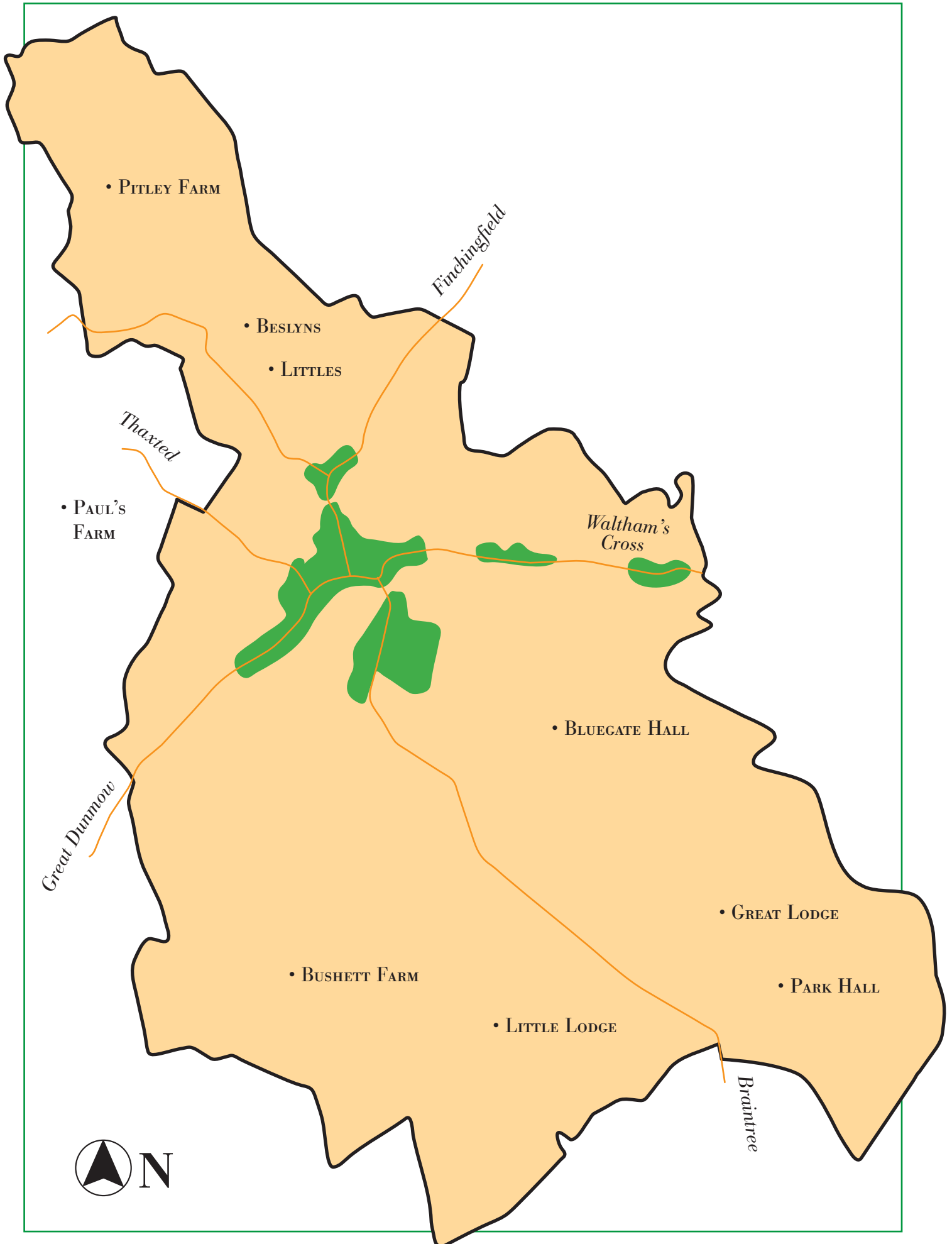
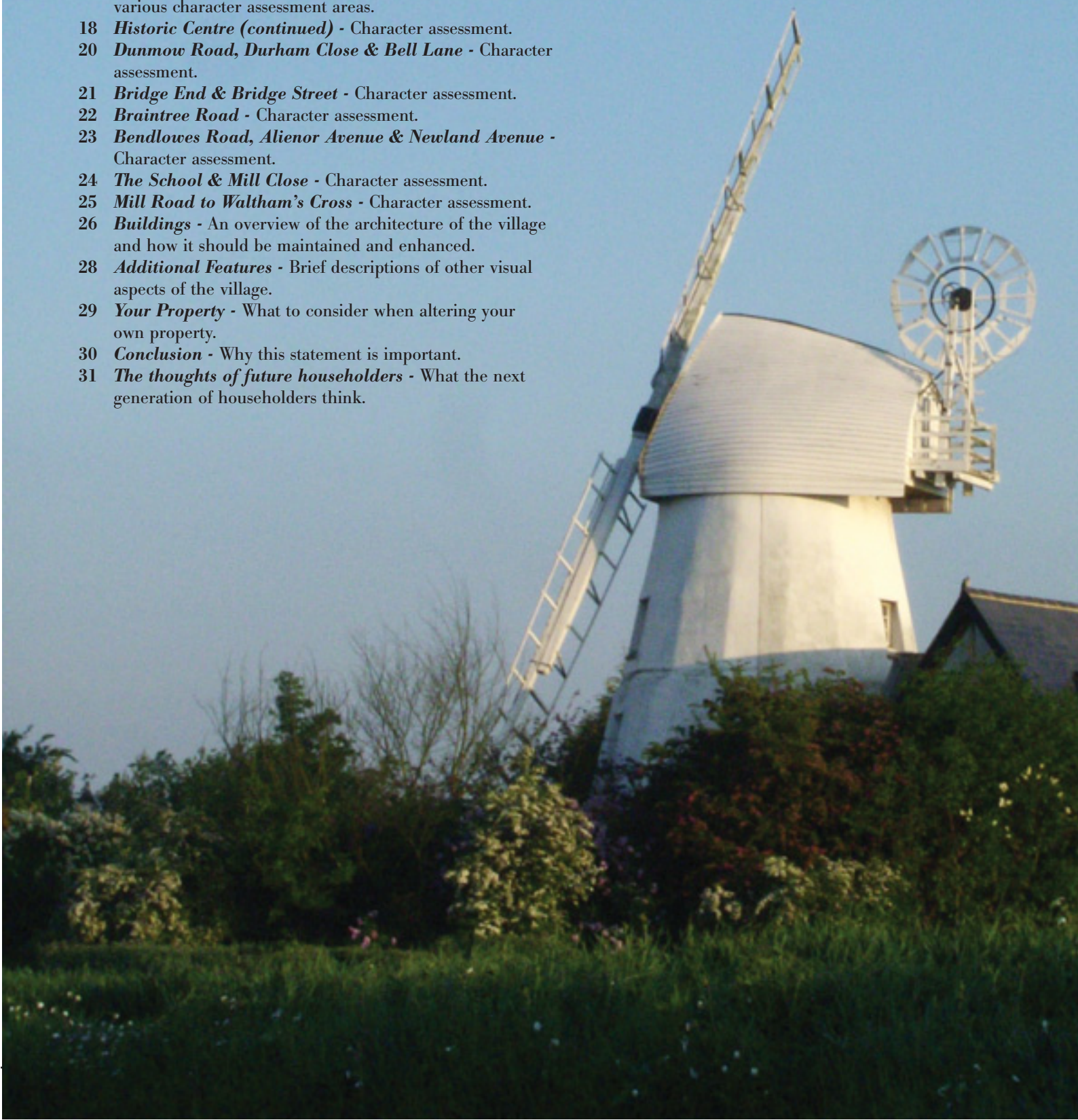


