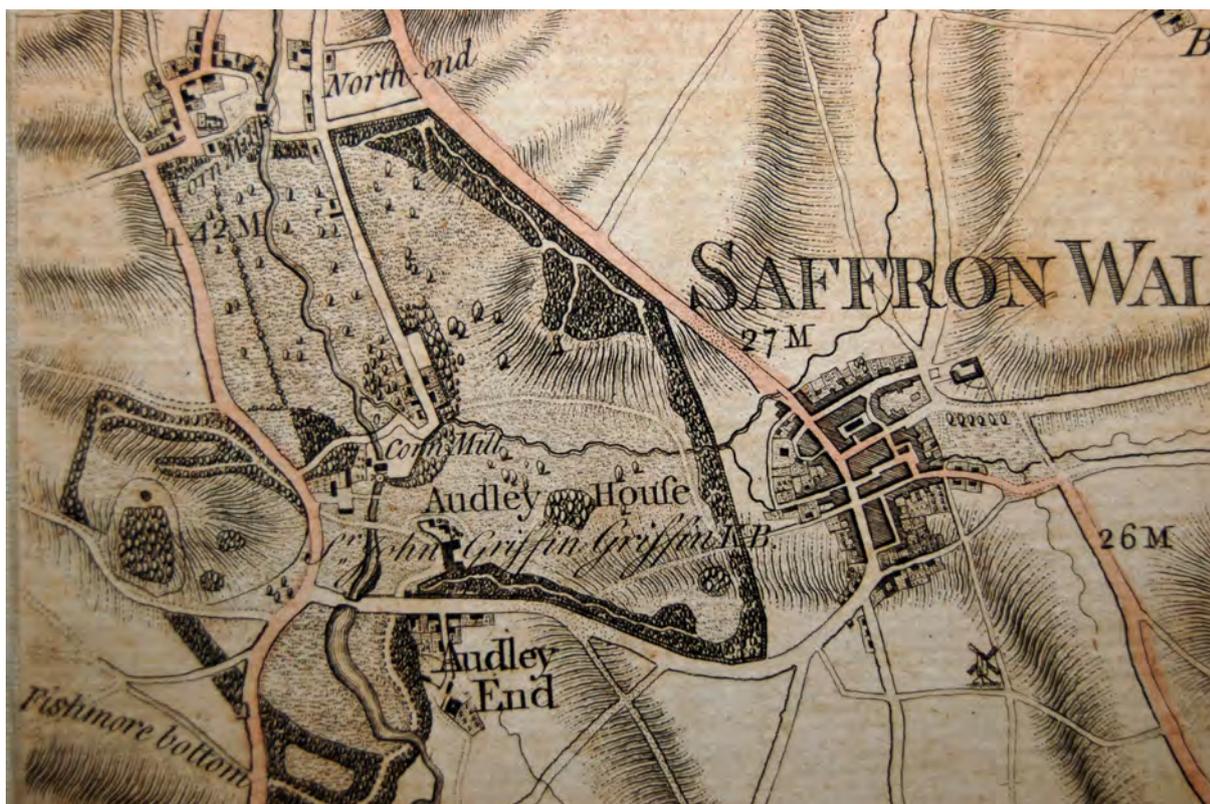
Audeley; Audleyend; Awdlens; Audley Inn; Awdley end. The Abbey was also referred to as Brocwalden or Brookwalden to distinguish it from the town of Walden or 'Chipping Walden'.

**1.59 Post Medieval.** Audley End was built between c 1605 and 1614, on the site of the Abbey of Walden, for Thomas Howard, first Earl of Suffolk. His surveyor was Bernard Janssen and in 1614 the Earl began to lay out extensive formal gardens. Following conviction for embezzlement he suffered great financial trouble and his property declined. Howard died in 1626, leaving his son Theophilus to bear the twin burden of his debts and enormous maintenance costs. When James, the third Earl inherited in 1640 the situation had not improved and after the Restoration the house and some parkland were sold to Charles II in 1668. Extensive works to the house were undertaken by Christopher Wren (1632-1723) but successive monarchs showed little interest in the property which in 1701 was returned to the Howards and settled on Henry, Earl of Bindon who assumed the title of sixth Earl of Suffolk in 1708.

**1.60** The sixth Earl commissioned Sir John Vanburgh (1664-1726) to make improvements which resulted in the demolition of part of the house, after which the property passed to Charles William Howard, seventh Earl who died in 1722 at the age of twenty-nine. The estate was left to his younger uncle, Charles Howard, while the title passed to his elder uncle, Edward. When Edward died, Charles became the ninth Earl and in 1725 he commissioned a plan for a great formal garden by the French architect Dubois. A less ambitious landscape scheme was eventually implemented however, possibly to a design by Charles Bridgeman (d 1738). Charles Howard died in 1733 and was succeeded by his son Henry, the tenth Earl who made further changes to the house. Henry died childless in 1745 and the property was divided between four co-heirs. One of these, Elizabeth, Countess of Portsmouth purchased the house and part of the park in 1751 to add to her share, commissioning John Phillips and George Shakespear to demolish the east, and parts of the north and south wings. Lady Portsmouth bequeathed her property to her nephew John Griffin Whitwell, who inherited in 1762 and assumed the name Griffin Griffin. Sir John, later Baron Braybrooke, carried out extensive reconstruction and repair work on the house from 1763 onwards, in the same year that he commissioned Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-83) to landscape the grounds. Richard Woods also carried out work within the pleasure grounds for Sir John, in 1780. Braybrooke died in 1797 without heirs, so the estate and the title passed to Richard Aldworth Neville, son of the Countess of Portsmouth's heir. When his son Richard, the third Lord Braybrooke inherited in 1825, Henry Harrison was brought in to restore the house and William Sawrey Gilpin (1762-1843) to advise on the gardens, which in 1831 were laid out in a formal parterre. Richard died in 1858 and was succeeded by his eldest son Richard Cornwallis who survived his father by only three years. The fifth Lord, Richard's brother Charles, continued to maintain the property until his death in 1902 when he was succeeded by his younger brother, the Hon Rev Latimer Neville. When the seventh Lord Braybrooke died in 1941 the house was requisitioned for war use and in 1948 it passed to the State in lieu of death duties. It is now maintained by English Heritage.

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**1.61** The large scale Plan of Audley End, Saffron Walden circa 1750<sup>(19)</sup>, Chapman and Andre survey of 1773-5, published in 1777, and 1865 Audley End Estate map<sup>(20)</sup> all give a good idea of the house and village at this period. The focus is very much on the house itself, demarked on the Chapman and Andre map as the seat of Sir John Griffin Griffin. There are relatively few houses on the village street, but in the park, Audley End House, the stables and several outbuildings are clearly visible as is a Corn Mill and the orchard garden.



Picture 1.1 Audley End as shown on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 (Reproduced courtesy of a private collection).

**1.62** The official Census return for 1841<sup>(21)</sup>, paints a picture of Audley End village and house as quite a diverse community. There are 33 adults recorded as being in the village proper, The majority are agricultural labourers, but Martha Fan, then 20 years of age, was the schoolmistress, William Brook, a groom and John Brown and Joseph Webb, both shepherds. Elizabeth Nockolds and Susannah Mapletoft are both listed separately as 'Independent'. In Audley End Lodge, there is James Carr, 30, a gamekeeper and in Walden Lodge, John C, an agricultural labourer. Down at the end of the village, the almshouses provided accommodation for '8 elderly ladies' - possibly

19 Plan of Audley End house and gardens in west of parish, showing avenues, ornamental gardens and waters, circular temple, menagerie, obelisk etc., with perspective drawing of the house. Includes drawing of Saffron Walden town; indicates millet fields, fowl-breeding yards, duck decoy, watermill, osiery held by Essex Record Office Reference Code: D/DBY P1

20 held by Essex Record Office Reference Code: D/DQy 69

21 1841 Census of Great Britain, Abstract prepared by Jacqueline Cooper in 2008

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former servants or widows of estate workers. The family were presumably not at home for in the main house there was only the Housekeeper, Jane Smith, and nine servants. Staying there, though, was Joseph Travis, the noted 'bird stuffer' who had a shop in the High Street of Saffron Walden and who was engaged in setting the many specimens in the natural history displays which are visible in the house to this day.

