



Great Canfield Village Design Statement



Virgin and Child (mid C13th)
Mural in church of St Mary, Great Canfield

INRI

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Introduction

What is a Village Design Statement?

In order to involve rural communities in maintaining their character and managing change without altering the uniqueness of the area, the Government established the concept of a Village Design Statement (“VDS”).

Our VDS gives a detailed description of the existing character and main features of design in Great Canfield – the things that make it special for its residents. It identifies the physical qualities and characteristics of the village and the surroundings that are valued by local people, and any particular aspects they would like to conserve and protect. Our VDS provides Design Guidelines. The VDS has been considered within the context of the Adopted Local Plan to ensure that the Guidelines conform to Uttlesford District Council’s planning policy and has been adopted as Council Approved Guidance as part of the planning process.

The overwhelming desire is to maintain the tranquil, rural character of our village. By “rural” we mean surrounded by open fields, buildings set back from the road and intermingled with native hedges and trees, large open spaces between the hamlets, very little traffic and many footpaths and bridleways, with natural features rather than buildings dominating the landscape.

Why produce one for Great Canfield?

Our Parish has evolved over many hundreds of years and, inevitably, will continue to evolve. The purpose of the VDS is to influence change in our village, not necessarily to prevent it and to ensure that any change is positive and protects the best of what we have.

The VDS will give local people a recognised voice at the very start of the planning process rather than having to rely on protest to make their views heard at the

end when it may be too late to influence decisions.

How does the VDS work?

It describes Great Canfield in three main ways:

- Our village in its setting
- The development of the overall settlement
- The characteristics of the buildings and spaces within the village

Each area of our village is different and the VDS helps the District Planning Officers appreciate this.

The VDS is intended to help protect visually important buildings and their settings, promote the use of appropriate designs and building materials and protect the rural lanes and open spaces.

The VDS will influence future development within our Parish. Its adoption by Uttlesford District Council means that it will become a 'material consideration' in the determination of planning applications and a positive influence on future development.

How has it been produced?

Following a meeting called by the Parish Council, a Committee was formed by a group of volunteers to produce the VDS. To be adopted by Uttlesford District Council it is essential that the Statement represents the views of the residents. The VDS is the result of full consultation with the whole Parish and this has been achieved in the following ways:

- Open monthly meetings held by the Committee over a period of more than two years
- An Open Day in November 2007 to elicit comments on the draft Questionnaire to go to all residents
- Consultation with local societies and associations

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- Most importantly, the Questionnaire circulated to all households in the Parish in March 2008: responses were received from two-thirds of the residents. (Where reference is made in this document to a proportion of respondents' views on a particular issue, it refers to the proportion of responses to that particular question)
- Regular updates in the monthly Parish News and quarterly Village Newsletter and on the VDS website www.greatcanfield.org.uk
- An evening exhibition in September 2008 where work in progress was displayed
- Invitations to residents to read and comment on draft versions, available in print and on the website
- Comments from Uttlesford District Council's Planning Officers and from the Rural Community Council of Essex
- An Open Meeting on 29th September 2009 to consider the draft final VDS.
- The Parish Council
- Uttlesford District Council Planning Officers and historic building advisers
- Essex County Council Planning Authority

References in parentheses (e.g. ENV1) are to the most relevant current UDC policies as set out in the Local Plan. These references are intended as a helpful starting point but are not exhaustive and residents are urged to consult the Local Plan, the UDC website or the UDC Planning Department for detailed information and advice as policies and nomenclature may change over time.

The Guidelines – shown in green boxes – are based on the views of the people who live in Great Canfield, what they value and how they want to shape their community. They have been endorsed by the Parish Council. If this guidance is followed, it will protect and enhance the unique character of our Parish.

The consultation process revealed a number of concerns which, while not strictly related to planning, nevertheless are important to residents. These are reflected in the Conclusions, also shown in green boxes. They are guidance for further action, either by the residents or the Parish Council.

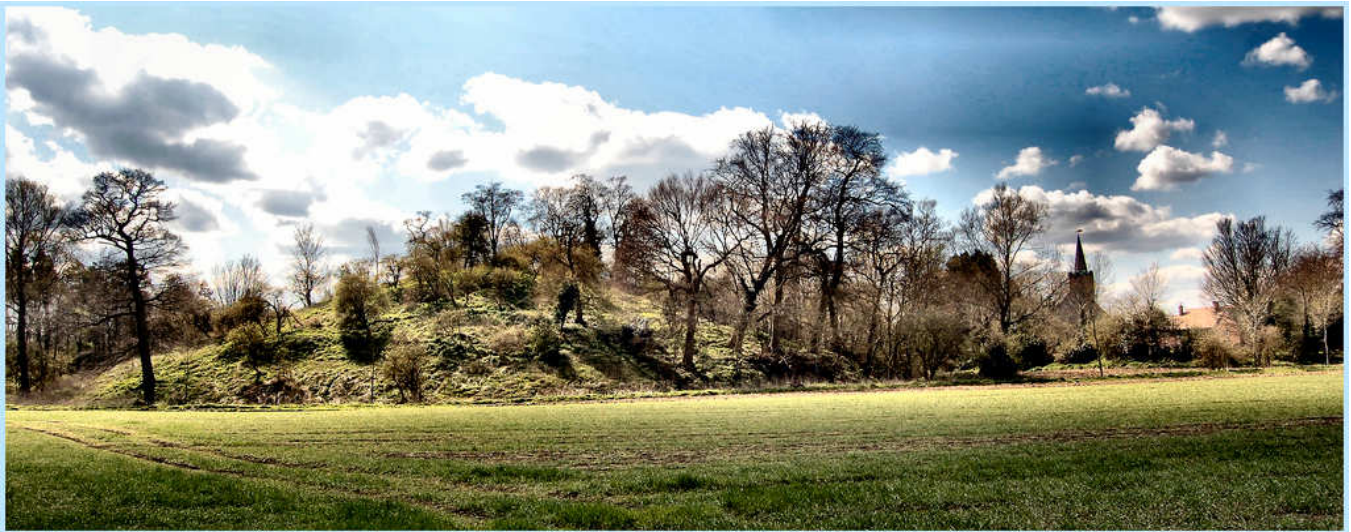
Copies of the VDS have been distributed to every household in the Parish. Copies have been lodged with the Parish Council and Uttlesford District Council, for inspection by anyone applying for planning permission within the Parish, and may also be downloaded from the website www.greatcanfield.org.uk.

Who is it for?

The look and feel of our village is affected by new development and alterations such as house extensions, window and door replacement, changes to walls and hedges, change of use of buildings and the way open spaces are used.

The guidance set out in this document is for anyone considering, or overseeing, development within Great Canfield, including:

- Local householders including those undertaking Permitted Development: see “Your Property” on page 42
- Local businesses and farmers
- Architects and designers
- Developers and builders



Castle mound and church

The Settlement

From early times the richness and fertility of the land have attracted people to the location we now know as Great Canfield. A great diversity of relics has been unearthed, with the earliest a Neolithic polished stone axehead, dating from 3,500 BC. Artefacts from Celtic times and the Roman occupation onwards have been found in quantity. Many of these are in private collections and some are held in Saffron Walden Museum.



Roman bricks in church fabric

There is also archaeological evidence of Roman settlement, unsurprising as Great Canfield lies between two Roman roads that converge not far away. Hundreds of years after their construction the Normans reused bricks from local Roman villas in the fabric of the church.

The name Canfelda probably derived from “field of canes or reeds”, perhaps linked with the marshy ground of the Roding valley. George Eland in his book “At the Courts of Great Canfield” suggested that the name Thorpe (Hope) End, a name retained into the C19th, hints at Danish occupation of that hamlet in 878. The Domesday Book of 1085 makes it clear that at the time of the Norman invasion Canfield formed a small part of the vast estates owned by Ulwine, a great Saxon thane.

Shortly afterwards Alberic de Vere was awarded the manor, and it remained in his family (later the Earls of Oxford) for five hundred years. The Normans built the castle mound, its outer bailey dating back to the early C12th, and the adjacent church of St Mary. The castle buildings were of wood. They and the palisades that surrounded them disappeared long ago, probably reapplied to dwellings elsewhere in Great Canfield. The farms around the church were demesne lands (farmed by serfs on behalf of the Lord of the Manor and not tenanted). *The Hall, Canfield Bury* and *Marsh Farm* now occupy some of that area.

Inside the church, acknowledged as a perfect example of Norman architecture, is a C13th mural of the Virgin and Child. In the porch are carvings from Norse mythology, adopted for Christian use, including Odin with his ravens Hugin and Mugin and depictions of a form of

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swastika, an ancient symbol also known as a fylfot cross.



Church of St Mary

The Parish and Manor seem always to have coincided in extent and the surviving manorial rolls help to explain the growth of the village over time. As the settlement evolved it developed a pattern still recognisable today. The Hart and Frith (or Thrift) Woods, both classified as Ancient Woodland, are now much diminished. They, together with the enclosed deer park which extended around *Canfield Park House* offered important economic rights and resources. Other woodland was cleared and the field system grew. In mediaeval times, large open fields ran

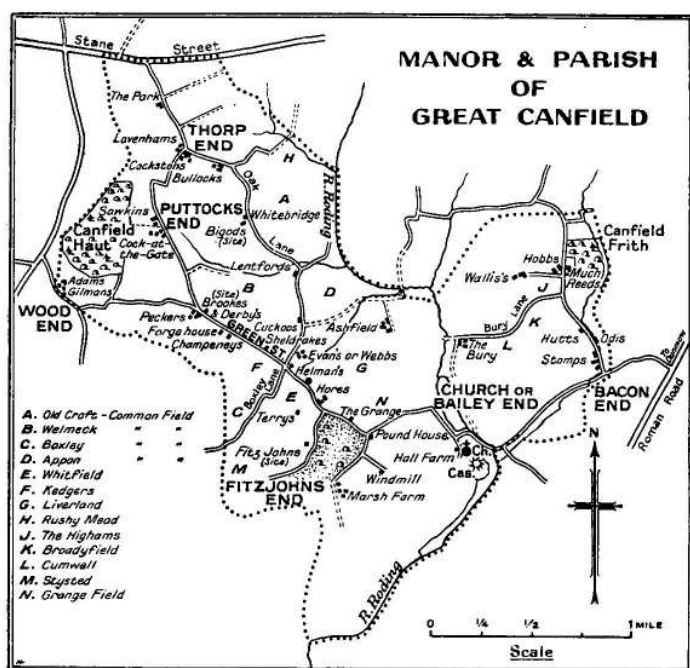
down the middle of the village to the north and east of Green Street, with Bexley (or Boxley) Common to the west of it. Some of the ancient field names are still used.

After the C12th there is no evidence of any nucleus or dominant area, with a handful of farms and agricultural workshops being scattered throughout the Parish. Over the centuries, the seven distinct hamlets or Ends evolved around the farms, crofts and woods. The accompanying sketch¹ shows those principal historical locations in the village, which survive to today with open countryside between them.

The church was always an important focus for the community but even in the Victorian period while almshouses lay close by the church, the inn, school and rectory were all situated separately from it. Shops, forge, maltings and post-office have all changed their locations over time. The stocks and whipping-post were situated centrally at Hellman's Cross and *The Griffin Inn* was part of what is now *The Grange*.