Great Bardfield Village Design Statement

Parish Map



- 4 **Introduction** - Explanation of what a Village Design Statement is, why it was written and how it was compiled.
- 6 **Historic Background** - Great Bardfield's history from the Domesday Book to the present day.
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- 22 **Braintree Road** - Character assessment.
- 23 **Bendlowes Road, Alienor Avenue & Newland Avenue** - Character assessment.
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- 26 **Buildings** - An overview of the architecture of the village and how it should be maintained and enhanced.
- 28 **Additional Features** - Brief descriptions of other visual aspects of the village.
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- 30 **Conclusion** - Why this statement is important.
- 31 **The thoughts of future householders** - What the next generation of householders think.



Introduction

What is a Village Design Statement?

The Village Design Statement gives a detailed description of Great Bardfield, the individual character of its main areas and the important features of its design and historical evolution. Design guidelines are provided for how these existing features should be reflected in any future development. 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.

Most importantly, it should be understood that the Statement is about managing change in the village, not preventing it.

Why produce one for Gt Bardfield?

It is not unusual for a degree of cynicism to be held by residents in small rural villages. This is because planning decisions that affect them are often made by large, urban based District Councils. Great Bardfield is not alone in this, but working with Braintree District Council has improved the situation by producing this Statement. The Village Design Statement 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 will it work?

The Statement describes the parish of Great Bardfield in three main ways:

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

The village has been divided into separate areas of different character. Not all kinds of development are considered suitable for each area of the village and the Statement helps the District Planning Officers appreciate this. The Statement has been considered within the context of the Local Plan Review to ensure that guidelines are appropriate to Braintree District Council planning policy.

The Statement will influence future development within the parish and its approval by the District Council means it will become a 'material consideration' in the determination of planning applications and a positive influence on future development.



How has it been produced?

To be approved by Braintree District Council it is essential that the Statement represents the views of the villagers and not just the small team of people responsible for its production. The Village Design Statement is the result of full consultation with the whole parish as well as the District Council and this has been achieved in the following ways:

- A number of advertised public meetings including a full day character assessment workshop
- A questionnaire circulated to all households in the parish
- Regular updates in the monthly village magazine
- An exhibition held at the School Fete in June 2004 where work in progress was displayed along with descriptions of the character assessment areas and design guidelines for future development
- Projects undertaken by the local primary school children
- Invitations to households to read and comment on draft versions
- Meetings with Braintree District Planning Officers

A small team of villagers held regular meetings over a period of fifteen months to plan and administer production of the document.

Who is it for?

'Development' is not only new buildings. The look and feel of a village is also affected by small alterations such as the use of open spaces, house extensions, window and door replacement or changes to walls and hedges.

The Village Design Statement gives guidance to anyone considering, or overseeing, development within Great Bardfield. This might include:

- Local householders
- Local businesses and farmers
- County Planning authorities and historic building advisers
- District Planning Officers
- The Parish Council
- Architects and designers (especially those based outside the local area)
- Developers and builders, (especially those based outside the local area)

Copies have been distributed to every household in the parish of Great Bardfield including Waltham's Cross. Copies have also been lodged with Braintree District Council for issue to anyone applying for planning permissions within the parish and further copies are available either from the Community Information Point or the Parish Council.

What is included?

The Village Design Statement explains:

- A brief historical context
- The way the settlement has developed over time
- The setting of the village in the surrounding countryside
- The character of individual areas in the village
- The characteristics of the buildings and spaces within the village
- Other features regarded as important by villagers

Where appropriate, design guidelines are included and highlighted in green. These, with the accompanying text and cross-references to District Planning Policy, provide guidance based on the views of the people who live in Great Bardfield, what they value and want to be retained.



Historic Background



▲ Church of St Mary the Virgin (Grade 1 listed)

A short history of Great Bardfield

The Domesday Book of 1086 marks the beginning of the recorded history of Great Bardfield. It was well established in the time of the Anglo-Saxons, who gave it the name “Bardefelda”, which is thought to mean 'open land colonised by dependent peasants'. After the Norman Conquest, the new lord of the manor was Richard de Clare, who held 170 lordships throughout the country. The manor house was situated on the higher ground off the Braintree Road,

and no doubt there was a wooden Saxon Church nearby. It was probably replaced by a Norman stone church soon after the conquest.