**1.63** In Victorian times, John Marius Wilson's *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales, 1870-72*, described Audley End as being "a railway station and a noble park near Saffron-Walden, Essex. The station is on the Eastern Counties railway, 1½ mile W by S of Saffron Walden, and at the junction of the branch railway thither. The park lies between the station and the town, on the river Granta; and is the seat of Lord Braybrooke. A bridge is in it by Adams; and a camp, on Ermine-street. The mansion is part of a splendid Tudor pile, built in 1603-16. It occupies the site of a Benedictine priory of 1136; and was erected by Howard, Earl of Suffolk, afterwards Lord High Treasurer of England, and named after his uncle, Audley. It was offered by the Earl to James I., who declined to have it on account of its being too costly; was sold by a succeeding Earl to Charles II., who failed to pay the purchase-money, and renounced possession; and was found by its owners to be so intolerably expensive, in the maintaining of a due establishment for it, that a large portion of it had to be taken down. What remains of it is magnificent; and it contains some valuable paintings and a fine museum"<sup>(22)</sup>.

**1.64** The agricultural depression of the early 20th century only exacerbated the general decline in population as more and more villagers moved away from the land, produce prices crashed and life became increasingly difficult for the owners of large estates. The house and parkland were requisitioned by the army for most of the war and in 1948 Audley End was put up for sale. It was eventually purchased for the nation and passed into the care of the Ministry of Works. At the same time the almshouses at Abbey Farm were given to the Diocese of Chelmsford by Lord Braybrook to become a home for retired clergy. In 1993 this building underwent a major refurbishment to be set up as a youth and conference centre under the name of St Mark's College.

**1.65** In common with many other rural settlements, Audley End village has seen a steady erosion of local facilities over the years, The National School was closed sometime in the early 20th century with children having to travel to either Saffron Walden or Littlebury. The building was then used for many years as a post office, but this too succumbed to pressures and ceased operation in 2009. Today, the only local services are to be had in Saffron Walden.

### Character Analysis

**1.66** The current Conservation Area has been surveyed as two character areas - Audley End village and Audley End House and grounds - with a map and key common to all. Historical photographs have been provided by Saffron Walden Museum and from the Saffron Walden Town Library. Other photographs have been taken by the fieldworker. All maps are reproduced from the Ordnance Survey under Uttlesford District Council Licence No: 100018688 (2004).

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22 *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales*, London & Edinburgh: A. Fullarton and Co. 1870-72

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**1.67 Scheduled Monuments.** Within the Audley End Conservation Area there is the designated Scheduled Ancient Monument of Audley End House and park<sup>(23)</sup>.

**1.68 Designated Parks and Gardens.** Within the Conservation Area there is one such English Heritage designation, this being the Grade I Audley End Park<sup>(24)</sup> (also a Scheduled Ancient Monument).

**1.69 Archaeological sites.** Audley End is described by the *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project*<sup>(25)</sup> as exhibiting well attested evidence of prehistoric occupation as well as the notable Iron Age hill fort feature at Ring Hill. The Roman road running south from Great Chesterford bisects the zone and a Roman settlement has been identified to the north of the park on the valley slopes above the river. The principal site of archaeological interest which influences the Conservation Area is that of the Audley End House which is constructed roughly on the site of the 12th century Walden Abbey; excavations have found evidence of the Priory in and around the present house. A number of construction phases associated with the re-modelling of the post-medieval house and gardens have also been established through archaeological fieldwork. Not all archaeological sites are of equal importance and the Council will decide a course of action that may vary from archaeological investigation and recording to protecting such a site from development, when determining planning applications. There will generally be a presumption in favour of preservation in situ.

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

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

- Is the non-listed building/structure of sufficient architectural or historic interest whose general external form and appearance remains largely unaltered?
- Does the building contain a sufficient level of external original features and materials?

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23 'Audley End Mansion' List entry Number: 1002163

24 List entry Number: 1000312

25 *Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project*, Essex County Council, 2009, pp. 103-106

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- Has the building retained its original scale without large inappropriate modern extensions that destroy the visual appearance, particularly in respect of the front elevation?
- Is the building/structure visually important in the street scene?

**1.72 Traditional materials and detailing.** Traditional materials and detail make a significant contribution to the character of the local area. Within the Audley End Conservation Area there is perhaps a greater diversity of historic building materials than in any other such local environment.

**1.73** Audley End House itself is principally constructed of brick faced with clunch, a chalky limestone rock used mainly in eastern England and probably quarried from low chalk ridges bordering the upper Cam valley and along the Fen edge towards the Suffolk border. It was extensively repaired in the 18th century with Burwell and Ketton stone<sup>(26)</sup>. Until the 19th century, when improved transport links made the movement of large quantities of stone easier, clunch was widely used as a building material in Cambridgeshire and north Essex because of its ready availability and the absence of local sources of stronger building stone. It is primarily left unfinished and where this is the case its porosity and susceptibility to weathering are evident in spalled facings and loss of detail in carved work. Detail is added by using contrasting materials. Notable is the central doorway with surrounding semicircular architrave in Jacobean style with inset red marble cabochons. Windows are either stone mullioned finished with oak frames or on secondary elevations softwood sashes can be found. Occasionally iron mullions are also used. The principal roofing material is lead though the prominent pair of turrets at the corners have swept copper capping and weather-vanes.

**1.74** Attached service buildings are of brick, often rendered and colour washed to replicate stone. Most are two storey. Joinery is typically more modest than on the main house. Doorways of the 19th century are segment with reeded flush panels, window are also segment headed and mainly comprise casements with glazing bars. On the larger buildings slated roofs are hipped, some being provided with paired display Roman cement chimney stacks.

**1.75** Other principal buildings within the park are either wholly or principally of red brick now weathered to mellow tones notably on the 16th century stable block where detailing in bands and around the windows is used to good effect. Stone furnishings around the windows add contrast and effect as they also do on many of the 19th century lodges. On these latter buildings finishing is in the Elizabethan style with solid corniced parapets and period motifs such as relief rendered strap work and Tudor roses.

**1.76** Lime render, either finished plain or with pargetted decoration is the predominant finish at the historic core of the village where buildings are most commonly constructed from oak timber frame. Timbers are often rendered over but if left exposed, are weathered to a silver grey. Infill should be with wattle panels, left plain for decorative

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26 See, J. D. Williams *Audley End The Restoration of 1762-1797*, Essex County Council, 1966

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effect. Notable are the considerable areas of early basket and combed pargetting applied to great effect on the run of village houses on the west side of the street. Bricks, used for principal construction from the eighteenth century, are handmade reds, often sourced from the estate kilns, occasionally with moulded detailing found on better quality buildings dating from the 19th and early 20th century. Brickwork is most commonly found in Flemish bond although English bond is also used, usually on perimeter walls and outbuildings where decorative effect is required. Barns and outbuildings are usually constructed in weather board which is prevalent, both feather edged and plain edged. It is historically preserved with pitch or creosote though now most often painted black.



Picture 1.2 Traditional Essex combed pargetting within panels on the wall of one of the estate cottages in Audley End Village.

**1.77** Throughout the historic core there is a predominance of double cambered handmade red clay plain tiles laid steeply (47 to 50°) or for 19th century and later additions, natural blue-grey slate at a lower pitch Orange clay pantiles are usually confined to outbuildings only.

**1.78** Windows are largely traditional, in painted or stained timber with either symmetrical flush or recessed casements, vertical or horizontally sliding sashes, the latter a particular feature of North West Essex. Visually arresting are those of the 'Gothick' 2-centred arched form with sashes and glazing bars on the principal elevation of Lion House. Where replacement windows are in evidence they are usually good copies of the original or are in period style.

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Picture 1.3 A variety of different window styles is found on the service wing at Audley End House.



Picture 1.4 Elegant 'Gothick' 2-centred arched form windows are employed to dramatic effect on Lion House.

**1.79** Roofscapes provide a rich variety of architectural detail, form and shape. Interest is drawn from the single or multiple red brick chimney stacks, some of very elaborate shape. On low 1 ½ storey cottages dormer windows penetrate the roofline where they typically provide contour and interest. On grander buildings smaller pitched roof dormers are typically narrow openings sometimes partly concealed behind a parapet. Further decoration is sometimes added in the form of elaborate barge boards such as those on the head gardener's cottage found adjoining the walled kitchen garden.

**1.80** Boundary treatments are an important element in defining the street scene where they provide texture and interest to an area. Walls, either constructed entirely of narrow bricks or of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping, and occasional estate railing fences define boundaries on public through-fares. Audley End House is fronted by a long run of iron railings and at the entrances stand elaborate gateways and wrought iron gates whilst properties like Abbey House and Lion House sit just back from the roadway behind mown lawns, their boundaries marked by chain-linked white painted posts.