As now, houses generally sat within their own plots, the majority accessed directly from the main lanes though often set back from them. Most originated as farmhouses or farm cottages, although the former were often divided into tenements in Victorian times. Until the break-up of the Maryon-Wilson Estate in 1900, few were owner-occupied.

It appears that from very early times the village adopted the linear character it still possesses. Its lanes linked the common lands and discrete parts of the manor with the major highway at Stane Street (now the B 1256), and to the thriving market town of Hatfield Broad Oak with its Benedictine Priory, and other neighbouring settlements. In later centuries those lanes also provided links to Maryon-Wilson properties in other parishes, for example *Langthorns* in Little Canfield. A drove road is said to have originally run past *The Elms*



Map of Great Canfield with older house and place names

¹ Source: *At the Courts of Great Canfield*, G Eland, Oxford University Press, 1949

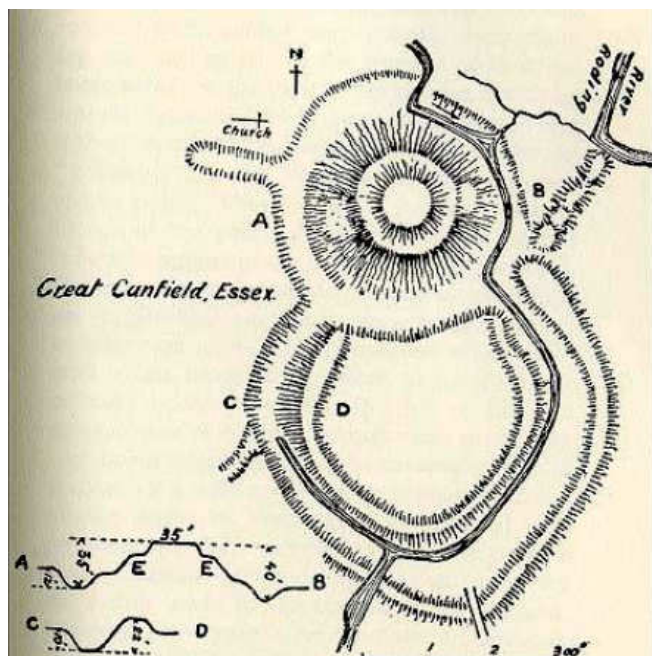
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which at one time sold ale to those who passed. As late as 1908 a new road was cut linking Bacon End with the railway station at *Little Easton Lodge*.

Within living memory the village still had a pub, school, post office, forge and shop but all have now been converted to other uses. Many houses, large and small, have been renamed. Others have simply disappeared, even quite recently, for example *Whitebridge* in Oak Lane where George Eland lived and wrote in the 1940s. There remain many other signs of earlier settlement in the form of listed dairies, pumps, dove-houses, model farm buildings, barns, and even a brick icehouse. Satellite photographs also reveal the outline of a windmill which was destroyed around 1900.

The People

By the time of Domesday the manor supported about 100 people including serfs. Tenant farmers were obliged to cultivate de Vere's land but were also able to rent land for themselves and use the common land for grazing animals.



Plan of castle mound and bailey

The records of the manorial court start in 1346, the year of the Battle of Crécy. They end in 1668, giving perspective over more than three hundred years of Great

Canfield's history. Occasionally the village felt the impact of great events from outside: most notably the records give evidence of exceptional mortality around the time of the Black Death in 1349. Otherwise they dealt with preoccupations arising locally. Apart from the odd assault and theft, most had to do with the land.

In the late C16th, the Wisemans acquired the title of Lords of the Manor. In the early C18th the title passed to the Peers family and from there by marriage and descent to the Maryon-Wilsons, who had acquired many holdings in the Parish. A family member still holds the title of Lord of the Manor.

Two books add detail on Great Canfield's history. George Eland's outlines findings from the manorial court rolls and discusses particular houses built during that time. Raleigh Trevelyan's "A Hermit Disclosed" examines the life of Jimmy Mason, a recluse in Great Canfield, through the diary he kept a century and a half ago.

Great Canfield developed as a flourishing agricultural community. The population peaked at 520 in the early C19th. The census of 1831 showed virtually all working within the Parish and 80% of those still on the land. White's Directory of Essex from 1848 describes Great Canfield as "a pleasant village ... has in its Parish 496 souls and 2,471 acres of land". The Directory provides a list of inhabitants; amongst these are a carpenter, victualler, wheelwright, shopkeeper, blacksmith, bricklayer, corn miller, tailor, vicar, and the squire. To these the Post Office Directory of 1874 adds a schoolmistress, shoemaker and farm bailiff to manage the squire's estates – virtually everybody at that time still finding employment within the village.

In 1825 there were 93 houses in Great Canfield and by 1875 this number had risen to 122. It declined to 75 in the 1920s, possibly as divided tenements were once more combined into single dwellings whilst others fell into disrepair and collapsed. From then on the number rose

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steeply again to the current 150 with much of this growth taking place in Hope End.

Great Canfield Today

Great Canfield has five main points of entry and is separated from its neighbouring villages by open farmland. The majority of houses back onto or are surrounded by agricultural land. This rural setting is greatly valued by the community, who strongly oppose urbanisation in its various forms.

Great Canfield remains a rural village, albeit one under pressure from urban development. Particularly in the Hope End and Bacon End areas, actual and planned developments in Takeley and Little Canfield grow ever closer.

At the time of the last census in 2001, there were 139 homes, including 3 council-owned and 23 privately rented with the remainder owner-occupied. Since that time there have been a number of barn conversions. The total number of homes has now risen to 150.

In 2001 there were 110 detached houses or bungalows, and 29 terraced or semi-detached residences. Of the total population of 364, 196 were male and 168 female. The age profile of Great Canfield's residents was very similar to other local towns and villages. The 2010 electoral register shows 331 voters.

A great demographic change occurred as agriculture shed its large labour force and many houses originally occupied by farming or ancillary workers were no longer required for that purpose. Today the great majority of residents in work find employment outside the village and in the absence of any regular public transport, 96% of households have a car and 76% have two or more.



*Buckles, thimbles, Roman and Celtic coins, Bronze Age axehead:
courtesy of B Knee, Esq.*



Fitzjohns at its original site, from across the lake (dated 1827)

Great Canfield “End by End”

Respondents to the Questionnaire were overwhelmingly in favour of maintaining the historic settlement pattern of “Ends”. The VDS has adopted that traditional descriptive approach whilst acknowledging that the exact extent of each End may be a matter of lively debate.

Hope End (formerly Thorp(e) End) developed around Hope End Green (previously called Coxtons End) and Bullocks Lane. Today it extends from *Great Canfield Park* to *Field House* and includes two quiet and secluded private roads.

Hope End is the largest, most densely occupied and most stylistically mixed residential part of the village with 112 residents on the electoral register today. Although it has a long history and contains two listed properties and others of historic interest, it now has the village’s highest concentration of C20th housing.

It is important to preserve the integrity of Hope End. Because of its situation, it is vulnerable to traffic and pressure from both business and residential development. Concerns exist over the future of the large site of a former nursery. The old railway line, now the Flich Way country park, provides a green buffer between Takeley and Great Canfield.



Spriewood

In the last century Hope End’s proximity to the then A120 (now the B 1256) and its convenient distance from the railway station at Takeley both contributed to its

growth. Until that time it appears that there was little if any development along the east side of Canfield Road with evidence of only the odd cottage over time. Many of the houses now present were originally built from the 1920s onwards as small bungalows situated on long individual garden plots or smallholdings. Two remaining examples are *Springmead* and *Spriewood*.

However like the majority of homes elsewhere in the village, most bungalows have now been significantly extended to meet changing needs and expectations. Scale, materials, hard landscaping, the paving of some front gardens to provide essential off road parking and infill building on pastureland adjacent to the road have inevitably contributed to a more ‘suburban’ appearance than elsewhere in the village. The residents of Canfield Road are struggling to maintain the narrow roadside verges outside their homes which are constantly damaged by traffic.



Lavenhams

To the west of the road the land was used as a deer park for some centuries and when that fell into disuse, reverted to agriculture for several more. The oldest houses in this area, *Great Canfield Park* (once a hunting lodge) and *Lavenhams*, both listed, are located here with *Canfield Park Cottage*, all backing onto farmland. Stables and outbuildings at *Great Canfield Park* have recently been converted into two new dwellings, *Canfield Byre* and *Park Barn*.



Darley Dale

Darley Dale occupies the site of *Cockstons*, an ancient moated house which was demolished in the late C19th. It is believed that the four houses at the Hope End triangle were originally *Darley Dale*'s servants' quarters. *Tansley* and *Ryber*, built in white brick and render, are unique in Great Canfield. In the early C20th the house and gardens of *Darley Dale* occupied some eighty acres and a number of the bungalows in Hope End Green were subsequently built in what were its orchards. *Field House*, a large modern redbrick house was built on a smallholding and adds to the diversity of style in the End.



Oakwood Cottage

It appears from maps and records that until the C20th the heart of Hope End was Hope End Green and Bullocks Lane. *Bullocks*, the farm house, has now been changed to reflect its C17th timber frame

and of the farm cottages only *Oakwood Cottage* now remains. The area has seen considerable infilling in the C20th and C21st with the majority of homes of the bungalow/chalet bungalow style, although there have been instances of the demolition of bungalows and their replacement by large houses in what were gardens and in styles not related to the locality.

The Green itself is now considerably smaller than it appears on the historic maps. However the maintenance of the wide grass verges on one side, the green hedging on the other (both of which form part of the Green) and the situation of the properties in garden plots helps to contribute to a more open, semi-rural atmosphere. Because of its proximity to the B 1256 Bullocks Lane has seen some small-scale commercial activity including some in what was *Little Bullocks*' farmyard.

Design: Hope End

Most commonly in Hope End the houses have rendered walls with a significant use of gables and dormers, although unrendered brick also features. Roofs are of various styles, colours, pitch and materials although pantiles are common, mostly made of clay but some of concrete. Some houses have introduced decorative pargeting which is traditionally rare locally but is part of a wider Essex vernacular.



Example of pargeting, Hope End

Puttocks End (*Poplicornes* to *Rosedale*) has ten houses spread along both sides of the lane over a distance of c. ¼ mile. It is separated from its neighbouring hamlets of Hope End and Green Street by wide open fields which enhances its sense of identity and provide long views.

Until the C16th this hamlet was called Rowriall in the Rolls and the reason for the adoption of its current name remains

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conjectural. It has been the site of many dwellings and holdings now disappeared.



west looking back onto Hart Wood. *Fanns* a Victorian redbrick farmhouse reputedly occupying the site of *Cock atte Gate* was until recently a pig farm. Its barns have been converted into two brick and weather-boarded homes, one of which was listed on conversion in 2000. A dilapidated shed on this road is known by locals as *Jock's hut* after its long association with a gentleman of that name who used it as his winter residence.



Rosedale (upper) and catslide roof, Salkyns (lower)

Two surviving properties are *Rosedale* C17th and *Salkyns* late C16th, both listed. The latter is a distinguished Grade 2* house with a catslide roof and was built on the site of an earlier house of the same name; it has been altered and extended. The other homes in the End are a typical cross-section of periods and styles including *Poplicornes* which carries a venerable name, bungalows set in large plots with adjacent pasture and a recently built house which occupies the site of a demolished bungalow. Most are set well back from the lane and all are surrounded by unspoilt countryside, with those to the



Poplicornes

Design: Puttocks End

Many of the houses are timber framed and plastered with tiled roofs. There are examples of half-hipped roofs (*Salkyns*), a style which is replicated on many extensions throughout Puttocks End and Green Street. In addition to sash windows there are examples of original diamond mullions. *Rosedale* is weather-boarded with tile-hung upper walls whilst *Poplicornes* too bears tiles produced by the Maryon-Wilson estate. Boundaries are mostly hedged or delineated by post and rail fencing and low brick walls. The majority of drives are shingled.