By 1240 a deer park had been enclosed, comprising the land now occupied by Park Hall, Great Lodge, Little Lodge and Bluegate Hall farms, and the King's huntsman had a right to take 20 bucks before Michaelmas, which were to be sent to Westminster. In 1368 the manor was held by Phillipa, the daughter of



▲ The Fountain erected by Henry Smith 1860

the third son of Edward III. Around this time the Norman nave and chancel of the church was completely rebuilt incorporating a rare stone chancel screen, and the church remains today much as it was over 600 years ago.

From 1262 a fair was held in the village on June 22nd at which horses were bought and sold. People came from far and wide for this event, which lasted until the 1920s. Around 1400 the village was important enough for large timber-framed houses to be built, and studies have shown that Place House, Gobions, the White Hart and The Gables, amongst others, date from this time. Great Bardfield became a royal manor when it was owned by Edward IV, and during the reign of Henry VIII the manor was granted in succession to Katherine of Aragon, Anne of Cleves, Katherine Howard and Katherine Parr.

▼ 14th Century Gobions



▲ Serjeant Bendlowes cottage

Around 1500 Christopher Bendlowes, a Yorkshireman, settled at Place Farm and his son William made a distinguished career in the law, being at one time the sole Serjeant-at-the-Laws to Elizabeth I. William Bendlowes is remembered to this day as a great benefactor to the village. He set up a

chantry so that prayers could be said for his family: Philip and Mary, Christopher and Elizabeth Bendlowes and William and his wife Alienor. He also created almshouses for the poor, endowed a school and set up a Charity.

In 1622 the manor was purchased by Sir Martin Lumley, who built himself a new manor house at Great Lodge, in what had been the Norman deer park. This house was demolished in 1729, but a Grade 1 listed brick barn survives from earlier times, together with domestic accommodation which became a fine house in its own right.



▲ *Grade 1 listed brick barn*

The bridge over the Pant is mentioned in 1551, and over the years it has been repaired and rebuilt many times. Gibraltar Mill in Mill Road was built around 1750, and at times there have been other windmills at Hawkspur Green and near Paul's Farm. The site of the watermill is very ancient, but regrettably the latest building was burnt down in 1991. A second watermill called Scrogg's Mill was near Copford Hall. A Pest House was in use in earlier times at Toms Green, near Beslyns House.

▼ *Late 14th Century Place House*



▲ *Town Hall 1859*

And so the village continued its agricultural existence through the years, until further developments happened in the 19th Century. The Society of Friends opened their meeting house in 1848; the Town Hall (1859) and the fountain in Brook Street were built by Mr. Henry Smith, a well-known Quaker. The Methodist Chapel was built in 1862, with seating for 200. The Primary School building dates from 1835, and in 1863 the existing pair of schools for boys and girls were merged. Today the school has over 140 pupils.

Great Bardfield felt the changes caused by the industrial revolution, and, in 1870, Chapman's, an agricultural machinery repair business, was established where Durham Close now stands.

A small gas works was working in the village before 1867, but it had ceased working by 1900, and a brewery was working around 1900. Up to the 1920s there were shops in the village to cater for most needs, but with the advent of the motor car many of these have now disappeared.

Great Bardfield became well known between 1930-1960 when it became the centre for a group of English artists. Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious were the first to arrive, living in Brick House, and John Aldridge lived in Place House.

Bawden and Aldridge collaborated on a series of wallpaper designs before the 1939-1945 war, and Ravilious produced many fine engravings for books and a series of designs of domestic china for the Wedgwood Company.

Bawden became an expert in lino-cuts, and he was in great demand to produce end papers and covers for books, as well

as posters, whilst Aldridge concentrated on oil painting. Sadly Ravilious, a war artist, was reported missing in action.

After the war the painters George Chapman, Walter Hoyle and Michael Rothenstein arrived and the community was further increased by Audrey Cruddas, a designer of sets and costumes for the theatre, Marianne Straub a designer of textiles, and Bernard and Sheila Cheese (Robinson), designers of lithographs and posters. (The front cover of the *Bardfield Times* has illustrations of the village by Sheila).

In 1951 as part of the Festival of Britain Aldridge, Bawden and Rothenstein opened their studios to the public, and this was so successful that nine artists in the village mounted their own exhibitions in 1954, 1955 and 1958, attracting large crowds from London. The exhibitions then ceased, and gradually the artists moved away and a momentous period in the life of the village was over.

In 2004 the artist Richard Bawden, son of Edward, designed two engraved glass panels for the doors to the church bell tower. They feature St. Luke, patron saint of artists and St. Cedd who brought Christianity to Essex.

Today Great Bardfield is a vibrant and caring village with a lively community life which caters for the needs and interests of its 1200 inhabitants.

▼ *Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious lived in Brick House*



Settlement Pattern

Great Bardfield lies on ground sloping down towards the River Pant, and it is difficult to find a viewpoint from which to see the whole village. The surrounding land is suitable for arable farming although once had much more woodland than is visible today.



▲ *Great Bardfield lies on ground sloping towards the river Pant*

The Anglo-Saxons settled by the brook which crosses Brook Street, and in the High Street. However, the Lord of the Manor decided to build the Manor House on the high ground overlooking the village, where Great Bardfield Hall is today, and a wooden church probably occupied the site of the present church. The manor controlled many farms, and the village became a centre for a wider area, being the meeting point of five roads. It also served as a convenient fording place of the River Pant.