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Picture 1.5 Wall to St Mark's Collage of early narrow bricks laid in English Bond.



Picture 1.6 Fine early 19th century square section iron railings define the south boundary of Audley End Park.

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

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

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

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



Picture 1.7 Mature trees within Audley End park line the Cam and frame the view to the south.

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

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

**1.85** 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.

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

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**1.87 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 retaining features associated with selected non listed properties is as follows:

- In relation to retention of chimneys, these need to be in good condition, contemporary with the age of the property, prominent in the street scene and generally complete with chimney pots. Exceptionally chimney stacks of particular architectural merit without pots may be selected.
- In relation to retention of selected windows, these need to be on front or side elevations, fronting and visible from the street/s, generally contemporary with the age of the property or of a sympathetic historic design and where the majority of windows of respective elevations retain their original characteristics and have not been replaced by disruptive 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 Permitted Development threshold. or to prevent the erection of inappropriate additions such as porches to terraced properties of historic interest.

**1.88** In the case of Audley End no such Directions are proposed because all historic buildings or structures are either listed or lie within the curtilage of Listed Buildings and are thus already afforded adequate protection.

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

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### Audley End Village

**1.90 General overview.** Audley End is a village with both a sense of timelessness and of long association with the grand stately home within whose historic demesne the properties sit. At the one end of the sloping street and almost hidden amongst trees can be found the ancient assemblage of red brick buildings comprising St Mark's College. Here the atmosphere is determinedly rural where open fields abut the walls, ponds and ditches fill with water and wide natural verges are full of summer flowers. White washed estate cottages closely crowd the single narrow street as the village street ascends to the main road. Here, and in greater proximity to the 'big house', the scale and spacing of structures is different where large formal properties sit back from the road behind white painted chain-linked posts.

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

**1.92 Archaeological sites.** There are no significant archaeological sites within this part of the Conservation Area although the remains of a Post Medieval water meadow have been noted as being visible as earthworks to the east of St Mark's Collage on aerial photographs taken in 1946. The site has subsequently been ploughed level on aerial photographs taken in 1988. The site comprises an irregular arrangement of straight and sinuous water channels which flank the Fulfen (meaning "foul marshland") Slade and occupy Fulfen Mead. They extend roughly north-west / south-east over an area that measures 350m long by 135m wide. The Slade flows westwards to join the River Cam.<sup>(27)</sup>

**1.93** The discovery of a Medieval wall-foundation at the early 17th century St Mark's College confirms that they are on the site of a hospital belonging to Walden Abbey<sup>(28)</sup>.

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

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27 Monument Number: ( TL 53 NW 293 )

28 A lost Essex hospital: the College of St Mark at Audley End, *Essex Archaeology and History Volume 26*, 1995 pp. 276-77

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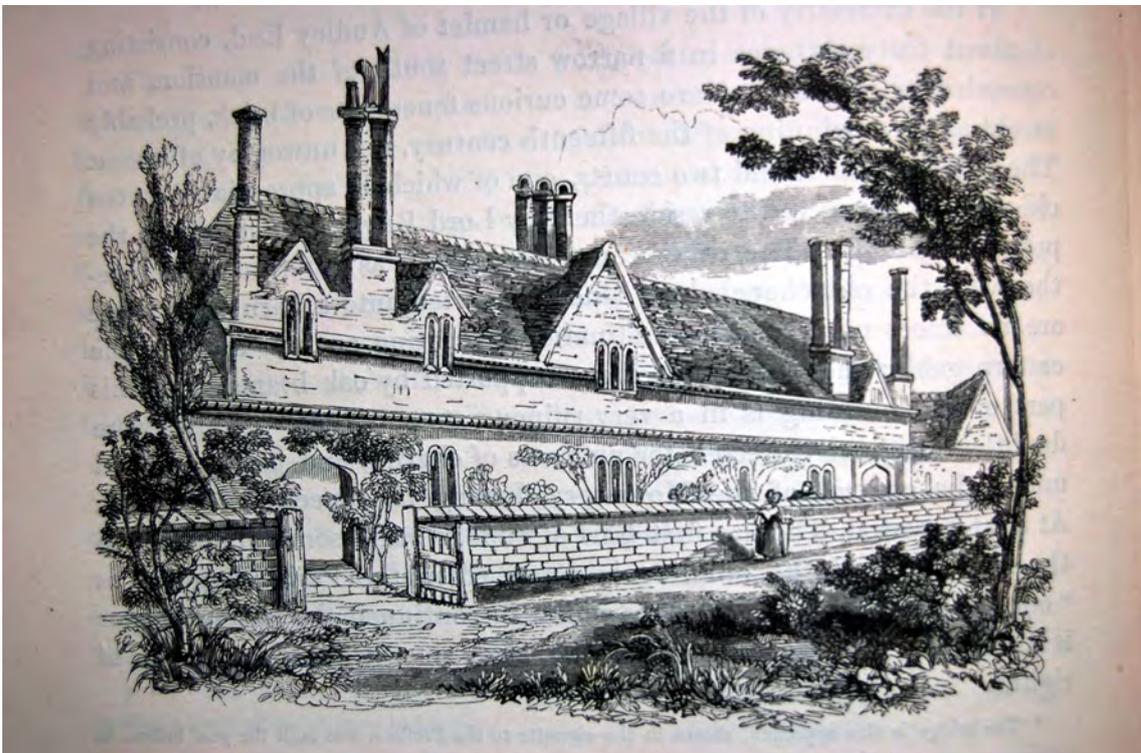
Picture 1.8 The inner court of St Mark's College in 1907 when it was used as a farmhouse. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum).

**1.95** St Mark's Collage. Grade I, formerly known as Abbey Farm. The foundations of the chapel, the oldest part of the buildings, were laid in 1258 as the infirmary for the Benedictine monks of Walden Abbey. Little remains of that building and the present structure was erected sometime between 1605 and 1614 by Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk as part of the grand plan for Audley End House. For many years thereafter it fulfilled the functions of an almshouse providing accommodation to estate workers in later life. The present structure of double rectangular courtyard with kitchen, stairs hall and principal hall in line in between the courts and chapel is on the same axis projecting to the east. The western front elevation forms an essentially symmetrical long range. Using local materials to their full potential, the walls are of small red bricks in wide jointed English bond with peg-tiled roofs over one and one and a half storeys. It is "of uncommon completeness of plan"<sup>(29)</sup>. Windows of the building all comprise narrow, single, double or triple round-headed lights, chamfered and all are now found with 20th century diamond leaded panes in old iron casements, some with stay hooks or friction quadrant stays. The ground floor porches have inner boarded doors with moulded and studded battens. Used as farm buildings until the middle to the 20th century, the whole range was given to the Diocese of Chelmsford by Lord Braybrooke to become a home for retired clergy. An extensive restoration between 1949 and 1951 included the replacement of many windows and the construction of the Chapel on the old foundations using similar bricks to the rest of the building. The chapel now has corner pilaster buttresses at the east end, a peg-tiled, gabled roof, the north and south sides each with a large brick-built multi-light window in style of the rest of the building, each with 4x3 lights. The east window has rectangular wooden framing with hollow chamfered mullions and transoms,

29 James Bettley and Nikolaus Pevsner *The Buildings of Essex*, London, Yale University Press, 2007, p. 106

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5x3 lights of diamond latticing with include scattered fragments of late medieval stained glass found during the excavation and restoration process. A fragment showing the Virgin and Child is a noteworthy survival from Walden Abbey<sup>(30)</sup>. Other stained glass fragments remain in the windows of the hall, stair hall and kitchen. An old freestanding pump remains in the north courtyard. In 1993 the building underwent a further major refurbishment to be set up as a youth and conference centre and it continues to fulfil this function today providing residential and day courses as well as hosting wedding receptions and other festivities. The plan of the college, with 2 courts separated by the hall and chapel can be paralleled in the contemporary Wadham College, Oxford.



Picture 1.9 St Mark's College as it appeared in 1836, from Richard Neville's 'History of Audley End'.

**1.96** The interior includes fireplaces set diagonally in room corners of the tenements, each being chamfered with arched heads and all now plastered and painted. Within the kitchen the fireplace (transverse to range) is of large four-centred arched construction with a 17th century wooden surround, cut down to fit, with bold carved heads, swags and cartouches and remains of paint. It was possibly removed from Audley End House during the late 18th century restoration and updating of the State Rooms under Robert Adam. The fireplace has an old quadrant chimney crane and an elaborate grate of circa 1800. Lamb's tongue chamfered stops are found on the stair hall and principal hall joists and a fragment of wind braced, clasped side purlin roof is notable at the west end of the central block of the west front, commensurate with its 17th century date of

30 as suggested by James Bettley and Nikolaus Pevsner *The Buildings of Essex*, London, Yale University Press, 2007, p. 106

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construction and subsequent division of hall. The re-built chapel has one original early 17th century hammer beam truss, restored and a second truss to the east was constructed in the 20th century in imitation.