Wood End (from *Hart Wood Cottage* to *Gilmans*) is now the smallest and most discrete part of the settlement close to the Parish boundary with Hatfield Broad Oak. Eland suggests that sixty years ago its distinctive identity had almost faded out. Over the centuries earlier cottages have crumbled without trace and it currently contains just 5 houses. The settlement is

Great Canfield “End by End”

closely associated with Hart Wood and later *Hart Farm* where in the late Victorian period the Maryon-Wilson family established a small brickworks. This produced clay tiles and red bricks which were used on many estate houses, both Victorian and earlier. Fourteen village houses bear the crest from the Maryon-Wilson coat of arms (popularly assumed to portray a griffin but in fact a wolf). The houses provide a recognisable and unifying design thread throughout the central part of the village.

Hart Farm, now a timber single storey residence, was in the mid-C20th part of an egg packing station: at that time several farms and smallholdings in the village farmed poultry. The neighbouring *Hartwood Cottages* reveal fine examples of the ‘wolf’ motif, local red brickwork and decorative wall tiles.



Detail from Hartwood Cottages



Gilman's

Separated by 1/4 mile of woodland and open countryside are *Perses* and *Gilman's*, both thatched, with extensions roofed with red tiles. They date from the C16th and C17th and as elsewhere their holdings of land ebbed and flowed over centuries.

Design: Wood End

This handful of buildings provides a neat illustration of how over 500 years houses within the village have been built to fulfil different functions and how their form reflects this.

They are separated by another quarter mile of pasture and farmland from Green Street.

Green Street (from *Peckers* to *Black Hall Barn* including *Cuckoos Lane*) is situated centrally in the village close to the ancient common fields. The settlement of nineteen houses extends along the road for about half a mile and, with two exceptions, consists of period houses surrounded by farmland. Other houses in the settlement have vanished. It has been fortunate to avoid infilling and therefore maintains open views across the fields and between the houses. Along half of Green Street there are wide grassy verges with houses situated back from the road with large gardens and plots. *Deal Tree Farm* remains an active farm and has both old and new farm buildings, one of them listed. The newer buildings are partially screened by an earth bund planted with native trees and a large collection of fruit trees.



Champneys

Eleven of Green Street's houses originating from the C15th to the C17th are listed and only one replacement house and one barn conversion have been built since 1900. Most homes were originally small farmhouses or farm cottages such as those at *Deal Tree Farm* and *Sheldrakes* (*Frank*

Great Canfield “End by End”

Martin’s Farm) but unsurprisingly for its central position it has had at least two forges, several small farms, a pound and some later estate cottages. *Peckers* farmhouse, which has C16th origins, has a well-preserved collection of Victorian model farm buildings constructed in local brick and a large restored Tudor chimney.



Peckers Farm (upper) and Hayden’s End (lower)

The group of houses at Hellman’s Cross includes a later and now converted forge which operated until 20 years ago, as well as a C16th thatched cottage and two late Victorian houses. Both *Hayden’s End* and *The Old Post House* have housed the post-office and shop at different periods. Here was an important junction with the old drove road that led from Boxley Common along Cuckoos Lane and onto Oak Lane. Cuckoos Lane is now a peaceful retreat containing three widely spaced historic houses. *Helmans* a C16th, single storey thatched dwelling to which George Eland moved and the C17th *Black Hall* farmhouse

and a substantial black boarded converted barn complete this part of the settlement.

Design: Green Street.

The houses are predominately plastered or rendered over timber frames and seven are thatched in long straw with dormer windows cut into the thatch. The remaining houses are all peg tiled. Good examples of local brickwork or tile hung fascias can be seen throughout this part of the settlement for example at *Peckers* and its model farm buildings; *Chestnuts* and *Chestnut Villa*; *Clovelly* and the *Old Post House*.



Black Hall (upper) and Green Easter (lower)

There are many examples of old leaded lights some set directly into the wooden surrounds or in wrought iron casements. C19th cast iron casement windows with gothic tracery can be found at *Champneys* and arched gothic style windows at *Helmans*. White painted weather-boarding features at *Pulleyns*. There are gambrel roofs at *Forge House*, *Cuckoos* and *Black*

Great Canfield “End by End”

Hall with an original half-hipped roof at *Green Easter*. *Black Hall* is unusual in this part of the village as it extends to a third, attic storey.

Fitzjohns End (from *The Grange* to *Marsh Farm*, originally Tye-End). *Fitzjohns Lane* occupies one of the most tranquil situations in the village with widely spaced dwellings along a narrow no-through lane. Originally the largest freehold on the manor, it was held by Simon Fitzjohn in the C14th. All that remains of the later, C18th, *Fitzjohns* (see view on page 9) is part of its service wing now converted into *Barbary Cottage* which looks out across the small man-made lake. Other remnants of the outbuildings include *Fitzjohns’* brick ice-house, which is still visible, and part of its stables. Each of the lane’s remaining five homes is listed (C16th-18th). *Dairy Cottage* has been extensively modernised and its original clasped purlin roof enclosed. *Terry’s*, now divided into two



Fitzjohns (above) and Barbary Cottage (below)

dwellings, is of great antiquity and appears in the rolls of 1351. It has inevitably been much altered over time and this is reflected in the variety of its building materials -

part brick, part timber framed; plastered and tile hung walls; and part tiled, part thatched roof.

Formerly *The Rectory*, the current *Fitzjohns* assumed the name after the demolition of the original manor house around 1900. Its early C16th origins are well hidden beneath later alterations and it now presents an early C19th appearance. It overlooks the village cricket ground and recently built cricket pavilion.

The Grange similarly conceals its C16th origins behind a classic early C19th brick facade. Eland suggests that it was probably built on demesne land leased to the Priors of Hatfield. In later centuries it appears to have been the rectory for some time, and in the C19th a licensed house – the *Griffin Inn*. Close to *The Grange* is a large modern barn conversion at *Griffin Farm*. The farmyard here is adjacent to the road and contains a number of large modern farm buildings set in an extensive area of hard standing.



Pound House

Around the junction at Marsh Lane is a cluster of four homes of differing periods. *The Pound House* (C18th); the cottage attached to the brick built Victorian school house which now functions as the Village Hall; and two substantial 1960s brick-built houses, one of which was built as a rectory.

In Marsh Lane the C17th *Mill House* is of particular interest because of its original association with the windmill, now demolished, which stood in the facing field.

Great Canfield “End by End”

Marsh Farm originated in the C16th and during the C20th the farm building was divided into two separate dwellings. However, in recent years the house, its old barn and outbuildings have been developed. They occupy a peaceful position at the end of a very rural no through road with extensive views, and illustrate how the design, style, conversion and extension of existing buildings, even when listed, can alter not just the buildings themselves but also the character of the surrounding landscape.



Marsh Farm

Design: Fitzjohns End

Houses are timber framed and plastered, with tiled roofs. *Terry's* has a 'catslide' roof and a large central chimney stack. *Barbary Cottage* retains a small distinctive bell tower.

Church End (also Bayle or Bayley End: from *Wheat Cottage* to *Badgers* including *Ashfield* and *Bury Farm*) is the most populous End after Hope End.

The road from Fitzjohns End leads downhill towards the River Roding with Ashfields occupying one side and with open agricultural land on the other. Two Victorian brick and tile hung cottages, *Wheat Cottage* and *Balcombe House*, bearing the Maryon-Wilson arms are situated there. By the river there is *Poplars*, once three C18th almshouses, which was roofed and clad in local red clay tiles and is now one home.

Ashfields contains a small settlement with two very different characters. Although historically associated with both Church End and Green Street, it could be argued that it is now de facto a modern eighth hamlet. It is served by two private roads and stands peacefully amid farmland once part of the manorial demesne lands. It has one listed property, *Ashfields Farmhouse*, which originated in the C16th but is now much altered. The remaining homes include mid-C20th, rendered and barge-boarded former farm cottages and a bungalow. It has a small children's playground.



Ashfields Carriage and Polo Club

The redevelopment and addition of residential accommodation at Ashfields Carriage and Polo Club since the acquisition of the land in 2003 has provoked strong views. It occupies significant acreage dedicated to grazing and equestrian activities and has three large stable blocks and imposing associated buildings. It has a recently opened function suite. The business undoubtedly generates a significant volume of heavy vehicle movements which adds stress to the roads and the verges particularly in the summer. Noise during its events can intrude on peaceful enjoyment elsewhere. Its extensive size and architecture, on a prominent site, unsoftened by landscaping and at odds with local building styles, has excited particular criticism since its inception. However its supporters argue forcefully that it brings variety to local agricultural

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land use and is a positive force in the local economy.

All the houses set around or close to the Grade 1 listed church are now part of a conservation area which protects the Church and the motte and bailey. In addition to the church itself the setting is enhanced by the lychgate and boundary wall. *The Hall* originated as a manor house built by the Wisemans in the C16th and was altered in the C19th with the integration of its hipped roofs and the addition of, amongst other features, sash windows. The associated farmyard and farm buildings, including a listed late C16th aisled barn, are situated discreetly off the end of the church close. The remaining houses dating from the C15th to 17th include *The Maltings*, a timber framed hall house and *Church End Cottages* which are clad in plain and scalloped tiles. *Rose Cottage* was divided into 2 almshouses in 1901 but is now one home again. The conservation area also includes mid C20th properties built and subsequently enlarged in what is now considered to be a highly sensitive location.



The Hall

Bury Farm, with its C17th farmhouse standing a considerable distance from the road, was originally demesne land. It is still a mixed working farm and it has been partially diversified by the conversion of some of its redundant outbuildings into holiday lets.

Water Hall, C16th, lies across the river by the eastern boundary of the conservation area. It has a catslide dormer roof.

The demolition of the *Old Barn House*, one of the earliest barn conversions in Essex and the building of a large classical brick house, *Badgers*, in 2003 has also split opinion about scale and style. After a public enquiry the house, designed by Quinlan Terry, was given exceptional consent under PPG 7 based on the quality of its design and materials. It certainly has no counterpart in Great Canfield but was based on Essex vernacular building of classical houses elsewhere in the county.



Badgers

Design: Church End

The majority of the older houses are timber framed and rendered. There is no thatch remaining in this area: most houses are peg tiled and some are clad in plain and scalloped tiles. The gambrel roof is again in evidence at *Bury Farmhouse* which also features examples of well proportioned flat-roofed dormer windows.

Bacon End is not referred to by that name before the mid C17th and the origin of the name is disputed. Before that the area is just called ‘By yonde the Ree’ (stream).

Today it extends for over a mile in a wishbone shape from the group of houses and two recently converted listed barns around *Bacons* to just beyond Bacon End Green before the road meets the Little Canfield parish boundary. The End contains 26 homes, including many listed houses dating from early C14th to early C19th, with the remaining homes dating from the mid C19th and C20th. There are

Great Canfield “End by End”

four houses built by the local authority which are now in private ownership.