▲ *Great Bardfield Hall*

The village had wealthy people living in it from 1400 onwards, as is evident from the timber-framed houses such as Gobions, the White Hart, and others in the High Street, Vine Street, Brook Street and Bridge Street, and this was the extent of the village for many centuries. A separate hamlet grew up just across the ford, and when the bridge was built in the middle ages this became known as Bridge End.

▼ *Great Lodge*



By the sixteenth century, houses were beginning to appear in the approach roads, notably Place House and its farm in Dunmow Road, and Vicarage Cottage in the Braintree Road. Smaller houses for the peasants were built in the centre of the village but outside this, even by 1755, there were only two houses in Mill Road, three in Braintree Road together with the village pound, nine in Bridge Street, two in Bell Lane and twelve in Dunmow Road. However, the primary use of the surrounding land



▲ *Little's*

was always arable farming rather than sheep farming and from the earliest times farms existed at Pitley, Little's, Copford Hall, Claypit Hall, and Bushett. The Norman deer park had enclosed the land to the southeast of the village, and this area was later broken up to become the farms of Little Lodge, Great Lodge, Bluegate Hall and Park Hall.

▼ *Bridge over the river Pant*



Windmills were built in Mill Road, and at Paul's Farm (which is strictly Little Bardfield), and watermills at Scrogg's Mill near Copford Hall, and west of the windmill in Mill Road.

▼ *Gibraltar Mill*





▲ Terrace of red-brick cottages in Bridge Street



▲ The High Street



▲ Northampton Meadow

It was not until the nineteenth century that the village started to expand. Industries such as a brewery and an agricultural machinery workshop appeared, and a terrace of cottages was built in Bridge Street. Some of the old timber-framed houses in the village centre were rendered or encased in brick, and much of the thatch was replaced by slate or tile.

The population was 1110 in 1851, but most people found jobs and all their day-to-day requirements in the village. Infilling took place in all the approach roads. Bridge End and later the northwest side of Dunmow Road were developed.

Further significant development did not take place until just before the 1939-1945 war, when the Bendlowes estate was started and completed in the mid-1950s. This was followed by the building of houses in Braintree Road (St. Mary's Villas and Hall Villas), Northfields around 1960 followed by Mill Close. Around 1966 the single storey houses along the southeast side of Dunmow Road were built, and in the 1970s Durham Close was built on the land previously owned by Gobions. The meadow adjacent to Northampton

House was developed in the mid 1990s for Northampton Meadow, a small, mixed development which includes social housing.

In the 1990s further houses were built at Squire's Mead, and the farm buildings of Bardfield Hall Farm were converted into a business centre. In the last few years houses have been built in Bridge Street extending down to the bridge, in the farmyard of Bridge Farm, on the builder's yard in Bendlowes Road and on the site of the Rolls Royce garage in the village centre.

Many cottages have been improved and extended by their owners, and the present housing stock is in good condition and very varied in design. The population fell significantly in the inter-war depression years, but is now back to around 1200. The village envelope is now tightly drawn around the present development, and further expansion of the village is unlikely. The local farms now require only a few workers for efficient operation, and most villagers find work outside Great Bardfield, many in London or at Stansted Airport.

▼ Bendlowes Road





▲ *Approaching the village from Bell Lane*

Geology and topography

Great Bardfield lies within the South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands, part of the area designated by English Nature as the East Anglian Plain. The predominant soils are Kesgrave sands and gravels, and chalky boulder clay (till) with flints, deposited over the last 1 million years as outwash from the East Anglian glaciers during the last Ice Age. Hence 'erratic' stones are found which have been carried from as far away as Scandinavia and Scotland. Fossil corals from Cambridgeshire occasionally turn up on local ploughed fields.

Around the river Pant and the brook, there are river terrace deposits and alluvium which contribute to the undulating topography of the parish, witnessed by the steady climb from the river Pant, and the brook by School Green, to St Mary's Church and the top of the High Street.

▼ *The river Pant*



Landscape

The village is located within a Special Landscape Area where extra protection is provided through policy BDP62 of the Braintree District Local Plan and emerging policy RLP79 in the Local Plan Review. The area is classified as Ancient Countryside. Land use today is predominantly arable but with a wooded appearance of copses and shaws, mainly oak, ash and hornbeam, and some plantations which have been coppiced. These are however patchy and fragmented.

Traces of medieval field patterns can still be found. Growth of local agriculture in the eighteenth century, with improved drainage and mechanisation, was followed by a decline in the nineteenth century and between the World Wars. Grazing land, especially for dairy cattle, and pig-rearing were at one time more common. 20th century field

▼ *A typical copse*



▲ *A sunken lane at Waltham's Cross*

rationalisation and intensification, however, led to more frequent planting of cereals and monoculture industrial crops (oil seed rape), at the expense of pasture and natural vegetation, especially lowland grassland. There are signs of a reversal with an increase in the numbers of horses at pasture.

Trees and Hedgerows

Many ancient hedgerows were grubbed up but there are a few good remaining areas, dominated by blackthorn, elderberry and bullace (wild plum). Encouragingly, some areas and gaps are now being replanted with native species, especially hawthorn and guelder rose. Traditional hedgerow trees were oak, field maple, hazel and until recently English Elm which, sadly, was ravaged by Dutch Elm disease. There are splendid examples of Veteran Oaks at Alienor Avenue, Beslyns Lane and behind Pipers' Meadow. A tree and hedgerow survey is planned involving villagers, whose findings will be recorded as part of a wider environmental study.

Important local features are sunken lanes, such as Bell Lane and around Waltham's Cross, bordered by hedgerows which are a vital habitat and corridor for wildlife. Every effort should be made to manage these sympathetically - by discouraging the insensitive use of flail cutters. More careful management of grass verges throughout the district has led to an encouraging reappearance of cowslips. The recovery programme for the Bardfield Oxlip is covered elsewhere in this document.