Picture 1.10 Entrance to St Mark's College with the arched doorway and elaborate chimney stacks.

**1.97** A significant boundary wall to St Mark's encloses the building to the the north and north west and is Grade II listed. It dates principally from the 17th century with some later additions of 18th century date and was presumably contiguous in its construction with the building of the main almshouse complex. Much of the original is constructed of small red bricks with wide gauged joints. The principal gateway at the corner has piers with low pyramidal caps and a two-leaf gate.

**1.98** Beyond St Mark's and running northwards up a slight incline is the single street that comprises Audley End village proper. White washed cottages nestle closely against this thoroughfare, their stone steps protrude just slightly and the pleasing mix of building materials, roofs and jutting dormers present a most attractive aspect. Those on the west side comprise a single unbroken run of 11 one and a half storey cottages which are listed as a group at Grade II\*. They mainly date from the 18th century, but some elements of 16th and 17th century constructions remain. All are timber-framed and plastered with considerable areas of early basket and combed pargetting which have been neatly restored in a number of places The peg-tiled roofs are mostly pierced by

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small dormer windows. A number of later additions have been successfully incorporated, such as the 19th century rear gabled wing to No. 2 which includes decorated barge-boards stylistically linked with those on the former post office across the street.



Picture 1.11 This run of diminutive dormers on properties lining the west side of Audley End village makes an attractive prospect.

**1.99** On the opposite side of the street are two further groups of buildings. The first run comprises numbers 9-15 and again mainly date to the 18th century. Most are of timber framed construction, one and a half storeys with peg-tiled roofs although No. 9, a distinctive 19th century building, is of flint cobble with red brick banding under a slate roof. The final group on the village street are a little more varied with buildings of both one and a half and two storeys in height dating from the 16th to the 19th centuries. As a group they are listed Grade II\*. Most notable is the diminutive red brick former post office which was originally built as the village school.

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Picture 1.12 The village street as seen from the north sometime in the early 1900s. The scene is little changed today. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum).

**1.100** Adjacent to the former post office can be found the telephone kiosk (Grade II). It is of the K6 type, designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and made by various contractors in cast iron.

**1.101** At the top of the village, strung out along the main Audley End Road and facing into the park are three properties of grand proportions - Home Farm House, Abbey House and Lion House. Amongst these Abbey House is the most prominent. Probably originally of early 17th century date it was substantially enlarged in 1969-70 to approx 3 times its former size, by additions to the east and west and by the construction of a large west wing by Philip Jebb. Of timber-framed construction it is now almost entirely clad in red brick with clay tiled roof. The front elevation is symmetrical with a seven window range, parapet with modillioned cornice, bays 3 and 5 have similar 3-cant bay windows through both storeys. All windows are sashes with narrow glazing bars and are of 3x4 panes. Home Farm House is of timber framed construction, originally dating from the 17th century it was refaced with brick in the 18th century. The principal elevation faces north onto the road and comprises 5 bays, a central doorway with fluted pilasters, simple cornice hood, pulvinated frieze, panelled reveals, and a door of 6 fielded panels. All the windows have very good voussoirs and all are sashes with glazing bars, 3x4 panes. Above, parapet with dentilled cornice masks the half hipped roof of 20th century tiles, central square chimney stack.

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Picture 1.13 Home Farm House, originally dating from the 17th century it was refaced with brick in the 18th century.

**1.102** Though not as prominent as Abbey House, the nearby Lion House is most visually arresting. Built in the early 19th century of red brick with a hipped slate roof it is of rectangular plan but with the front centre brought forward in 3 cants. Its principal feature is the range of ten windows of `Gothick' 2-centred arched form with sashes and glazing bars ascending to `Y' tracery above. A central yellow brick chimney stack projects from the roof at its apex. Bettley and Pevsner note that "it appears to be based on a design by T. Lightoler published in *The Gentleman and Farmer's Architect* (1762)"<sup>(31)</sup>.

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31 James Bettley and Nikolaus Pevsner *The Buildings of Essex*, London, Yale University Press, 2007, p. 105

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Picture 1.14 Print of a watercolour circa 1900 showing the Adam Bridge and approach to Audley End. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Town Library).



Picture 1.15 The visually arresting prospect of Lion House with its range of 'Gothick' windows, set back from the road and framed by mature horse chestnuts.

**1.103 Important buildings or structures within the curtilages of Listed Buildings.** None are noted.

**1.104 Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution.** No such buildings have been noted in this part of the conservation Area.

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

**1.106** A range of fine walls are found within this part of the Conservation Area - either in brick or flint with brick piers and capping detail. Those that are listed have been noted above, although there are a number of others forming the boundaries to or linking listed buildings. Most prominent is that forming the western boundary of St Mark's yard where it is particularly visible along the long drive to the main entrance. Other shorter lengths of wall can be seen extending up on both sides of the road from the bridge over the Fulfen Slade to the village and beyond No. 2 to Home Farm House. They are almost all in good repair and both the Diocese and Audley End Estate should be commended for their care.



Picture 1.16 A fine run of flint walling with semi-circular brick caps lines the long approach to St Mark's.

**1.107** To the front of Abbey House and Lion House runs a range of white painted chain-linked posts. Whilst of no age, these serve to separate the properties from the thoroughfare and enhance their formal standing as grand dwellings looking into the formal park.

**1.108 Important open spaces.** Although not a public space, the grounds surrounding St Mark's represents an area of high quality open space. The varied trees, high hedges and mown lawns add to its quality and sense of an 'undiscovered gem' particularly when approached from the south along the track from Wenden Road.

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**1.109** The small triangular green at the entrance to the village is important as it acts as a buffer between the sometimes busy road and the houses. Sometimes it can become congested with parked vehicles, but mostly it is an attractive, though small open space.

**1.110** **Particularly important trees and hedgerows.** Mature trees of exceptional quality are one component of a quintessential English landscape. Those surrounding St Mark's effectively screen the property from the trackway whilst trees behind Abbey House and Lion House provide a green backdrop to these properties setting them in scale to the overall streetscene. Hedgerows delineating the boundaries of the settlement play an important function in making the transition from built environment to open countryside. Their retention is of the utmost importance.



Picture 1.17 The interaction of walls and quality hedges on the southern approach to St Mark's plays an important part in defining the quality of this part of the Conservation Area.

**1.111** **Important views.** Two such views are identified - looking along the approach to St Mark's and the view along the village street. Additionally, glimpsed views into St Mark's from various points are important and serve to place the area in context with the surrounding landscape.

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

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**1.113** As mentioned above, the majority of the walling is in good repair. The exception is that portion where the road crosses the Fulfen Slade. Here some spalling has resulted in losses of bricks and flints and the rather utilitarian pipework and railings are not in keeping with the otherwise high quality of the area. Some remedial works would be beneficial, though it is noted that the area is a difficult one given the location and proximity to water.



Picture 1.18 Overhead services on utility poles are somewhat disruptive in the streetscene.



Picture 1.19 Any opportunity to repair the village pump would be beneficial.

**1.114 Opportunities to secure improvements.** The village pump located on a section of walling on the village street is looking somewhat neglected and has lost the original handle. A crack in the wall is also evident.

**1.115 Suggested boundary changes.** A small amendment to the boundary to the east of Audley End village former Post Office to exclude the area of open woodland and grass verge. This area does not represent a significant landscape feature and makes little, if any contribution to the setting of the adjacent buildings. Furthermore, the revised boundary will more closely follow a demarked boundary on the ground.

**1.116 Other actions.** None.

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### Audley End House and Grounds

**1.117 General overview.** Audley End House and parkland is one of the most important archaeological, architectural and historic sites in the whole of the district. The grand house sits as the centrepiece of a carefully contrived landscape that, in many ways, is unchanged since Sir John Griffin Griffin commissioned Lancelot 'Capability' Brown to produce a picturesque setting for his newly remodelled home in the late 18th century. Service buildings tag onto the north side of the main house and to the west the long range of the 17th century stable block in mellow red brick is still visible. Beyond are workshops and the walled kitchen garden and to the front the great glassy sweep of the River Cam crossed by a number of bridges, most notably that designed by Robert Adam in classical style to carry the road to Saffron Walden. Everywhere there are trees, either single specimens standing in the parkland, acting as a backdrop to the house or fringing the skyline where, to the west they almost hide the Temple of Victory on Ring Hill. Modern roads do intrude, but only slightly and discrete signage serves as a reminder that this is a tourist attraction as well as a historic monument and "even in its reduced form [is] the most impressive country house in Essex"<sup>(32)</sup>.