Bacons is a substantial C16th farm house encased in red brick elevations in the late C19th. It adjoins two recently converted barns, known as *North* and *South Barns*. *Stomps*, once thatched but tiled after a field fire destroyed the roof in the early C20th, is adjacent to *Triggers* (known as *Trigger Hall* up to the mid C19th) a thatched cottage with origins as a C15th hall house. Early C14th *Foxleys* is listed Grade 2* and is probably the oldest surviving house in the Parish. It lies opposite C16th *Turnberry Cottage*. *Adam Huttes House* is a house with a venerable and well-documented history.



Foxleys

There is some C19th and C20th development which includes bungalows. *Woodlands* was constructed from an old barn moved from elsewhere in Essex and considerably extended in the late C20th. *Thriftwood* was also built in the mid C20th, in Tudor style.

The most recent construction is *Woodnut House*, a substantial house of brick elevations occupying the site of what was until recently a small bungalow (*Woodnut*, now demolished).

Also of interest is *Stone Hall*, an early C19th farm house with adjoining barns, and *Hobbs* a mediaeval hall house altered externally in the C19th and C20th, with adjacent barns converted for residential use in the C21st.

Houses in Bacon End are situated along a quiet lane in mostly substantial plots set back from the road, but along with other parts of the Parish suffer from destruction of the verges through use by heavy traffic and unsympathetic drivers. Hedges and post and rail fencing predominate but there are also old flint and modern red brick walls.



Stone Hall (upper) and Hobbs (lower)

Design: Bacon End

Because of the diverse mix of housing in Bacon End it is difficult to isolate a particular style. *Triggers* and *Stomps* both feature distinctive timber porches, and *Foxleys* and *Triggers* are thatched.

The more modest origins of *Adam Huttes House*, the *Elms* and *Hobbs Farm* have been hidden by later additions and more substantial exteriors; whilst *Stone Hall* is of classical proportions with sash windows. Some of the C20th homes borrow generic features from Tudor homes elsewhere in and out of the village. A number are of significant size and scale.

Guidelines: Settlement

1. Settlement patterns are a key to the distinctive nature of the village and developers should recognise this: no development should compromise the historic layout of the village into ‘Ends’. (S7)
2. The land separating Great Canfield and neighbouring settlements should remain undeveloped. (S7)
3. Particular efforts should be made to protect the rural setting of Hope End. (S7)
4. Ribbon development and infilling is generally unacceptable as it would destroy the village’s existing character and erode its green spaces. (S7)
5. Existing spaces and open land between the Ends and individual properties should be retained as these views of the countryside are important characteristics of the village. (ENV1, ENV3, ENV7, ENV8)
6. Any development should maintain and strengthen visual cohesion of the village and help to renew its specific architectural traditions. (GEN2)
7. Any application to increase housing density should take into account the existing context and not materially degrade it. (GEN2)
8. In order to protect the village character it is important that new development maintains an appropriate scale. (GEN2)
9. Development of large houses on small plots is to be discouraged as such development can upset the balance and harmony of the existing village. (GEN2)
10. Any new building should not overwhelm the fragile balance between the housing of different centuries in its area. (GEN2)
11. Development must take special heed of the propensity for flooding at Hellman’s Cross, Church End and Bacon End in times of heavy rain. (GEN3)
12. Any new development adjacent to or visually related to the conservation area should be designed so as not to conflict with the aesthetic qualities of that area. (ENV1)

Building Design

Great Canfield has always been an agricultural Parish and the existing stock of residential buildings predominantly reflects this past. Indeed the village's evolution can be traced through its building styles and the materials used in them which give it its unique character. The village is fortunate in preserving a high quality, low density housing stock.

Houses range from mediaeval through Victorian to the C20th and C21st, most having been altered and extended over many centuries. Many buildings are listed, with fine examples in every principal location in the Parish. Sixty buildings are listed Grade 1,2* or 2. Fifty five of these originated in the C17th or before, with the oldest dwelling dating from the C14th. Some original buildings have been demolished to make way for newer structures which carry their own distinctive character, for example *Stone Hall* built in the early C19th and *Badgers* in the C21st. Several ancient timber barns have been converted into homes.

Amongst the houses particularly admired by Great Canfield residents as distinctive of the village are the cottages along Green Street, those around the church, the former Maryon-Wilson estate properties and the few remaining original bungalows in Hope End. Houses of particular distinction include *Salkyns*, *Peckers*, *The Grange*, *Fitzjohns*, *Stone Hall* and *The Hall*.



Salkyns

Because Great Canfield is an old parish it contains a wide range of building styles

and materials. This makes it difficult to identify a 'village style' with any precision. However, the scale of buildings, commonly used materials and design features which recur throughout the Parish assist with design guidance.



Peckers model farm (upper) and The Grange (lower)

Scale

The height of buildings throughout the Parish is predominantly two storeys. A third or attic storey was introduced only in the C19th on some properties when the use of brickwork became commonplace as a replacement for or addition to the traditional timber frame. Houses tended to be quite narrow by modern standards, often only one bay wide on older houses.

An attempt to create new development in scale with existing properties can be seen with *Maple Cottage*, a recently built house on a compact plot in Green Street. The design has incorporated a cellar at basement level in order to provide a generous internal size whilst avoiding disturbing the scale of surrounding properties and maintaining a similar

Building Design

'footprint' to that occupied by the small farm bungalow it replaced.

Materials

Building materials were traditionally limited by availability, cost and until comparatively recently, transport. The materials and skills available during earlier centuries generally dictated a local style whilst allowing for individual detail and variety. Since the early C20th the availability of mass produced factory-made doors, windows, bricks etc. has eroded that vernacular style and is at risk of replacing it with a more standardised one.

Walls

The original construction of the oldest houses that survive is that of a timber frame with a lime render. The timber studs provide vertical strength and the panels formed in between are filled with wattle on which daub was applied, or with laths and plaster. This building style predominated until the C19th and is common throughout the Parish. Lime render is the most usual finish to be found on the external walls of those houses, often unfortunately having been replaced in recent times with a cement render which is detrimental to the ability of the timber frame to 'breathe'. The timber frame sits upon an oak sole plate often resting on 2 or 3 courses of brickwork or the clay soil.



Timber framing under refurbishment

Timber feather-edged boarding finished in black tar was traditionally used on outbuildings and barns and now frequently features on those houses that have been converted from former agricultural use.

Half weather-boarding is a common feature. It was often introduced after original construction as a protective measure on the lower walls of thatched properties where their lack of guttering caused the lime rendering to become damp and crumble. An example is seen at *Foxleys*.

Many modern homes and extensions have continued to feature a timber frame but builders now use modern damp proofing and insulation materials sandwiched between plasterboard and the external boarding and cement render.



Rose Cottage

The use of bricks is a feature seen on larger more substantial houses such as *Darley Dale*, *Bacons* and *The Grange*. The C19th and C20th saw the introduction of bricks made in the local brickfields giving the redbrick elevations typically found in Green Street and elsewhere. Combined with the brickwork was the introduction of



Pargeting

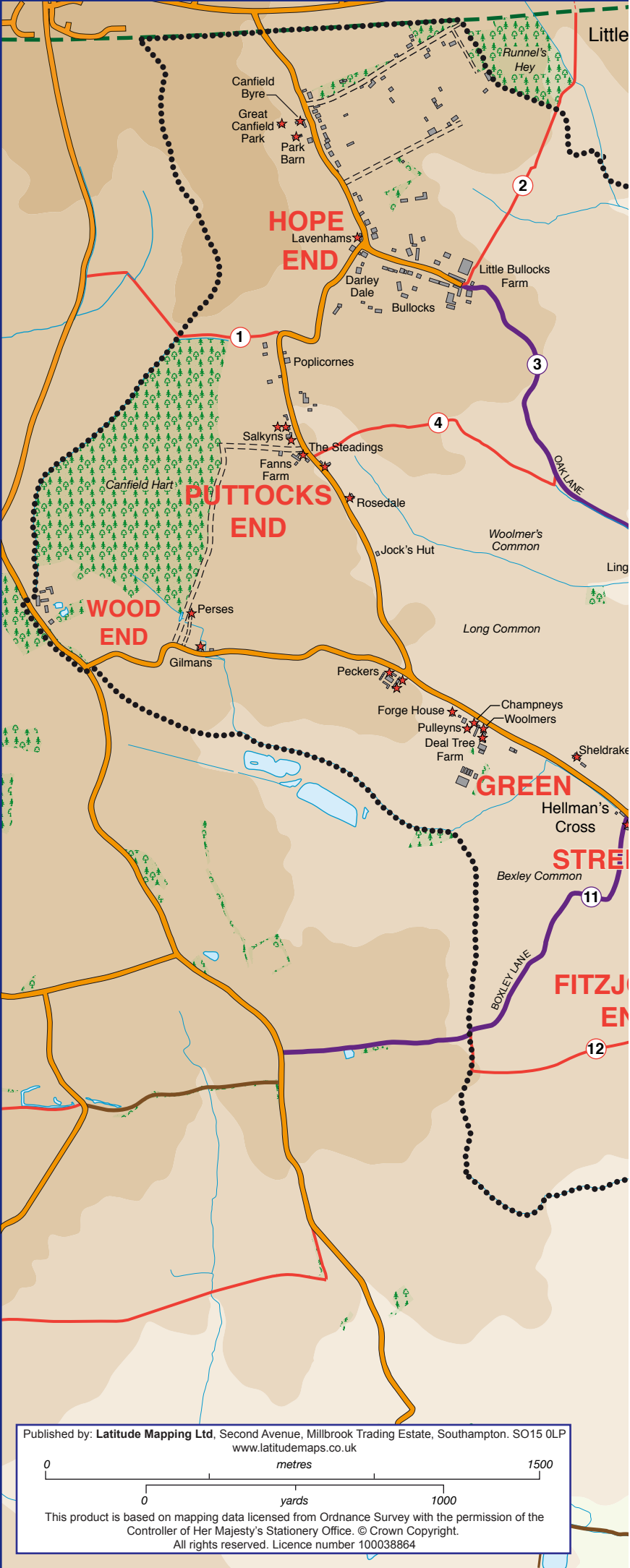
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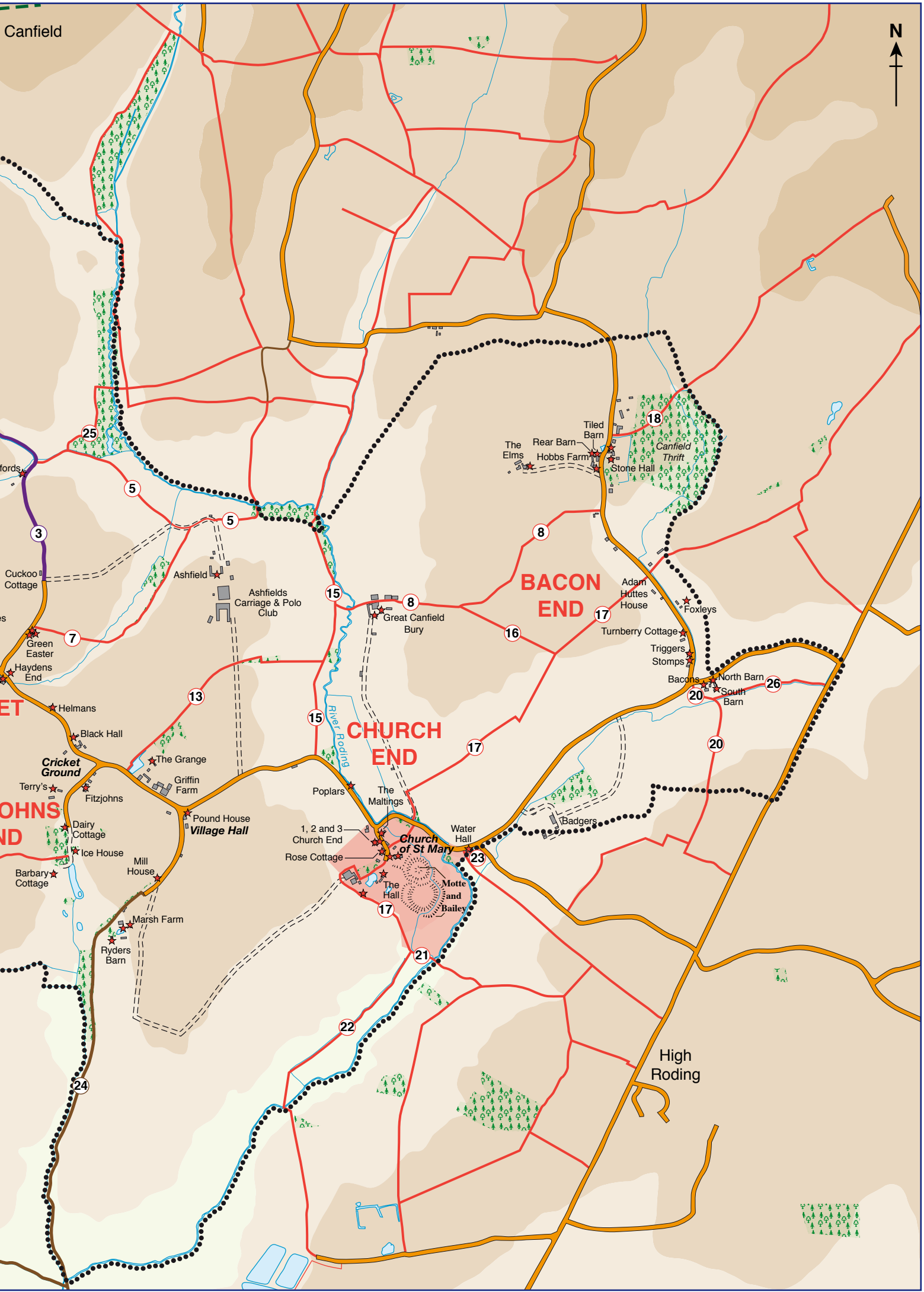
PARISH OF GREAT CANFIELD