Landscape Character Assessment 2005 saw the introduction of the new Environmental Stewardship schemes which are expected to be taken up by most local landowners, some of whom are already incorporating setaside, conservation headlands, grass margins, beetle banks and other wildlife-friendly features into their farms, all of which can mitigate the effects of intensification. Many of these measures are designed to benefit local species such as hares, skylarks and water voles which are now protected under the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan. The loss of farmland birds nationally is reflected locally in the decline of lapwings, for example, through the replacement of winter stubble by increased winter season cereal planting.

Following a reconnaissance survey in 2005, the village hopes to carry out a full landscape character assessment, which will identify the important character areas and landscape types that create our distinctive local countryside.



▲ *Foxes Wood at the extreme south of the Parish*

Village Gardens

Village gardens, with their mixture of native species and planted ornamentals, should not be overlooked as a vital habitat and refuge for our flora and fauna. But it is important that villagers are aware of the value of native species with which our wildlife has evolved.

Alien species (i.e. invasive plants which escape from gardens into the countryside, such as Spanish bluebells or the Himalayan Balsam by the Pant bridge) can also be a threat to our local biodiversity if they are allowed to encroach on local habitats or native species. When reinstating hedgerows and trees, locally sourced and raised cuttings and seedlings are always preferable and offer great projects for schools and enthusiasts (e.g. new oaks from our local acorns).

We are lucky enough to have retained many species of resident and migrant breeding birds, butterflies and moths, as well as interesting local flora, and it is strongly recommended that a formal ecological survey is carried out (encouraging villagers to log their findings through the village website) to act as a baseline on which to increase our stock of native and beneficial species and enhance our local biodiversity.

▼ *Veteran oak tree in Beslyns Lane*



▼ *Winter in the village outskirts*



Open Spaces

Great Bardfield does not have a typical 'Village Green'. Nevertheless it has open spaces and several small greens that are designated Visually Important Spaces and will be retained to protect the rural character of the village.

The largest, clearly visible space is Pipers' Meadow which is a water meadow, open to the public, beside the river Pant at the end of Bridge Street. It is protected from development by a section 106 agreement with Braintree District Council and has a regular programme of maintenance administered by the Parish Council. In Great Bardfield in the 1840s, the Victorian botanist Henry Doubleday



▲ *Pipers' Meadow*

recognised and named the Bardfield Oxlip as a true species, (neither Primrose nor Cowslip). In recent years examples of this species have dwindled and there is now a programme to regenerate it. Pipers' Meadow is one area where this important part of the village's heritage will be reintroduced.



▲ *The Great Bardfield Oxlip*

There are three small greens all at road junctions: the Memorial Green, School Green and Crown Green. Although these are relatively small, they are especially important as so many of the houses are built right up to the pavement and there is



▲ *Memorial Green*



▲ *Crown Green*



▲ *Glebe Meadow*

▼ *School Green*





▲ Brook St - Causeway Green on left School Green on right

Design Guidelines

- The Village Envelope has now been drawn tightly around the village and should not be expanded to accommodate further development
- Pipers' Meadow should continue to be protected from development
- Glebe Meadow should continue to be protected from development
- 'Visually Important Space' status should be sought for open spaces within the village that improve views and contribute to the rural character of the village. This should be addressed through the emerging Local Development Framework
- Grass verges should be retained
- Any additional planting should complement existing trees
- Existing indigenous woodland, hedgerows and field boundaries should be preserved
- The Local Education Authority should be discouraged from any further development on the School Field
- Footpaths and bridleways should be kept open and in good repair. Any diversions should be carefully planned. Opportunities for new footpaths and bridleways should be considered
- The valley of the brook stretching from open countryside behind the Church and almost to Brook Street provides a valuable open space with excellent views and should be protected from development in the future

precious little greenery in the centre of the village. The Greens also retain open views through the village which are not only visually important but improve sight lines for emerging traffic.

To the Brook Street side of the Church of St Mary is Glebe Meadow. Mostly concealed by hedgerows, this large sloping meadow safeguards excellent views of the Church and this open space should be protected from development in the future. Between Glebe Meadow and School Green is Causeway Green which completes the open aspect at this end of the village and should also be protected. Crown, School and Causeway greens are owned by the Lord of the Manor and permission must be sought for any alterations, planting etc.

The School Field provides an open space at the beginning of Braintree Road, providing a visual break in development between the school and the Catholic Church. Although building of a new Lottery funded Pre-school and After School Club building was allowed in 1999, further development of the School Field should be resisted.

The Playing Field, while large and a great asset to the village, is unfortunately tucked away behind Bendlowes Road and at one end of the village. Consequently, while invaluable to Great Bardfield, it has no positive visual effect on the village itself.

On the outskirts of the village, on entering from Dunmow Road, Braintree Road, Mill Road, (including the green

at the centre of Mill Close) and in Bendlowes Road are several wide grass verges and all should be retained to soften the effect of the built environment.

Footpaths & Bridleways

There is a substantial network of footpaths and bridleways within the parish which are walked frequently. Over 43% of residents surveyed in 2002 had experienced some difficulties in using them and around 50% of all respondents wanted to see improved maps and leaflets on local walks. The Parish Council has responded to these views, and the clearance and comprehensive mapping of footpaths along with circular routes has been completed as a separate project.

The valley of the brook, known colloquially as 'The Moors' which cuts through the centre of the village is visually important as it brings an open green space, from behind the Bardfield Centre and Church right into the centre near Brook Street. This provides an

important break in development between the church, Bardfield Hall, Bendlowes Estate etc and the main Historic Centre of the village.

▼ Mill Close



Historic Centre

Comprising of High Street, Vine Street, Crown Street, Brook Street, part of Braintree Road (including St. Mary's Church, Bardfield Hall and the Bardfield Centre) and part of Dunmow Road.

The Historic Centre is built around an area where three main thoroughfares meet. These routes enter the village from the North (Finchingfield), South (Braintree) and West (Dunmow), converging at the Memorial Green and Crown Street. Development follows the lines of these thoroughfares.