**1.118 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.** There is the designated Scheduled Ancient Monument of Audley End House and park<sup>(33)</sup>. This encompasses the current English Heritage site and extends from the Orchard and nursery garden in the west to the back park where it meets Icehouse Lodge in the east.

**1.119 Designated Parks and Gardens.** The extent of the original historic parkland has been accorded Grade I status as a Designated Park and Garden. Effectively this includes the current golf course and woodland to the north up to Northend Lodge, the parkland and present agricultural land to the outskirts of Saffron Walden and Walden Lodge, the present Audley End Miniature Railway and land to Gamages Wood and, to the west open land and woodland up to an including the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Ring Hill<sup>(34)</sup>.

**1.120 Archaeological sites.** The site is of great archaeological significance being the location of the original Benedictine Abbey of Walden, of which there are now no remains. Foundations, broken columns and mutilated mullions have been found under the eastern lawn and the flower gardens. Other foundations and bones have been excavated from the bowling green, near the great pond. Building remains discovered beneath the floor of Audley End House itself suggest that the inner court behind the hall marks the site of the Abbey cloister. Collier states that extensive foundations were buried beneath the eastern lawn and flower beds of Audley End House<sup>(35)</sup>. The priory was founded by Geoffrey de Mandeville in 1139-1143 at about the same time as he was building the castle in Saffron Walden. By 1190 it had become important enough to be accorded the status of an abbey. In 1538 the abbey and its possessions were

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32 James Bettley and Nikolaus Pevsner *The Buildings of Essex*, London, Yale University Press, 2007, p. 95

33 'Audley End Mansion' List entry Number: 1002163

34 List entry Number: 1000312

35 Duffield William Collier *The People's History of Essex*, 1861 p.593

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surrendered to the king, who granted them to Sir Thomas Audley who converted the buildings for his house c1538-1544. Parts of the cloister walls have been revealed by excavations in the 1950's and in 1979 when it was shown that the north, east and south sides of the inner court of Audley End House certainly incorporated, and the west side probably incorporates, the lower parts of the walls surrounding the monastic cloister, therefore confirming that the abbey cloister and inner court of the later Jacobean house were co-extensive. The Site Monument Record (SMR)<sup>(36)</sup> report notes significantly that:

*"This, taken with other evidence, including a late 16th century estate map, indicates a "remarkable structural continuity" between the Abbey and both the later houses. A tile floor from the church was found though it may be a relaying as part of the 1st post medieval house. Other features located included parts of the south west corner of the cloister, including, probably, the bases of engaged columns for a vault over the undercroft (possibly a century earlier than the rest of the, 14th century cloister). Early finds made close by include: many burials, iron nails (evidence for wooden coffins), 2 lead coffins (all these probably from the monks' cemetery), 2 13th-14th century circular bronze brooches with bronze swivel pins, found with human remains, probably from a lay cemetery. There is stonework at the house from the early and recent excavations, including a finial in Barnack stone, found in 1832. A broken piece of flat gravestone was referred to in 1836 but has disappeared. The stonework includes items from all stages of the house's development. Other building materials found include: brick, roof tiles, floor tiles of varying types. Some tiles are by the 'Westminster tiler', others are of Flemish manufacture<sup>(37)</sup>."*

The 19th century parterre garden was excavated 1985-87 in advance of reconstruction. Pre-19th century features revealed in flowerbeds and later features were recorded but not excavated. The 1950 trenches at the eastern corners of the cloister were reopened and recorded in detail for the first time. It seemed that the 14th century rebuilding of the cloisters did not affect any structural aspects of the claustral buildings, being restricted to the pentice itself and some rearrangement of doorways and internal features. South of the south transept lies the presumed chapter house with a narrow slype beyond and other buildings stretching to the south east corner<sup>(38)</sup>. The Site Monument Record concludes that the two short lived monastic sites are "of the utmost archaeological importance" and that "the remarkable structural continuity between Walden Abbey and Audley End I, and indeed between the abbey and the inner court of Audley End II" should be noted as integral to an understanding of the history of the site.

**1.121 Individually Listed Buildings and other structures.** A selection of representative Listed Building descriptions (generally abbreviated) is provided below.

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36 SMR 410

37 Excavation report: *Saffron Walden: excavations and research 1972-1980* (Drury, P. J. in Bassett, S. R.) No 45, pp. 94-105 Dated: 1982

38 Excavation report: *Audley End: Excavations in the Courtyard 1987* (Cunningham, C) Interim Report Dated: 1987

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**1.122** Audley End House. Grade I. What remains today is part of a palatial country house built for Thomas Howard, Lord Treasurer to James I between 1605 and 1614 by the Earl of Northampton, John Thorpe and Bernard Janssen, mason. It overlies the earlier Abbey building but had a second, larger outer court to the west. This was entirely demolished in a number of phases by the mid 18th century in a programme of works that also included the removal of the east range of the inner court that contained the long gallery, council chamber and original chapel and the infilling of a loggia on the south side (as now). Principal refurbishment occurred in 1721, by Sir John Vanburgh, in the 1770's for Sir John Griffin Griffin by Robert Adam, and in the 19th century when many of the rooms were reorganised for the second, third and fourth Lord Braybrookes.

**1.123** The best sense of the scale and concept of the original house can be gained from the 24 detailed intaglio prints of Audley End House, published in 1686 by Henry Winstanley<sup>(39)</sup> when the House was briefly a "Royall Pallace" for Charles II. It is notable that in spite of the many alterations subsequent owners have retained the Jacobean style in much of the later refurbishment. In 1948 it was sold to the Ministry of Works<sup>(40)</sup>.



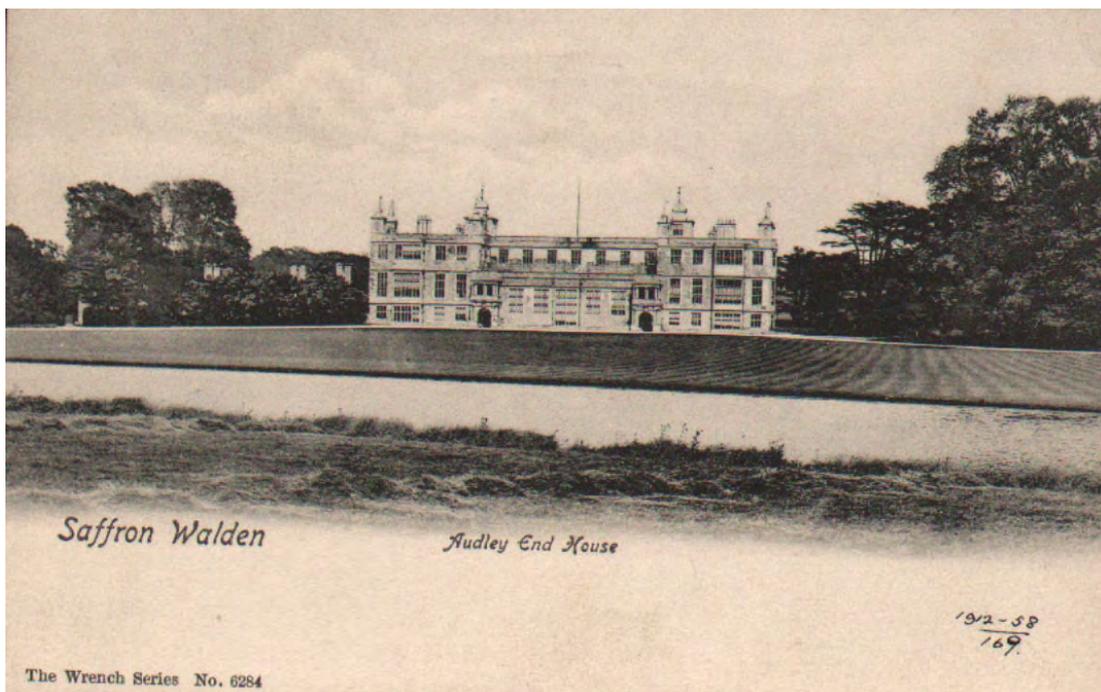
Picture 1.20 Henry Winstanley's view of the great court at Audley End, as originally constructed. The artist has not shown the outer wall and gates so as to get a better view of the front of the main house. Engraved as part of a series of images of the house, then a Royal Palace, and printed 1676-1688. (© The Trustees of the British Museum - Museum number 1883,1013.31).