- Parish boundary
 - Conservation area
 - ★ Listed structure
 - Public roads
 - Woodland
- Public rights of way
- 1 Footpath (with local numbering)
 - 24 Bridleway (with local numbering)
 - 3 Byway (with local numbering)

Height in metres

over 100
90 to 100
80 to 90
70 to 80
less than 70





Canfield



**BACON
END**

**CHURCH
END**

High
Roding

Church
of St Mary

Village Hall

**JOHNS
ND**

Cuckoo
Cottage

25

5

3

7

13

15

8

8

16

17

20

20

26

17

21

22

24

Cuckoo
Cottage

Green
Easter
Haydens
End

Helmans

Black Hall

Cricket
Ground

Terry's

Fitzjohns

Dairy
Cottage

Ice House

Barbary
Cottage

Mill House

Marsh Farm

Ryders
Barn

Pound House

Griffin Farm

The Grange

Ashfield

Ashfields
Carriage & Polo
Club

Great Canfield
Bury

Poplars

The Maltings

Water Hall

Motte and
Bailey

The Hall

Rose Cottage

1, 2 and 3
Church End

Badgers

Triggers
Stomps

Bacons

North Barn

South
Barn

Foxleys

Adam
Hottes
House

Turnberry Cottage

Stone Hall

Hobbs Farm

Rear Barn

Tiled Barn

Canfield
Thrift

Canfield

Building Design

tile hanging to the upper level, in some instances using both plain and cut tiles.



Local styles in bricks and tiles

Pargeting, or the creation of patterns in the external render, is not part of the traditional vernacular in Great Canfield though is used widely elsewhere in Essex. There are however examples of modern work within Hope End and Cuckoos Lane.

Roofs

Originally the roofs of the oldest houses would have been thatched with long straw grown locally. The design was initially limited to a simple pitched roof, with variance of hipped ends styles.



Half hipped elevations: Water Hall

Although thatching with long straw remains a common feature in Bacon End and Green Street, many previously thatched houses now have tiled or slate roofs either following fires or through choice. With their introduction roof design became more varied particularly when buildings were enlarged.



Thatcher at work

Pitched roofs predominate in roof shapes. They often have either fully-hipped or half-hipped ends. Such roofs are also frequent above dormer windows, a common characteristic. Gambrel (or gabled mansard) roofs are a distinctive local feature.

Catslide roofs are traditional in the area, sometimes introduced when a small single storey annexe was added to the original building.

This feature has been used to good effect in some recent extensions to break an otherwise plain elevation.



Gambrel roof

Roofing materials are predominantly plain red clay tiles or pegtiles, with pantiles and slates adopted for outbuildings. Examples of good red tiles can be seen at *Lavenhams*, *Salkyns* and *Peckers*. Slates can be seen to impressive effect on the model farm buildings at *Peckers* and are

Building Design

used on some larger houses, an example of recent construction is *Badgers*.

Pantiles are used as the roofing material of choice on *Black Hall Barn*. Roof tiles arranged in patterns are seen on many of the Maryon-Wilson estate cottages. More modern houses tend to use an eclectic mix of roofing materials including concrete tiles of various hues which can be harsh in appearance.

Chimneys

Chimneys are a feature in most houses and add interest to the skyline. Generally they are constructed in red brick, either integral to the original design or as additions to older buildings. Many surviving cottages are of the 'hall-house' type where the initial construction would have allowed only for ground floor living with the frame rising directly to the roof timbers: a hole in the ceiling enabled smoke to escape. Later alterations, sometimes centuries after the original construction, introduced first floor sleeping accommodation and brick chimney stacks. These stacks were either placed centrally or at either end, 'framing' the building. Prominent ornate axial chimneys constructed as part of the original design can be seen on *Salkyns*, *Peckers*, and *Great Canfield Park* with a further example on a more modest building being seen at *Terry's*. The village retains a good variety of chimneys from the utilitarian to the impressive.



Chimneys: *Salkyns* (top left); *Peckers* (top right); *Terry's* (bottom)

Windows and Doors

Within the stock of older houses it is the windows that have been most altered externally. In many of the original hall houses, openings would have been framed with timber to allow light in during the day and covered with material at night to retain the little heat that was produced from the central open fire. Early examples of mortice joints and some of the original diamond-shaped timber mullions can be seen at *Salkyns*. Glazing was introduced as fixed leaded windows, a few of which survive in the Parish - a good example being seen at *Gilmans* which has two fixed lights and a wrought iron casement.



Leaded light with pentice board

Timber casement windows with small glass panes in individual sashes predominate, mostly added in the C19th. and C20th. Sliding sash windows feature in some larger houses e.g. *The Grange*, *Fitzjohns*, and *Darley Dale* and many older cottages feature modern leaded lights. Dormer windows are very common where an upper floor has been introduced into old buildings, or as an original feature in modern buildings. The best examples remain as minor incidents in the roof plane. Large picture windows are uncommon and are generally inappropriate in a rural setting, certainly in proximity to more historic houses.

Where houses are semi-detached or terraced it is obviously more visually attractive to strive for coherence and to avoid clashing styles for example traditional sash windows with modern PVC casements.

Building Design

The use of pentice boards above windows on buildings with feather-edged boarding is a common and attractive sight. Timber windows and doors are commonly painted

although they are often in natural hardwoods. Open lattice timber porches produce an unusual local feature although some have now been enclosed.



Building Design

Barn conversions

More recently, barn conversions have tended to create large family homes and are usually clad in timber weatherboarding, with casement windows, under either red clay tiled or slate roofs.



Tiled Barn, Bacon End Green

Boundaries & Landscaping

Traditionally boundaries have been formed by native hedges and trees. This has been supplemented in places by the use of picket or post-and-rail fencing. A few houses retain late Victorian iron railings. Walls are a less usual feature, although there are fine examples of flint and brick, and traditionally where they appear they are low, modest in extent and in scale. Long runs, high modern brick walls or 'stockade' type high close-boarded wooden fencing and tall metal or solid wood gates should be discouraged as they urbanise the landscape.

Vehicle access & driveways

Driveways of gravel or shingle predominate in the area. Extensive hard standing is seen as urbanising the area and, since it may adversely affect surface water run-off, recent legislation requires planning permission for impermeable surfaces in most cases.



Shingle driveway

Development

What can be seen today is a snapshot in time of 1000 years of organic growth. There is a general recognition from respondents to the Questionnaire that lifestyles and expectations have changed with an inevitable impact on the style and function of existing and future buildings. However, the residents of Great Canfield want houses that are attractive and functional and use traditional materials and styles where possible.

The village scene is enriched by a variety of attractive and interesting building styles representing different historical periods. Many buildings are listed as of special architectural and historical interest and others, though unlisted, reveal much about Great Canfield's past and the village's continuing evolution. One finds for example semi-detached Victorian cottages situated between Tudor houses in Green Street; and in Bacon End and Church End buildings dating from mediaeval times to the C20th. This range of styles clearly requires planners and developers to look carefully both at the context of a particular application and the overall balance of style and design in the village.

Generally, the varied housing stock is seen as contributing to the rural character and a healthy social mix. However there are challenges. After the first and second World Wars Bacon End and Hope End in particular experienced growth and a number of bungalows and houses were built in each area fulfilling the then housing need. Bungalows were also built in Church End and on some farms. Whilst some of this building maintained a rural form and style and mellowed into a union with existing homes, the absence of planning laws sometimes led to a mismatch with neighbouring properties and those which existed elsewhere in the village. Similarly, some examples of late C20th architecture are deemed out of scale and sympathy with neighbouring homes and the countryside and more suited to a suburban landscape.

The conservation area already receives special protection. Generally, development

will only be permitted where it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of that area. More widely, a number of residents observed that groups of buildings and views outside the conservation area also deserve protection.

Normally development affecting a listed building should be in keeping with its scale, character and surroundings. Because listed houses are subject to additional planning controls which broadly limit changes to their scale and appearance, it has tended to be changes to or replacements for unlisted properties which have posed most planning and design challenges. Overwhelmingly, there is a desire for more coherence in future including the following views:

- any new building or conversion should be sympathetic in style and design to property in the immediate area
- pastiche or 'off-the-shelf' buildings which could be found anywhere in the U.K. should be discouraged
- windows, doors and roofs of new houses should respect the style of the existing or nearby property. Where neighbouring houses are historic this will generally mean that traditional building forms and materials are used, though not slavishly repeating old features as this could result in pastiche if not managed sensitively.
- in areas of more modern housing, equal care should be taken to ensure that new development harmonises with the existing built environment
- roof heights should be in keeping with those of adjacent buildings
- gates, fencing and walls should be compatible with our rural setting.

Thus far Great Canfield has been fortunate to remain free of estates of houses and this greatly contributes to its character and unspoilt landscape. The community is overwhelmingly against any such development. A clear majority is in favour of either no development or single houses only and there is an equally clear view that any development should take place incrementally over a 5-20 year timescale. In the event of new housing the preferred type is 3-5 bed family houses. There is

Development

less support for first time buyers, low cost housing and provision for the elderly.