▲ *Varied Roofscape*

Overall view

The Historic Centre is built on varying gradients. High Street stands above Brook Street which falls towards the valley, with Braintree Road rising up and round the hill to the South. These changes in level of the properties enhance the views and provide interesting variety, especially to the roof levels throughout the village. The church stands high on its hill and can be seen from many positions in the village. Due to the bends in the roads and changes in level, the views throughout the village and glimpses



▲ *Cottage Museum*

between buildings are often unexpected. There are several greens and open spaces in the Historic Centre that provide opportunities for interesting views. Such views of the church, the windmill, open fields and spaces behind the properties add to the interest.

The gradients and changes of direction of roads and paths around the village also enable the back views of properties in the Historic Centre to be seen from different locations. It is important that these views are considered in proposals for new development or extensions to existing properties.

Any proposed development which lies behind other buildings and cannot be seen from the main streets should still be carefully considered as it may have a detrimental effect from other viewpoints.

Generally, the buildings follow the line of the road with most properties positioned directly onto the pavement, with few having land between their front doors and the street. Many of these properties have steps leading to front doors above street level and several feature iron railings.

▼ *The Village Centre*



▼ *Entrance to Brook House*



Mature trees are visually very important within the Historic Centre. There are several large established trees which soften the views of the built environment and skyline.

Features of Development

The Historic Centre includes three places of worship (the Anglican Parish Church of St. Mary, the Roman Catholic



▲ *Quaker Meeting House*

Church and the Quaker Meeting House). It also includes almost all the commercial parts of the village including shops and business areas such as the Bardfield Centre. Most of the historic properties of the village are located in the Historic Centre, the oldest (apart from the church) date from the 14th century. Two of the historic buildings are open to the public - the Cottage Museum and the Cage. Also in this area are Great Bardfield Hall and other historically and architecturally significant buildings such as Place

▼ *15th Century centre of St John's terrace*



▲ *The Cage*

House, Gobions (formerly Durham House), Brick House and Serjeant Bendlowes Cottage. These and many others form familiar and distinctive features of the village.

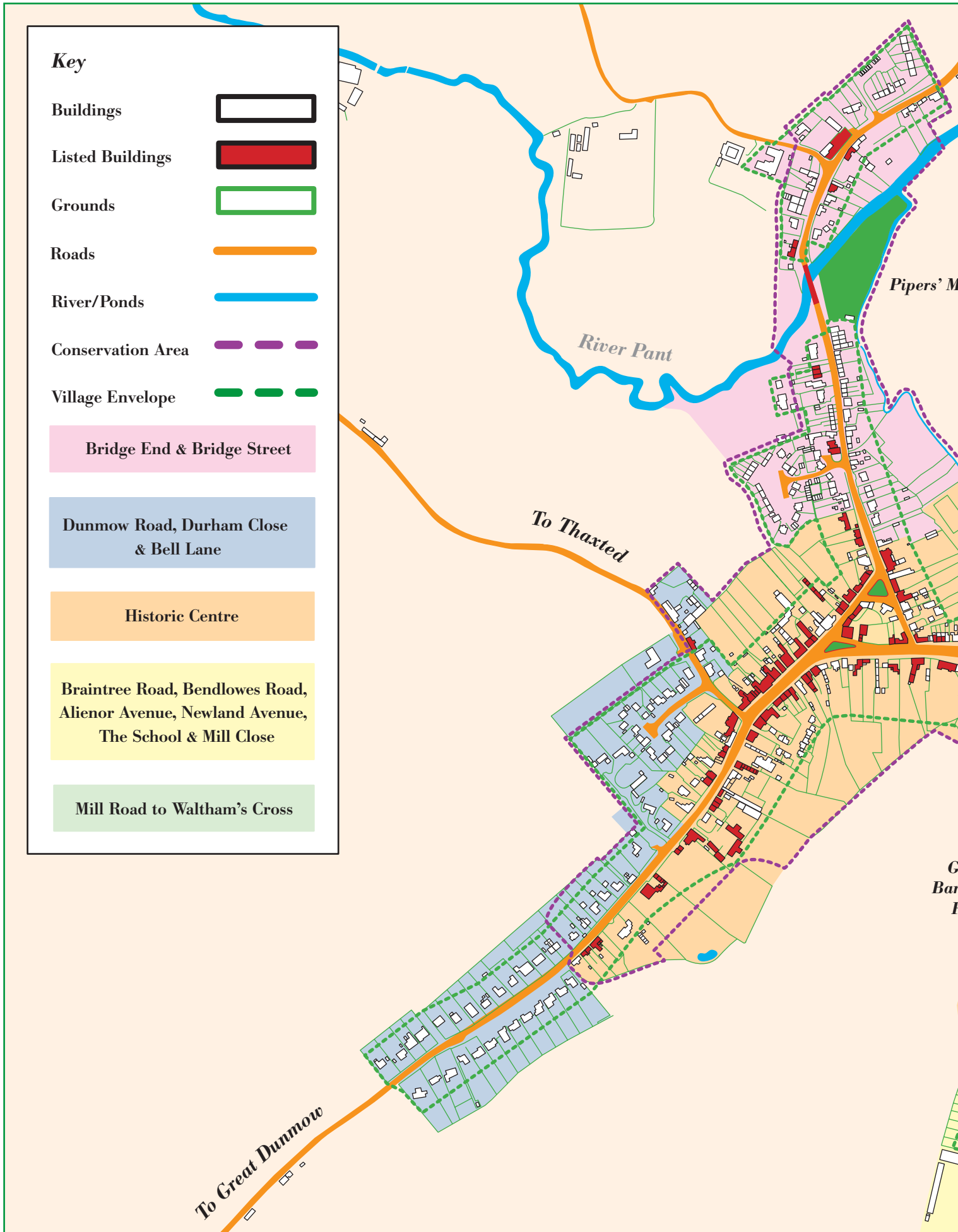
Very few properties are visually similar. Only where there are semi-detached cottages or a short terrace of 3-4 houses is there any similarity. Generally, properties have been built very close to each other of different ages and styles, and using a wide variety of building materials. The height of properties