39 Born in Saffron Walden in 1644, Winstanley's father (also named Henry Winstanley) was land steward to the Earl of Suffolk during the years 1652-1656. The young Henry Winstanley was also employed at Audley End House, initially as a porter and then as a secretary to the Earl. When the House was sold to Charles II in 1666 he continued to work there under Clerk of the Works, John Bennett, and following Bennett's death, Winstanley was appointed Clerk of the Works at Audley End in 1679 - a post he held until 1701. Cf *The Prints of Henry Winstanley* by Martyn Everett, 2006

40 *The Buildings of England: Pevsner N & Ratcliffe E: Essex: London: 1965: 61; Architectural History: Drury PJ: No Other Palace in the Kingdom Will Compare With It: London: 1980: 1-39; Drury PJ & Gow IR: Audley End, Essex: HMSO, London: 1984*

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**1.124** The house, as it now stands, is of U shaped plan, clunch ashlar faced, three storeys high with the principal first floor the tallest. All the windows are of ovolo moulded, mullioned and transomed form, lights mainly now have plain glass. Parapets all round hide roofs and are pierced with strapwork decoration. To the front the two porches act as ground and first floor loggias with Ionic grouped corner shafts of black and white marble with profuse strapwork and grotesque decoration. The ground floor round headed arched doorways give onto early 17th century doors variously panelled with war and peace motifs. Loggia on the upper floors have a pair of openings to front. At the north and south ends of the range there are tower shaped blocks with turrets at the corners with blocked, keystone, round headed apertures, swept copper capping and weather-vanes. To the front the full height bay window is a prominent feature giving light to the Great Hall. Other windows on on the ground floor are 7x2-lights, first floor 7x3-lights and second floor 7x2-lights. Waterheads around the court on the south side can be various observed with dates of 1679, and on the north side marked I.R.1686 and 1786.



Picture 1.21 Audley End House as it appeared in the early 20th century from the far side of the River Cam. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum).

**1.125** Inside, the principal features include the Jacobean Great Hall and screen and contemporary north and south timber-framed newel staircases. The saloon, once the Jacobean Great chamber, is particularly impressive with its original ornamental plaster ceiling depicting serpents and an early interpretation of a native North American. Later work includes one room of a set of state apartments, an 18th century stone staircase by Sir John Vanburgh leading off the Great Hall high end and the refurbishment of rooms in the south range by Robert Adam. Contemporary with Adam, but designed by John Hobcroft is the 'Gothick' chapel in the north west angle.

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Picture 1.22 The imposing front elevation of Audley End from the sward.

**1.126** Enclosed service courtyard abuts the north side of house constructed in single storey brick with slate roofs. Early 19th century segment headed doorways are noted with some doors retaining early 19th century reeded flush panels. Windows are mainly also segment headed casements with glazing bars. There is also a second group of larger buildings in arc facing west, some of which are two storeyed, all linked and contiguous with the service court, hipped slated roofs, some provided with paired display Roman cement chimney stack. The whole irregular group is now colour washed and restored internally to interpret the original functions of dairy and laundry.

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Picture 1.23 The range of 18th century colour washed service buildings extending to the north and west of the main house.

**1.127** Audley End Stables (Grade I). To the north west of the main house stands the fine range of red brick stable buildings. Originally thought to pre-date the main construction of the house by some years, the current opinion is that in style and materials the stable block is most likely to have been constructed as part of the major rebuilding of the house undertaken by Thomas Howard, 1st Earl of Suffolk, between c.1605 and 1614. This is confirmed by documentary evidence in the form of a survey of the estate made before 1605, which shows that there was nothing on the site of the present building at this date. Being a stable block it was not originally conceived as a high status building, as Giles Worsley notes in *The British Stable* <sup>(41)</sup>, ‘there is generally little sign of the advanced ideas of Elizabethan and Jacobean architecture in stable design’ going on to add that ‘this is also the case at the grandest surviving stables of this date, those at Audley End’. As with the main house, Henry Winstanley produced a number of engraved plates, one of the north front and one the south, which serve to show that the surviving structure has been relatively little altered since the late 17th century with only the loss of a number of relatively minor features such as the lean-to to the east of the central crosswing <sup>(42)</sup>.

41 Giles Worsley *The British Stable*, Yale University Press, 2005

42 Cf. the full study: Pete Smith *Stable Building Audley End House Saffron Walden, Essex. Research and Analysis*, English Heritage, 2008

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Picture 1.24 The stable block probably around the end of the 19th century from an image donated to Saffron Walden Museum in 1912. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum).

**1.128** At the north and south ends of the range and in the centre, gabled wings project on both the north and south sides. The south front has 1:3:1:3:1 window range of three-light windows with stone surrounds and mullions, there are four-centred arched heads to the lights and brick square label moulds. On each side of the central wing there are three brick gabled dormers. Moulded brick bands extend across both fronts between the storeys providing a decorative finish. On the north front the windows are similar to those on the south and between the wings there are large bays with splayed corners and tiled roofs. Each has has storeys of lights with the lower storey blocked. The central wing has an archway with pilasters and pediment. Roof tiled, with an octagonal lantern with a leaded fleche at the crossing of the central wing and main block. Internally, many of the 19th century stable fittings remain in place and the loose boxes and stalls are still used to house horses.



Picture 1.25 A view of the back of the stable block as it appeared in 1836, from Richard Neville's 'History of Audley End'.

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Picture 1.26 The fine early 17th century stables, set against mature tree cover and just back from the river make a most attractive and historic scene.

**1.129** A number of lodges and gates guard the entrances to the historic park. Two are to be found in the Conservation Area. To the south of the main house and at the entry point from Audley End Road is the Grade II listed Lion Lodge. It sits adjacent to the prominent Lion Gate (see below). Built in the Elizabethan style sometime around 1846 of red brick with stone dressings it is a partly two storey building of rectangular plan but with projections on three sides. The roofs are all obscured by pierced stone parapets in period style. All windows are casements of cast-iron with lozenge and octagonal latticed glazing and the large windows have stone mullions and transoms. A garden wall attached to house on north side has a doorway decorated in Elizabethan style with parapet over shaped with triple arches and accompanying tall pyramidal finials.

**1.130** The adjacent Grade II\* Lion Gate is the principal gateway to Audley End House. Re-built in 1786 of oolitic stone and now colour washed, the central large carriageway and smaller side footways all with have semicircular arched heads set between inner and outer piers with recessed panelled pilasters. An attic storey over central arch bears an inscribed panel with date of '1786' and is surmounting by a prominent Coade stone gorged lion on a chapeau inscribed 'Coade, London'. Draped oval Coade stone urns surmount the flanking piers and the lower terminal piers also have smaller similar urns (that to the west being the original Coade stone whilst that on the eastern extension is supplied in imitation). The date, '1616' is set in the spandrels of the centre gate arch. The gates themselves, are of leaf decorated wrought-iron, two-leaved gates to each archway with subsidiary iron gate piers to central archway. All paired gates have a dropped swept centre and spear head railings.

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**1.131** Cambridge Lodge (listed Grade II) stands almost due west of the house and gives exit onto the main London to Cambridge road (now the B1383). It was built of red brick in the Jacobean style in 1834 by Thomas Rickman, the noted Quaker architect principally remembered for classifying medieval architecture but also as the creative mind behind New Court of St John's College Cambridge<sup>(43)</sup>. The present lodge is of two storeys with the entrance porch rising to a three storeyed tower with an ogee leaded roof with a modillion cornice. On the west end of the front there is a semi-circular two storeyed bay, stuccoed, with casement windows with stone mullions and transoms to the ground storey windows and mullions to the first storey windows. The doorway has a stone surround and an elaborate panelled and carved door. There are two chimney stacks with three octagonal shafts and moulded caps.

**1.132** The associated Cambridge Gate (Grade II) dates from the mid 19th century and comprises a gateway with brick octagonal piers with precast stone tops with panels ornamented with roses and portcullis and surmounted by bulls heads. The precast stone tops are weathered. There are wrought iron gates and flanking spearhead railings on a brick base with a moulded stone cap.