A feature of recent years has been the demolition of some C20th bungalows and the construction of much larger houses on their sites. Many more have been greatly enlarged. This has excited a debate about the balance of housing stock in the village. A majority expressed a desire to retain a range of houses by cost and size in order to maintain a social mix of age and income. However, a desire to remain in the village as families grow or need to accommodate elderly relatives is reflected in a large majority view that it is acceptable to change the size of a house significantly by extension. A smaller majority is of the view that it is acceptable to combine small houses into larger single dwellings.

There is significant concern about specific examples of new houses which have been seen as out of scale with neighbouring buildings or with their own plots. Large houses on small plots or those which fill the width of a plot are not common in the village and are perceived as introducing an urban feel.

A clear majority is in favour of converting redundant farm buildings for residential use, particularly if this avoids any new building, although there is concern that this should not be exploited. It should be noted, however, that current planning policy only allows conversion for residential use in certain circumstances: these include establishing that there is no significant demand for other uses such as small businesses or tourist accommodation.

Opinion is strongly against the introduction of any more light industrial development in Great Canfield: it is felt that this would materially increase the traffic on our Protected Lanes.

The majority of respondents are already concerned about the level of noise and light pollution arising from within and outside the Parish including insensitive use of security lights.

Whilst many might prefer the village to remain unaltered, Great Canfield is not and never has been a museum. One of the principal aims of this VDS, based on responses to the Questionnaire and in open meetings within the village, is to ensure that policy makers are aware of the views of the residents and that any building which does take place integrates with and enhances what is here already. However, a large amount of householder development and change takes place under permitted development rights so for the Guidelines to be effective the whole community must be committed to playing its part.



The Old Forge (now a dwelling house)



Bungalow conversion, Church End



Cottages, Ashfields

Development Guidance

Much development in Great Canfield as elsewhere is controlled, in our case by UDC core policies and regional and central government policies which UDC is statutorily bound to implement. These include protection of the countryside and control of new building etc. Additionally statute gives large areas of discretion which must be exercised with due regard

to local conditions and local opinion.

The current policy is set out in the Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 (Development Plan) and the Town and Country Planning Act 2008, together with UDC Supplementary Planning Policies. A full list of relevant policies can be found via <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/planning>.

To the limited extent that some further development may be permitted, the following Village Design guidance should be closely adhered to.

Guidelines: New buildings

1. New buildings should be sympathetic in style, scale and design to property in the immediate area: this may require different judgements for different parts of the village.
2. Design should be of the highest quality. Architects should adopt the best of existing vernacular building style and design in sympathy with it. Copycat or pattern book designs alien to the local vernacular should be avoided.
3. Developers should avoid mixing historical styles in the same building. Modern innovative design which is compatible with local character should be allowed if consistent with the other Guidelines.
4. The building (or buildings) should be appropriate to the size of the plot and roof heights should be in keeping with adjacent buildings.
5. Elevations should generally use traditional materials such as painted render, lime plaster, brickwork and weather boarding. Design details such as doors and windows should have regard to those of neighbouring buildings. Roofs should be pitched tile or slate or long straw thatch. The use of flat roofs and cement tiles should be avoided. Dormer windows should be minor features in the roof line and skylights unobtrusive.
6. Contemporary materials, if used, should be selected carefully and appropriately with regard to other Guidelines.
7. Chimneys add interest to the skyline and, where relevant, their inclusion should be encouraged.
8. To reduce light pollution, security and convenience lighting should be muted and fitted with automatic controls.
9. Any new building should avoid adverse impact on the infrastructure such as sewage and water, drainage and flood control and have adequate off-street parking.
10. Design concessions should permit sustainable and renewable energy measures on an appropriate scale.

Guidelines: Extensions, conversions and renovations

In addition to the Guidelines for New Buildings, the following additional Guidelines should be adhered to.

1. Extensions, even those substantially increasing the size of houses should be permitted subject to other planning rules. They should be situated sensitively and be in proportion to their plots.
2. Careful consideration should be given to the impact of extensions and in particular conservatories when they are visible from roads or footpaths.
3. The scale, design and external materials should respect those of the original building.
4. Windows, doors and roofs should harmonise firstly with the style of existing buildings and then with nearby property.

Guidelines: Extensions, conversions and renovations (continued)

5. Re-rendering to timber-framed buildings should use lime mortar (with matching sand) to enable the building to breathe and keep the timbers dry.
6. Re-pointing should use original mortar colours.
7. Replacement windows should match the original in style, size and material: PVC should be discouraged where it would be inappropriate.

Guidelines: Boundary enclosures

1. Boundary enclosures that are compatible with the existing character of the village and adjoining properties should be encouraged.
2. Rustic native hedgerows, low fencing or walling and low farm style or rural style gates are customary. Existing trees and boundary hedges are an important part of the village identity and their removal should be generally resisted. If it becomes necessary to remove them in the course of development or alteration, they should be replaced.

Guidelines: Surroundings

1. Driveways and hard-standing for cars and access paths should be unobtrusive, in scale and finished informally with rural materials, not large, uniform areas of tarmac or block paving, which adversely impact on the street scene.
2. Garages should be as discreetly situated as the plot allows and be in proportion to the house served.
3. Grass verges should be retained.

Guidelines: Consultation and planning applications

1. All planning applications should be discussed with the owners of neighbouring properties prior to a formal application being made.
2. Where the application is significant or potentially contentious, applicants should consult the village through the Parish Council prior to a formal application being made.
3. In any major development, developers should have regard to the UDC protocol for community involvement which can be found at www.uttlesford.gov.uk and then Planning > Local Plans and Local Development Framework > Statement of Community Involvement.
4. All planning applications should include a clear and detailed statement showing how they meet all the relevant guidance set out in this VDS. Proposals must clearly show 'street elevations' with detailed proposed dimensions. They should show how any buildings sit relative to adjacent properties in order to assess fully the impact on those properties and the area in general. They should expressly discuss any impact they may have upon the views and the existing spaces and open land between the Ends.
5. Parishioners should keep themselves informed about the planning in their area. Upon notification by Uttlesford District Council or Essex County Council, the Parish Council should ensure that applications are publicised in a timely fashion and as widely as possible, including on the village website.

Landscape and Wildlife

Great Canfield covers nearly 4 square miles. Many attractive views can be enjoyed from its narrow, winding roads and public footpaths. Despite its proximity to Stansted airport, the Parish continues to retain an aura of tranquillity. The landscape is quintessentially rural Essex, with gently undulating fields and pastures interspersed with trees, hedgerows and the occasional building. The highest point in the Parish is to the north of Canfield Hart where it exceeds 100m above sea level and the lowest, where the River Roding leaves the Parish at its southernmost point, is at 66m.

The land is part of the South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands of the East Anglian Plain. The subsoil consists of chalky boulder clay with flints, surmounted by topsoil of medium loam. It is rich in potash and the chalk releases a good supply of lime to plant life. The clay soil retains moisture during long periods of drought, allowing continued productivity through the dryer periods. The River Roding maintains a steady flow. Underlying the subsoil are glacial gravels, in places exposed where the river has cut down through the boulder clay.



Cattle at Bury Farm

The River Roding enters Great Canfield $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles from its source in Molehill Green and runs $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles through the Parish, continuing to flow some 30 miles until it joins the River Thames at Barking Creek. The most recent survey of biological river quality, at the road bridge in 1990, gave the highest quality along the whole length

of the river. The river level rises fast after rainstorms, producing its characteristic steep, eroding banks. Much of the land requires deep open drains to remove surface water. Many lanes run parallel to drainage ditches. Sections of the road system lie below field levels and flooding can be a problem in extreme conditions. Despite management, the River Roding still floods periodically.

Changes in society, farming methods and local economics have all affected the landscape. The river itself has been tapped and diverted for several purposes, for example by the Normans for the moat around the motte and bailey; and for flood control and water meadows north of the church.

Woodland covers about 110 acres. This is a big reduction from the area occupied in mediaeval times but two substantial areas of protected Ancient Woodland remain: Canfield Hart at the western boundary and Canfield Thrift at the eastern. All woodland is privately held, but public footpaths allow its views to be widely enjoyed.



Fitzjohns Lake

The overwhelming majority of respondents support the expenditure of resources on the preservation of their trees and hedgerows, and the use of native trees and hedges to manage the visual impact of new development. The avenue of horse chestnut trees along Green Street is over 150 years old: it throws a canopy over the road and provides a spectacular background to

Landscape and Wildlife

the cricket field. Venerable oaks stand by the road to Bacon End. The Peace Oak at Hellman's Cross was planted to mark the end of the First World War. Nearby, another commemorates the Queen's Golden Jubilee. After the storm of 1987, thousands of new trees were planted in Canfield Thrift. A variety of trees was planted along Oak Lane in 1992 whilst along Green Street saplings mark the new millennium. In all, 156 trees are covered by Tree Protection Orders: please see http://www.greatcanfield.org.uk/page_21.html.

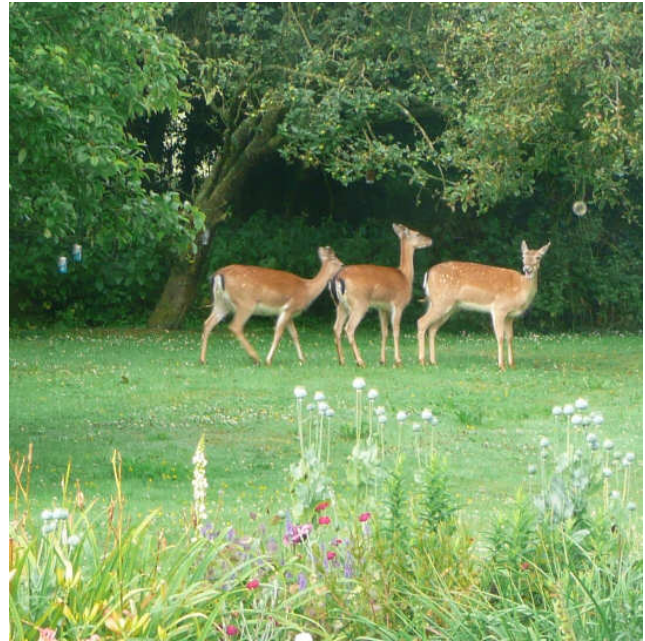
Indigenous species reinforce the rural aspect. In the spring, blossoms from hawthorn, wild rose, blackberry, blackthorn, crab apple, bullace, honeysuckle and many others enliven the hedgerows and, in their season, snowdrops, primroses and cowslips ("peggles") appear along roadside verges and banks.



Blackthorn in blossom

Great Canfield's fields, woodland, roadside verges, streams, ponds and gardens give plentiful havens for a rich diversity of fauna and flora. A list – inevitably woefully incomplete – can be found at http://greatcanfield.org.uk/fauna_and_flora_22.html.

The wildlife listed gives a snapshot of a continually changing mix of animal and plant life. New factors have brought the egret and the buzzard to Great Canfield. But there are also many species in decline, among them the barn owl, grey partridge and skylark. The reasons are various but include the activities of man.