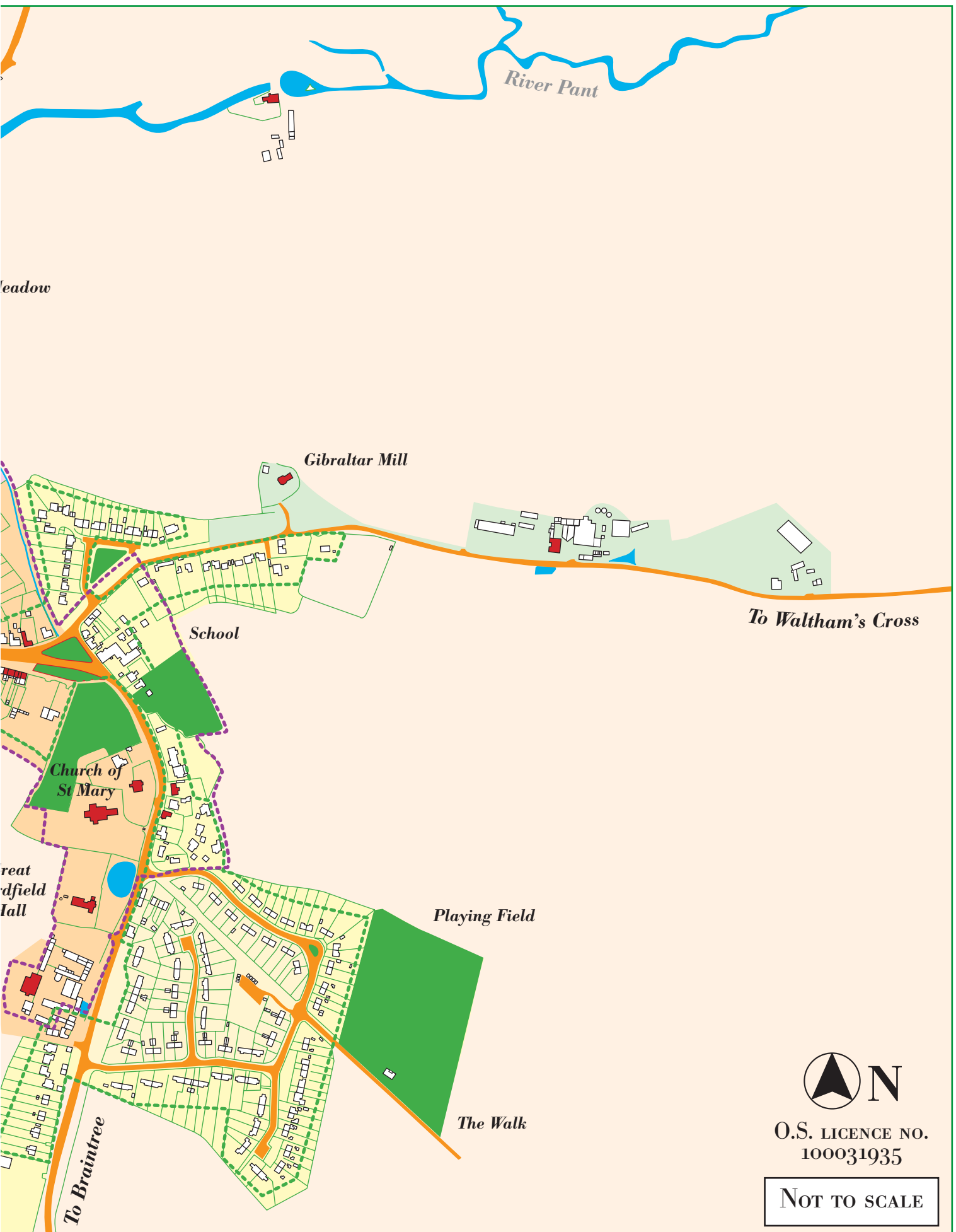
differs also from one and a half storey cottages to three storey houses. The upper storeys of many houses have been extended into the roof so that many properties have dormer windows.

The variety of styles, heights and building materials bring great interest to the Historic Centre. These distinctive and often very different styles, ranging from the 14th century to the present day, generally blend remarkably well together. The juxtaposition of widely different properties abutted against each other adds to the rich character of this area.

There are a few properties which seem out of place and these tend to be those built with little regard for their surroundings - generally developments of the mid to late 20th century. However, there are also examples of good practice where modern properties blend well with their surroundings and are not obvious 20th century builds, for example, South Place in Dunmow Road and Ranmore, next to the butchers.

Over the centuries spaces between buildings have been filled so that there are now few gaps left. Some back-land development has taken place behind properties facing the main streets although these are generally not obvious from the road. They have often replaced commercial operations which







▲ *varying properties abutted together*

were hidden behind the main street scene, for example The Old Brewery, the barns behind Place House and The Corniche. Other interesting areas are to be found hidden away behind the street frontage such as the Quaker meeting house with its own small burial ground.

Building Materials and Design Features

The building materials used vary widely. There are many examples of red brick, lime or cement rendering, pargetting or weatherboarding to be seen. The roofs are mainly of slate or clay tiles with the occasional thatched cottage in between. The chimneys on many properties are distinctive and add to the interesting roof-scape in the centre of the village.

▼ *Mature trees soften the views of the built environment*



There is also a wide variety in the style of doors and windows, all of which are critical in maintaining the character of existing buildings. When doors or windows require replacing in the Historic Centre they should be of painted timber to match existing details. There are many buildings with interesting features such as the carved timbers on Place House and the decorative prentice boards over the windows at Sergeant Bendlowes Cottage (see page 6).