**1.133** Surrounding and within the park there are also a number of other listed structures. Most notable is the Grade I listed bridge over the River Cam designed and built in 1763-4 by Robert Adam. It is constructed of oolitic stone ashlar, hump-backed, curved with splayed ends and with three elegant segmental arches. The central section is balustraded with terminal piers. Each side has roundels in the spandrels, the south ones being plain but those to north have heraldic decoration in the two inner ones and 'ANNO 1764' in the outer examples<sup>(44)</sup>.



Picture 1.27 A 20th century view of the Adam Bridge showing the roundels and, in particular, the building date of '1764'. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum).

43 H. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* 3rd ed. p 813

44 Drury PJ & Gow IR *Audley End, Essex* HMSO, London, 1984

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**1.134 Important buildings or structures within the curtilages of Listed Buildings.** A number of such structures have been noted and are detailed below. The issue of deciding whether or not a building is 'curtilage listed' can sometimes be problematic and there is no exact legal definition of a building's curtilage.

**1.135** The main tests relate to the physical layout of the land surrounding the main building/s at the date of listing, the physical layout and functional relationship of structures to each other; ownership, past and present and use or function, past and present. Structures need to be ancillary or subordinate to the main Listed Building and form part of the land and not be historically independent. Protection is granted to such objects or structures within the curtilage of a Listed Building if they were built prior to July 1, 1948. In determining the extent of a Listed Building and its curtilage, a key assessment will be to examine the situation at the time of listing.

**1.136** Interpretation is difficult at the Audley End site and briefly explained in the individual building descriptions below. Whatever alternative legal interpretation others may take in the future, the key point is that all of the buildings identified by this Appraisal contribute to the visual and historic importance of the respective sites and should be retained.



Picture 1.28 The head gardener's house, built in 1875 and situated at the southern corner of the walled kitchen garden.

**1.137** The former head gardener's house. An elegant and prominent building, set into the extreme south east corner of the walled kitchen garden. It is largely unaltered, two storeys, constructed of red brick with central gabled porch and projecting wing to

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the south. Four window range, all casements with a small half-width window over the porch. Set in the south projection under the eaves is a relief panel dated '1875' under the Neville bull and crown crest. Elaborate pierced 'thorn-work' barge boards to the gable ends with square section terminated finials. There are some similarities in the joinery with that employed on the former post office and No. 2 in Audley End Village. This property is considered to have had a functional relationship with and ancillary to the main Audley End House and thus 'curtilage listed'.



Picture 1.29 Range of agricultural buildings and stabling to immediate north of the stable block. They would appear to date from the latter part of the 17th century.

**1.138** Range of agricultural buildings and stabling to immediate north of the stable block. A long range in a continuous run variously of brick barns of various heights with high square ventilation apertures on the larger barn. Roofs tiled and hipped. Probably date from 17th century. A large structure on this site is shown on the Winstanley plan of c. 1676 where it is marked as 'the Stores' and again on the 'Capability' Brown design for a stable yard in 1763<sup>(45)</sup>. These are considered to have had a functional relationship with and ancillary to the listed stable block and thus 'curtilage listed'.

**1.139** The 'new coach house' on the north side of the stable yard consists of a slightly projecting central gabled section with a broad segmental arched doorway and double plank doors. At each side are single similar though slightly smaller segmental arched doorways with double plank doors. In the gable above the central archway is a three-light brick mullion window with graduated and pointed lights and leaded diamond panes. Research by English Heritage has concluded that It was probably built for the 5th Lord

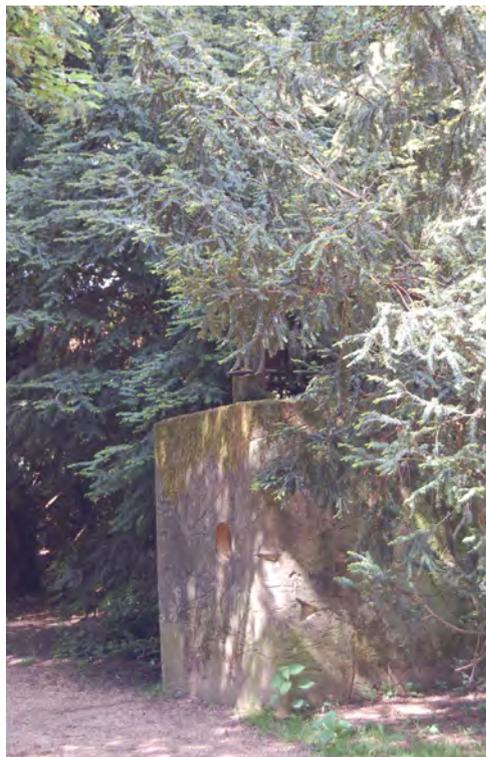
45 Pete Smith *Stable Building Audley End House Saffron Walden, Essex. Research and Analysis*, English Heritage, 2008, Fig 3 and Fig 30

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Braybrooke and designed by his architect, Richard Hussey<sup>(46)</sup> sometime around 1875. The western section of the building included a forge workshop and there is an external chimney stack at the rear. Today, following a recent restoration, the building houses the estate fire engine and a small gift shop. English Heritage conclude that "this relatively plain and functional late 19<sup>th</sup> century building contributes successfully to the larger group of buildings which form this stable yard"<sup>(47)</sup>. This building is considered to have had a functional relationship with and ancillary to the listed stable block and thus 'curtilage listed'.

**1.140** Range of potting sheds, gardeners' accommodation and vinery heating house. Single storey, constructed of red brick with casement windows. Central chimney stack. Presumably contemporary with the construction of the vinery, they are shown on the 1877 Ordnance Survey.

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



Picture 1.30 Road block located immediately to the west of the Fly Bridge.

**1.142** Situated in the Cam valley on route of the vital London to Cambridge road and near the river and railway line, Audley End occupied a strategically important site during the Second World War abutting the route of the GHQ Line (General Headquarters Line)

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46 Pete Smith *Supplement to Audley End Stables Historic Buildings Report*, English Heritage, 2009, p.6

47 *ibid* p.8

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- a defensive line built to contain an expected German invasion<sup>(48)</sup>. The house was also significantly tenanted by the military and used first as the training base by the Dutch Special Operations Executive (SOE) and subsequently by the Polish SOE<sup>(49)</sup>. A rectangular concrete pillbox with short blast wall on its north west side is located on the west side of the River Cam, overlooking the lawns of Audley End House. Unusually, there is no loophole in its SW wall. A Second World War road block is also located on Stable Bridge. The site comprised a pair of concrete anti tank cubes at the bridge's western end plus a demolition chamber inserted into the eastern end of the bridge. The cubes remain but the chamber has been filled in. The bridge was also defended by a pillbox to its south-west (NMR TL 53 NW 215) which is no longer extant.

**1.143** A further contemporary road block is also located immediately west of the Fly Bridge. The site again comprises two large concrete anti-tank cubes. Originally the two cubes would have supported a steel hawser which could be lowered for friendly traffic or fixed in the raised position as an anti tank obstacle. Additionally, a number of loop holes were cut in the wall of the Bothy Garden permitting covering fire out over Duck Street. The pillboxes and cubes are one of a number of similar defensive features constructed along the River Cam in 1940-1941. They formed part of the Audley End Defence Area (Number 70) and the GHQ Line (Essex). These sites are now included in a leaflet and walk around the Saffron Walden area produced by Essex County Council.



Picture 1.31 Soldiers training at Audley End. From the uniforms, this shot is likely to have been taken during the inter-war years. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Museum).

48 The GHQ Line ran from the northern end of the Taunton Stop Line near Highbridge in Somerset, along the River Brue and the Kennet and Avon Canal to Reading, around the south of London south of Guildford and Aldershot, to Canvey Island and Great Chesterford in Essex, before heading north to end in Yorkshire. Full details are available via the Defence of Britain Project:

<http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cba/projects/dob/>

49 Ian Valentine, *Station 43, Audley End House and SOE's Polish Section*, The History Press, 1998

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**1.144 Other distinctive features that make an important architectural or historic contribution.** Walls so identified are protected from demolition without prior consent unless otherwise stated. A range of boundary treatments are found within this part of the Conservation Area - wooden agricultural fences, garden hedges, flint walls with brick piers and capping detail, brick walls, formal park railings and more modest estate railings. The most important are listed.

**1.145** Most prominent on the approach from the town is the south boundary wall (Grade II\*) to Audley End Park stretching along Audley End Road for 1120m from Lion Lodge to the edge of Saffron Walden. It is contemporary with the building of the original house in the early 17th century and is constructed of red brick with some yellow bricks, mainly in English bond with some patches of garden wall bond.