Fallow deer

The great majority of respondents want to preserve the biodiversity of the village. This requires concerted effort across Essex and beyond. Within Great Canfield much is already being done, and a lot more is possible. A number of farmers are taking part in DEFRA's stewardship schemes. The objectives are to improve water quality and reduce soil erosion; improve conditions for farmland wildlife; maintain and enhance landscape character; and protect the historic environment. Many species of the village's fauna and flora flourish in the "micro-farming" environment of village gardens: these can also play a vital role as nature reserves in sustaining the biodiversity of the locality.

Great Canfield residents place a very high value on their landscape, and consider it very important that the existing open spaces in the village be kept green and undeveloped. When asked, people in the village have cited a wealth of examples. Amongst the views most frequently mentioned are those within and around Church End; the motte and bailey; Green Street and the chestnut avenue; the open character of Green Street from Hellman's Cross to *Peckers*; the cricket pitch, and vistas of the River Roding from various points. To these, walkers add a number of views from footpaths, bridleways and

Landscape and Wildlife

byways such as those from Oak Lane and Boxley Lane. Clearly there are very many areas of open space, augmented by their trees and hedgerows, that residents believe define the character of Great Canfield.



Castle motte in autumn, from bridge over River Roding



Green Street, western end

Guidelines: Landscape

1. Any proposed development should take into account the long, open views which are available throughout the village. (S7, ENV3)
2. Preservation should be encouraged of all existing indigenous woodland, hedgerows, field boundaries and all special features of the landscape that contribute so much to the character of Great Canfield. In particular, no development on, or erosion of, Ancient Woodland in Great Canfield should be permitted. (ENV7-8)
3. In connection with development, mature trees should be retained wherever possible and further planting encouraged to ensure that mature examples are available for the future: consideration should be given to obtaining Tree Preservation Orders for mature native species. (ENV3)
4. Intrusive structures such as mobile phone masts and high level pylons should be resisted.
5. Any development must have regard to the present drainage issues and not contribute to any risk of further flooding or pollution of the watercourses. (GEN3)

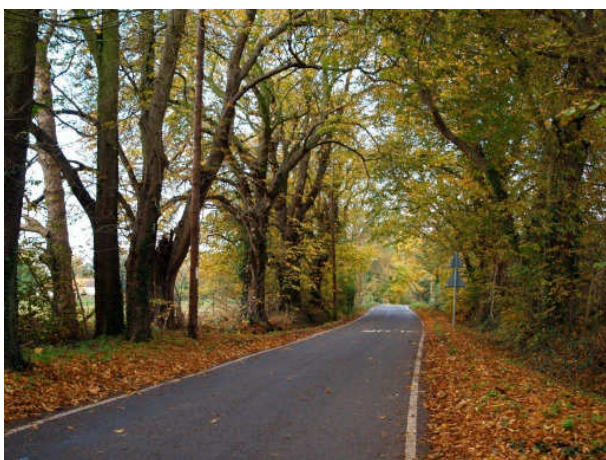
Guidelines: Wildlife

1. New development should not diminish the biodiversity of the area through its effect upon for example hedgerows, trees, flora, ponds, or watercourses.
2. Sympathetic management of hedgerows, woodland and indigenous trees should be encouraged to provide natural nesting cover for bird species. (GEN7)

Roads, Verges and Public Footpaths

Roads

Great Canfield is served by 8½ miles of narrow lanes which connect the B184 to the East (High Roding), the B1256 to the North, (both of these are old Roman Roads) and the B183 to the West (Takeley to Hatfield Broad Oak). The road system is broadly unchanged since mediaeval times and none of it is classified by the Ordnance Survey as even a secondary road (please see the map on page 41). A Planning Inspector recently described Green Street with its chestnut avenue, as “...this picturesque, narrow winding lane expressly protected by...the adopted Uttlesford Local Plan”. In fact, Canfield Road, the principal lane running through the village from High Roding to Hope End via *Peckers* (and including Green Street) has been designated a “Protected Lane” and represents about 60% of the paved roads in the Parish: as well as its normal use by pedestrians and equestrian traffic it also forms part of the National Cycle Route network.



The Chestnut Avenue

The responses to the Questionnaire showed that residents have strong views about roads (and verges). The roads are seen by the majority of respondents as suitable for local traffic. However there is widespread agreement that the narrow lanes are unsuitable for HGVs and other large vehicles which damage the verges and block other road users, and that restrictions on these vehicles should be introduced – many residents would favour limiting such traffic to “access only”.

The volume and speed of vehicles, both large and small, are also seen as a hazard to both pedestrians and riders of bicycles and horses, and there is considerable support for the introduction of speed limits (but not speed bumps or chicanes): speed limits in parts of Hope End and Green Street are currently under consideration by Essex Highways. A significant number of respondents are in favour of the adoption of a “Quiet Lanes” policy throughout the village and this is being investigated with the relevant authority, Essex County Council. Such initiatives have been found to encourage community involvement and more responsible driving, aided by the installation of entry/exit signage.



Hope End Green

The rate of traffic increase is a local worry, especially that caused by larger vehicles unsuited to tight corners and restricted width. Widening roads to accommodate increased traffic is strongly rejected but there is some support for adding more passing places where practicable. The use of the village roads as a “rat run” has decreased since the opening of the new A120 but is still a concern, as is the persistent flouting of the 3-ton weight restriction on the bridge between Hope End and Takeley while it awaits repair.

There is no street lighting and little desire to have any. An overwhelming majority of respondents are in favour of limiting the number and size of road signs to those needed for essential information and the safety of road users. Signage has increased over the last few years but a

Roads

delicate balance has been attempted between the interests of safety, providing directional information and blotting the landscape with garishly coloured lines and road signs.

The traditional street furniture of old fingerposts, red telephone box, post-boxes

and the stocks and benches are seen as adding to the rural environment.

The Conclusions set out below (and under Verges and Public Footpaths) reflect the views of residents on issues which are the principal responsibility of the Parish Council.

Conclusions: Roads

1. The Parish Protected Lane network must be safeguarded and recognised as material in any proposal which may result in increased road usage. (ENV9)
2. The Police and Essex Highway Authority should be encouraged to review regularly the need for speed limits within the village.
3. Essex County Council should be pressed to introduce Quiet Lanes into West Essex and specifically Great Canfield.
4. Essex Highways Authority should be encouraged to review the extent to which weight restrictions can be applied to vehicles using the village roads.
5. More passing places should be sensitively introduced.

Verges

There are few kerbs and no pavements in the village; instead there are verges and hedges and this is felt to be environmentally pleasing and to slow traffic. However, there is widespread concern that the verges are being eroded by road users, particularly heavy lorries and horseboxes, and are not always suited to pedestrian use as a refuge from traffic. Where verges have been eroded, repairs to the sides of road tend to reduce the width of verges permanently. The great majority of respondents agree on the importance of spending resources on preserving the verges.

Passing places were suggested by a number of respondents as a means of protecting verges, as were the use of white stones at the edge of verges. Whilst it is clear that the latter does



Example of verge erosion

act as a deterrent, it should be noted that this practice is at the risk of the resident especially if the stones are less than one metre from the road.

Failure to clear the ditches and maintain the “grips” (drainage through the verge) exacerbates flooding in the low-lying areas of the village.

Conclusions: Verges (ENV8)

1. Verges should be regularly inspected for damage.
2. Verges should be maintained at a suitable height, width and condition for pedestrian use.
3. When the edges of roads are repaired the original width of the road should be retained and verges should be reinstated to their pre-damaged breadth.
4. The Essex Highway Authority should be pressed to ensure that the grips are cleared periodically.
5. Owners of land adjacent to the road are urged to ensure that the ditches are cleared periodically. Spoil should be disposed of sensitively to preserve pedestrians’ safe use of verges and if this is not possible, should be removed.

Public Footpaths



Footpath 25 by Cow Common

The village is criss-crossed with Public Rights of Way, most established long ago. The unsurfaced parts cover over ten miles and whilst the majority are footpaths there is also a mile of bridleway and a mile and a half of byway. Most continue through neighbouring parishes, and to the north connect with the Flitch Way Long Distance Path. The definitive footpath map can be found on the central map and at http://www.greatcanfield.org.uk/footpaths_17.html.

Older maps – for example those of 1881 and 1900 – show many of the same routes that are enjoyed today. Footpaths give everyone the opportunity to appreciate the wonderful unspoilt views of a truly rural landscape and perspectives not seen from the car.

The Questionnaire revealed a lively interest in footpaths although it is rare to meet a fellow walker on the way. Some concerns were expressed regarding the availability of information and the maintenance and waymarking of paths. Great Canfield has now joined the Parish Paths Partnership run by Essex County Council. This provides encouragement and funding for such tasks as improved waymarking, path clearing and managing relationships with landowners. In addition, regular walks have been introduced under a knowledgeable leader. Together these steps will make this amenity more accessible to local people and help preserve an important heritage.



Boxley Lane



Footpath 15, NE of Ashfields

Conclusions: Public Footpaths

1. The local footpaths, bridleways and byways are vital amenities and should be properly signed and maintained.
2. Information on Public Rights of Way should be more easily accessible: their use should be promoted.

Community

Most residents of Great Canfield value the rural atmosphere and the general sense of wellbeing that village life provides. Almost two thirds of residents have lived in the village for more than ten years, and over half of these for more than twenty years. There are currently no shops; no village pub; no school; and no regular public transport. Whilst many residents would like to see some of these amenities in the village, a significant minority wanted no additional amenities. A trial weekly shopping bus service to Bishop's Stortford started in May 2009: details of this and the Community Travel Scheme can be found on the village website.

There is no gas supply and no mains drainage and the potential provision of these two services was rated quite highly by respondents. Some parts of the village cannot access broadband and a significant number of respondents listed this as a need: broadband access would allow residents to work from home.

Despite the scattered layout of the village, Great Canfield has a number of community amenities, groups, and events.

St Mary's church is an important part of village life although we now share a priest with five other parishes. The Friends of St Mary's was constituted in 1990 to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the founding of the Parish, and the whole village came together to plan and produce a day-long Pageant. The Friends of St Mary's continue to provide financial support for the maintenance of the church,

Great Canfield has a village hall, owned by the church, which was originally the village school. It has its own committee which organises events such as quiz nights, suppers with entertainment, and festive events, as well as regular bridge club evenings. The vast majority of respondents considered a village hall an important asset and most regarded the current hall as satisfactory. Others made suggestions for improvement including refurbishment, better parking and more courses and classes.

There is evidence that cricket was played in Great Canfield in 1860 and the Cricket Club, which runs two teams and which meets every weekend from April to September, is supported by some residents although many of the team members come from outside the village. The Cricket Club now boasts an excellent new clubhouse and bar, open to non-members.



Cricket match amidst the chestnuts

A more recent addition to the village is Ashfields Carriage and Polo Club which hosts a number of equestrian, shooting and charitable events throughout the year as well as a weekly Carpet Bowls Club. It also has a licensed bar and meeting room.



Carriage event, Ashfields

A need for more sports facilities in the village was mentioned by a number of people although this may be difficult to achieve.

The Happy Circle was founded forty-five years ago by the then Rector's wife and is the longest surviving social organisation in the village. It was originally for the over 60s but is now open to anyone in the

Community

community. Some years ago it amalgamated with a similar club in Takeley and is probably the most active organisation in the village.

A book group meets monthly in members' homes to discuss the month's read and to suggest and agree books for future reading. A mobile library also visits the village regularly and there have been some requests for additional stops within the village.

The village fete was a regular and popular annual feature. It has now become less frequent.