**1.146** On the other side of Lion Lodge is the run of railings, listed Grade II. They divide the park from the road and are notable for their fine early 19th century square section bars with spear tops and slender lower alternating bars.

**1.147** A fine probably 3m high section of brick and flint wall links the stable block with Cambridge Lodge. It is mostly obscured by trees from the park but is very visible from the lane that runs along the back.

**1.148** The length of brick and flint walling extending from Lion Lodge along the side of the B1383 towards Duck Street is most prominent in the street scene and serves as a visual indication of the approach to the house and park. This long length of walling forms the outer boundary to the walled orchard garden which is itself linked to the kitchen garden.

**1.149** The walled kitchen garden lies some 350m to the north-west of Audley End House. It contains four enclosures and has partly been restored in recent years to its 19th century form with flower, fruit and vegetable areas, each edged by box hedging and accessed by formal paths laid down with hoggin. An early 19th century vine house survives in one of the compartments and faces to the south. On the north of this same wall are a number of former workshops and potting sheds, now recreated and open to the public. The walls that comprise the boundary to the kitchen garden are of note particularly for the various warming fire apertures employed in former times to heat the bricks in order to prevent frost damage to delicate fruit on the trees espaliered against the them. The walled gardens were established in the 1750s by the Countess of Portsmouth and extended in 1768 by Sir John Griffin Griffin who added glasshouses and an orangery. These were demolished in 1802 when the vine house was built.



Picture 1.32 The kitchen and orchard gardens as shown on the 1877 Ordnance Survey. (Reproduced courtesy of Saffron Walden Town Library).

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Picture 1.33 Interaction between the fine high walls, restored vinery and maturing planting contribute to the quality of this historic kitchen garden which has served the main house for many years.

**1.150 Important open spaces.** The park of Audley End House represents an area of exceptionally high quality open space where the interaction of historic features, trees, water and landscape contribute to the local environment. Accordingly it has been accorded Grade I status as a designated historic park and garden.

**1.151 Particularly important trees and hedgerows.** Mature trees of exceptional quality are one component of a quintessential English landscape around the house and nearby properties. Those surrounding Audley End House effectively screen the property from the water meadows whilst trees around the stables and Cambridge Lodge provide a green backdrop to these properties setting them in scale to the overall landscape. Hedges delineating the northern boundaries of the parterre garden and hiding service wing buildings from the main house frontage play an important function in adding to the high quality and diversity of the environment. Other quality hedges and wide verges abutting the run down into the stable yard provide a transition from the surrounding open sward to the more functional areas of the estate. Their retention is of the utmost importance.

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Picture 1.34 A glimpsed view of the back of Audley End House through the specimen trees and hedges lining the formal gardens and adjacent to the ha-ha.

**1.152 Important views.** Views of this site could be taken from many angles. Those from the Adam Bridge looking over towards the main house, the stables and along the River Cam are most notable and have, in the past, been beloved of artists and engravers.

## 1 Part 1: Appraisal



Picture 1.35 The glassy sweep of the River Cam, re-engineered to its present course as part of 'Capability' Brown's landscape design and with Lady Portsmouth's Column visible in the distance.

**1.153 Elements that are out of character with the Conservation Area.** No elements are noted and English Heritage are to be congratulated on their management of the site.

**1.154 Opportunities to secure improvements.** None noted.



Picture 1.36 The importance of the landscaped parkland in providing a setting for Audley End is apparent in this view of the house from just below the Temple of Victory.

**1.155 Suggested boundary changes.** Currently the walled kitchen garden and orchard gardens, the Elysian Garden, Tea House Bridge and Temple of Concord are all excluded. These features all sit within the immediate park designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Together with the extensive archaeology they are integral to the history of the site and are importantly linked to and contribute to the unique character of the Audley End House estate. It is therefore proposed to extend the boundary of the Conservation Area to include the whole of the area currently designated as the Audley End Scheduled Monument.

**1.156 Other actions.** None.

## Part 2 - Management Proposals 1

### Revised Conservation Area Boundary

**2.1** There are two proposed revisions:

1. A small amendment to the boundary to the east of Audley End village former Post Office to exclude the area of open woodland and grass verge.
2. To extend the boundary to include the whole of the area currently designated as the Audley End Scheduled Monument.

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

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

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

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

Telephone no. 01799 510510

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

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

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

### Planning Control and Good Practice: Listed Buildings

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

**2.6** The Listed Buildings and associated structures within their curtilages, including those specifically identified by this Appraisal are important and are a significant contribution to the quality of the built environment of Audley End. 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.

## 1 Part 2 - Management Proposals

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

**2.7** Three such unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area have been identified. The Council will seek to ensure that these are retained. These are as follows: The head gardener's cottage, the 'new coach house' and the range of agricultural buildings and stabling to the immediate north of the stable block.

**2.8 Proposed Article 4 Directions.** In the case of Audley End no such Directions are proposed because all historic buildings or structures are either listed or lie within the curtilage of Listed Buildings and are thus already afforded adequate protection.

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

**2.9** This Appraisal has identified several features including walls and the pump in Audley End Village that make a particular contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Some walls are protected from demolition without prior consent by virtue of exceeding the specified heights relevant to Conservation Area or by Listed Building legislation. Any proposal involving their demolition is also unlikely to be approved. Additionally the various Second World War military installations comprising the pillbox on the west side of the River Cam, roadblocks on the Stable Bridge and another on the Fly Bridge and loopholes in the Bothy Garden wall should all be retained.

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

**2.10 Important open land, open spaces and gaps.** The open spaces as identified being principally the grounds of St Mark's College and the park to Audley End House. All represent landscape features that materially contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area that must be protected.

**2.11 Particularly important trees and hedgerows.** Only the most significant trees 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. The quality trees in the grounds of St Mark's College, behind Abbey House and Lion House provide a green backdrop to these properties. Those throughout the Audley End park add scale and interest as well as forming part of the important historic landscape. Additionally, hedges on the periphery, particularly to the south of the village serve as a transition into the open fieldscape beyond.

## Part 2 - Management Proposals 1

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

**2.12** The most important views within and out of the Conservation Area are diagrammatically shown. Particularly notable are those views across the parkland from various vantage points to Audley End House.

### Enhancement Proposals to Deal with Detracting Elements

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

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

Detracting element	Location	Proposed Action
Overhead utility services on intrusive poles	At various locations in Audley End Village. These poles and associated overhead services are the most disruptive element in the Conservation Area	Contact utility company to explore potential of securing improvements of selected overhead services in selected locations
Spalled and unsightly brickwork/pipes	Walling extending across the Fulfen Slade	Liaise with Audley End Estate to seek remedial action

#### Other actions

The village pump located on a section of walling on the village street is looking somewhat neglected and has lost the original handle. A crack in the wall is also evident. It is noted that subsequent to the appraisal being undertaken work has now been completed on the pump and wall.



Fig 2 - Character Analysis



Saffron Walden Audley End Village  
Conservation Area Appraisal: Character Analysis

1:3,800

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# 1 Maps

## Character Analysis Key

	Existing Conservation Area boundary
	Proposed extension/reduction of the Conservation Area
	Archaeological Sites
	Scheduled Ancient Monument
 —  <b>TK</b>	Individually Listed Buildings, walls and Telephone Kiosk
	Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area
	Important green spaces
	General location of important trees
	Water features
<b>Other distinctive features to be protected from demolition (including walls and railings within the curtilage of Listed Buildings).</b>	
	Walls
	Railings
	Pump
	Important views
	Detracting elements out of character
	World War II defensive features

Figure 3 - Management Plan



Saffron Walden Audley End Village  
Conservation Area Appraisal: Management Plan

1:3,800

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# 1 Maps

## Management Plan Key

	Revised Conservation Area boundary, adopted policy ENV1 applies
	Archaeological Sites
	Scheduled Ancient Monument
 — <b>TK</b>	Individually Listed Buildings, walls and Telephone Kiosk . Adopted policy ENV 2 applies
	Other buildings that make an important architectural or historic contribution to the Conservation Area. See policy ENV 1
	Important green spaces, adopted policies ENV 3 and ENV 8 apply
	General location of important trees
	Water features
<b>Other distinctive features to be protected from demolition (including walls and railings within the curtilage of Listed Buildings).</b>	
	Walls
	Railings
<b>P</b>	Pump
<b>"</b> <b>&lt;</b>	Important views
<b>E</b>	Proposed enhancement
	World War II defensive features

## Appendices 1

### Appendix 1 - Sources

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