While two-thirds of the residents took the time to respond to the Questionnaire - indicating a healthy interest in the village - many residents mentioned a need for a greater sense of community and the lack of a pub or meeting place which might overcome this.

A Village Newsletter is produced quarterly by volunteers and is delivered free to every household in the village. It provides details of village events; contact names; a summary of Parish Council business; and articles about the village both present and past. The Parish News is produced monthly and covers all six parishes.

A village website was set up recently at www.greatcanfield.org.uk. Since it is recognised that not everyone has access to the internet, the village notice boards and the two magazines will continue to contain the Parish news.

The Parish Council is made up of seven elected representatives of the village. Meeting dates are advertised on notice boards and the website. The Parish has a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and enjoys a relatively crime free existence (apart from littering). The Parish Council organises an annual litter pick with volunteers from the village. The village skip was re-instated last year and proved popular. Some residents have also suggested communal recycling bins for the village. A majority of respondents express an interest in the Parish Council exploring whether a need exists for affordable or sheltered housing for local people.

During the preparation of the VDS, a number of comments were received which, while not strictly relating to the design of the village, nevertheless reflect important concerns about the community and they are shown below.

1. It is clear that communicating information about village events and activities is a problem and ideas on how to improve this would be welcome. More widespread use of the new village website is one possibility.
2. Village associations should be encouraged to contribute regularly to the website with details of forthcoming events and activities.
3. The two most popular organisations in the village – the Cricket Club and the Happy Circle – are largely dependent on people from outside the village for support. Residents are encouraged to support these organisations.
4. Like-minded people could form a sports group: tennis players, for example, could arrange to use some of the private tennis courts in the village.
5. The village fete should be resurrected as a regular event.
6. The issues raised during the village consultation, such as opposition to the expansion of Stansted Airport, could provide an opportunity for more concerted community action. The Canfield Society was originally formed in 1980 to fight the development of Stansted Airport, and its popular fund raising events successfully brought residents together.
7. The village hall needs the support of more of the residents.
8. A welcome pack for all new villagers, containing practical information and contact details of the various groups, is something that has been successfully adopted by other villages and should be considered.

Commercial Activities

Farming

Over 90% of the 2,471 acres of land in Great Canfield is actively farmed, by 12 families with between 80 and 400 acres each in the Parish. Almost all of this is high-quality Grade 2 land used for arable farming, with two farms having small herds of cattle. Currently, about two-thirds of the crop is wheat and the balance consists mainly of rape, beans, potatoes, peas and spring barley. Modern mechanisation means that farming provides few employment opportunities.



Combine harvester at work

A valuable by-product of farming has been the maintenance of the landscape in Great Canfield: the majority of farmland is managed under one or more of the government-sponsored environmental programmes.

Other commercial activities

Economic pressure in farming has led to some diversification – including holiday cottages, bed and breakfast accommodation, storage, and some light industrial use, including agricultural contracting.

The principal new development is the equestrian centre at Ashfields. Scattered throughout the Parish are a number of other small businesses mostly conducted from residential or converted agricultural buildings, including graphic design, car parts and cosmetics. There are a number of business units at Hope End.

The rural character of the village and the unsuitability of the lanes for heavy traffic do not lend themselves to further light industrial development and a great

majority of the respondents to the Questionnaire thought that there should be no more such development.

In the future, improvements in telecommunications may result in more people choosing to work from home.

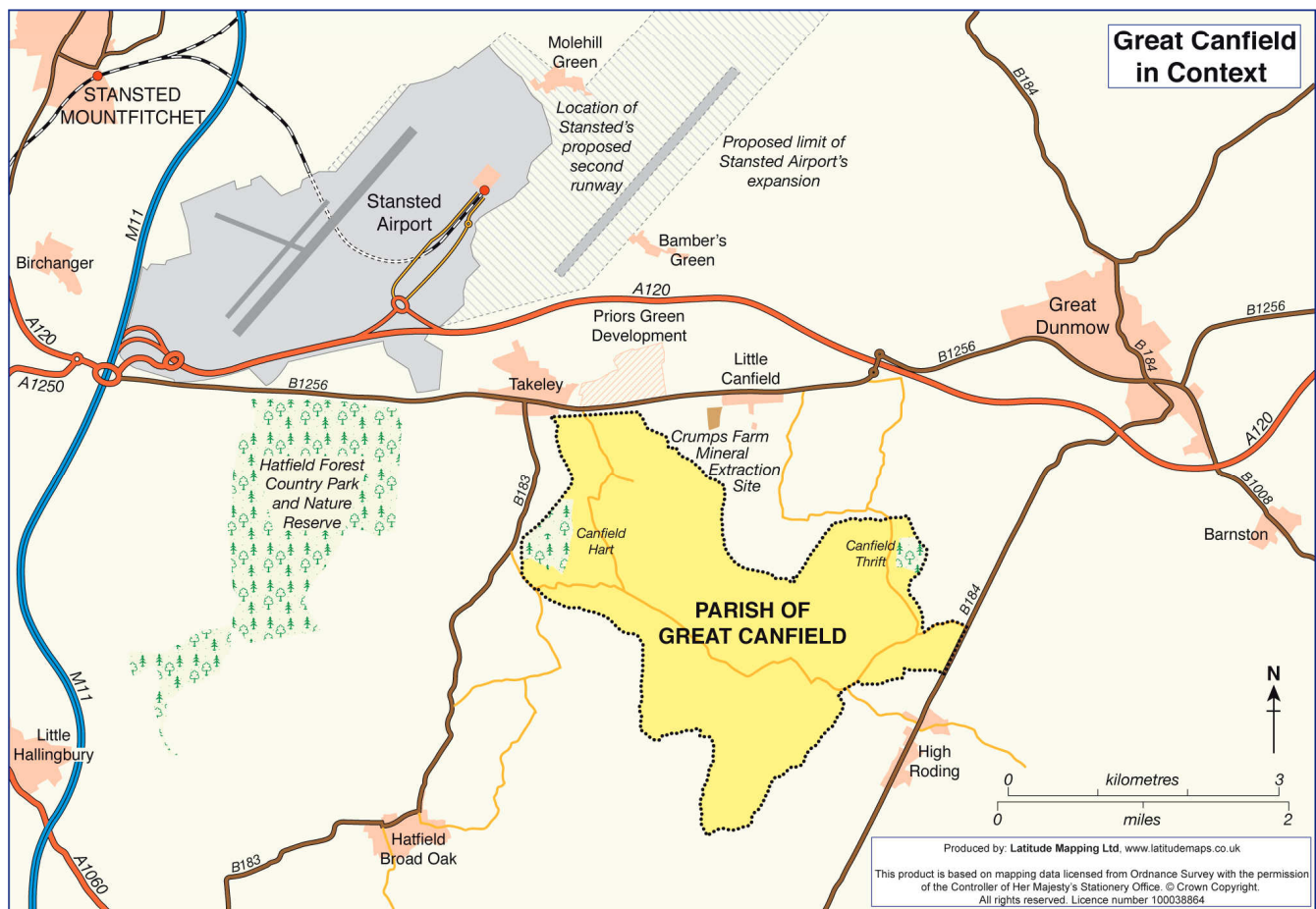


*Top: Bury Farm buildings converted to self-catering cottages
Bottom: Canfield Byre, converted from listed farm building*

Guidelines: Agricultural and Commercial (S7,E4,E5)

1. The conversion of redundant unlisted farm buildings for residential use should be encouraged.
2. There should be no more light industrial development in Great Canfield and the conversion of farm buildings for industrial use should be opposed.
3. There has to be strong agricultural justification for any new agricultural buildings.
4. Any new agricultural buildings should be designed and sited to minimise the effect on neighbouring property and the overall landscape. Particular attention should be paid to scale, design, materials and the screening of such buildings.
5. Indigenous trees and hedging should adequately screen commercial operations.

Great Canfield in Context



Great Canfield is sparsely populated and predominantly rural. However some of its surroundings, especially to the north, have very different characteristics and bring threats which have the potential to exact profound change on the village environment.

There is significant new building development in Takeley, including the 700 odd new houses at Priors Green, and overspill is a concern.

Stansted Airport is nearby, to the north-west. BAA continues to seek further expansion of passenger throughput and it is applying for a second runway on new land to its east. If granted, it will change the face of Great Canfield for ever and a large majority of the respondents are against this development. The airport already conveys unwelcome noise, light and odours to its inhabitants.

A planning application has been submitted for the nearby Crumps Farm mineral extraction site, which if granted, will result in up to 120,000 tons per annum of "black bin" household, commercial and industrial waste being

processed prior to landfill at the site. A significant majority of respondents expressed concern at this development. There are many environmental issues including the visual impact of a very large processing building, light pollution, HGV movements, noise and odours, and further encroachment on the rural landscape. Future applications may involve extraction to the south and west of the existing gravel works, bringing industrial activity within the Parish boundary.

To the north lies the ill-defined location of a possible new town. It is being considered by the East of England Regional Assembly's review of the practicality of growth strategies for homes and employment (East Of England Plan >2031). Any such town is said to be conditional on significant growth of Stansted Airport and would comprise some 20,000 new homes on a greenfield site east of the ancient Hatfield Forest and south of the A120. By comparison Bishop's Stortford comprises 14,267 homes. The impact of such a development would be environmentally catastrophic both for Great Canfield and the surrounding area.

Your Property

Whether listed or not, old or new, your property is an important part of the character of the village.

If you are considering alterations to the exterior of your own property, anywhere in the village, there are a number of aspects you should consider. The alterations may be significant changes such as replacement windows or doors or seemingly less important items such as paintwork, signs, boundary walls, gates, hedges or removal of a tree.

All alterations affect the building and its surroundings as well as the overall look of the village so please make your own assessment of the potential impact by studying each visible elevation of your property including the rear elevation, where visible, prior to alteration and ask yourself:

- What are the distinctive features of your property, neighbouring properties and the area?
- How do the alterations you are considering affect the positive distinctive features of your property? Do they complement the character of the local area? Do they meet the guidelines set out in the VDS? If not, how could you change them so that they do?
- Additionally is there the opportunity to remove any uncharacteristic features?

Next Steps:

- Contact Uttlesford District Council to establish if planning permission or building regulations permissions are required for your proposal
- Check also if there are any other restrictions on the development of your property. Is it a listed building or in the conservation area? If so, it will be subject to much stricter control and in most cases require listed building consent or special permission for alterations or demolition. Amongst other restrictions, you may need permission to cut down or significantly reduce the size of trees.
- If you are in doubt, employ an architect or seek professional advice on your proposals. Uttlesford District Council is also happy to provide advice prior to the submission of an application.
- Show this Village Design Statement to your architect or builder at an early stage of your planning.
- Follow the consultation process recommended on page 31.

Useful Contacts

Uttlesford District Council

Planning Advice Officer 01799 510676

Duty Planning Officer 01799 510617

Conservation Officer 01799 510462

(for listed buildings and development in

Conservation Area)

Permitted Development

see www.planningportal.gov.uk

and www.uttlesford.gov.uk then follow links to Planning/Advice & Guidance

Essex County Council

Listed Buildings 0845 6037624

Highways (West Area office) 0845 6037621

e-mail: highways.westarea@essex.gov.uk

English Heritage, Eastern Region

01223 582700

See www.english-heritage.org.uk

And www.imagesofengland.org.uk



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This VDS can be found on the Great Canfield website www.greatcanfield.org.uk and also on the Uttlesford District Council website www.uttlesford.gov.uk

March 2010