The Church

The Anglican Church of St Mary is one of two Grade 1 listed buildings in the parish and dates back to 1174. The Norman nave and chancel were rebuilt in 1368 when a rare stone chancel screen was added. The screen is one of only three complete examples in the world, the others being in nearby Stebbing and Trondheim in Norway. The large diamond shaped clock was added in 1912 and dedicated to the Coronation of George V. Those that feel the clock is too large describe it as 'a clock with a church on it'!

Great Bardfield Hall

This fine Sixteenth Century Hall House stands close to the church on the site of a late twelfth century house. It has been sensitively restored to preserve period features (see page 8).

▼ *Carved timbers on Place House*



▼ *Church of St Mary the Virgin*





▲ 14th Century White Hart, former public house

Design Guidelines:

- Developments to the rear of properties should be carefully considered where rear elevations are visible in the Historic Centre
- The roof-scape is a very important aspect of the village and satellite dishes should be concealed from public view wherever possible
- Further backland development should be restricted. Any infill development within the existing settlement area should be small in scale and should respect current building lines
- No development on, or erosion of important village greens (Crown, School, Causeway and Mill Close) or visually important open spaces (Glebe Meadow and Memorial Green) should be permitted
- It is important to maintain the open fields beyond the church that link the village and the surrounding landscape
- Building materials should be selected from those found in the Historic Centre, and new buildings should take into account materials appropriate to the existing and adjacent buildings such as lime render, soft red Essex brick, clay peg-tiles, slates or thatch. This should apply not only to the building but to paving, rainwater goods, meter boxes and other features. For example wide areas of tarmac are not acceptable in the Historic Centre. Sympathetic block paving, cobbles or shingle are preferable
- Some areas such as the High Street, Memorial Green and Bridge Street have problems with available parking space. More off street parking is desirable but should be designed to have minimum visual impact. Any new development must include provision for off street parking in accordance with the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards 2001 (or any subsequent legislation)
- Mature trees should be retained wherever possible and further planting encouraged to ensure mature examples are available for the future

The Bardfield Centre

Although the Bardfield Centre development is on the outskirts of the village it has been included in the Historic Centre as it comprises a sympathetic conversion of old farm buildings which once belonged to Great Bardfield Hall. There have been more recent additions to the site but these blend in well. The Centre is well screened and unobtrusive, yet during

the week is a busy, vibrant business area. The units are well used by a variety of businesses and provide employment for local people.

The Centre also includes a Grade II listed barn which was restored in 2003 and provides a good example of how historic buildings can be sympathetically developed, preserved and utilised.

▼The Bardfield Centre/High Barn on left



Dunmow Road, Durham Close & Bell Lane



▲ South side of Dunmow Road

Dunmow Road

The entrance to the village from Great Dunmow is down a gentle gradient, past a well planted flood reservoir which will become an interesting nature reserve when it matures. This is followed by unobtrusive ribbon development on both sides of the road.

On the north side this is a mixture of bungalows and chalet bungalows, elevated but set well back from the road. To the south side of the road there are mainly chalet bungalows built in the 1960s with grounds falling away to the south. Grass verges to the south and grass banks and hedges to the north soften the appearance at this important entrance to the village.

At the point where older, two storey houses have been built on the south side, the street-scape is balanced by newer two storey houses on the north side. There is a mixture of rendered and brick houses to either side with no pavement to the north.

The most unattractive aspect of the area are the visually obtrusive overhead electricity cables.

▼ North side of Dunmow Road



Design Guidelines: Dunmow Road

- Heights of buildings should be in keeping with adjoining properties
- New buildings/extensions should maintain the same set back building line to remain unobtrusive
- Boundary treatments should respect the surrounding development
- Overhead cables should be removed if ever the opportunity arises



▲ Durham Close

Durham Close

This small estate is a mixture of brick and rendered, double storey houses built in the early 1970s to the Essex Design Guidelines. It includes a mixture of detached and semi-detached houses that are orientated to provide interest and variety. The presence of mature trees and well-tended front gardens soften the overall appearance.

▼ Bell Lane, Durham Close and the Historic Centre converge



Design Guidelines: Durham Close

- Any building extensions or alterations should follow the interest and variety of building styles seen in existing buildings

Bell Lane

This narrow, winding, sunken lane forms the entrance to the village from Thaxted and Little Bardfield, climbing a medium gradient leading directly into the Historic Centre. It is a Protected Lane, which means it cannot be widened or have its banks or hedges removed, (RLP87 Protected Lanes). The rather utilitarian Telephone Exchange sits in a prominent position on a ridge, visible from the approach to the village, (see page 10). As the first buildings are reached, open fields, modern development, (Durham Close) and the Historic Centre, (Gobions) converge. There is virtually no 'buffer introduction' of newer buildings as is the case with all of the other village entrances.

Design Guidelines: Bell Lane

- Given the position of the village envelope there can be no new development between open fields and the historic centre. Any future development to existing buildings should be sympathetic to existing views and historic buildings



▲ *Bridge Street, Northampton House on left*

Northampton Meadow forms a cul-de-sac of 19 modern houses to the right, built in 1996 in an Essex vernacular style (Essex Design Guide). Many are red brick with black brick plinths while others are of painted render. They are set around a mounded green, the detached houses having off-street parking with the remainder sharing communal parking to the front. This development includes social housing managed by a local housing association.

Although historic Northampton House, at the entrance to Northampton Meadow is the only property beyond two storeys, the overall roof-lines are varied and interspersed with a variety of chimneys adding to the interest and variety.

Generally along Bridge Street, the greatest problem is on-street parking which reduces the road leading from the village centre to the bridge to a single vehicle width.

***Design Guidelines:
Bridge End and Bridge Street***

- Any new development in the area should have adequate off-street parking, (refer to Essex Vehicle Parking Standards)
- Any new developments should have clearly delineated boundaries such as hedges or walls
- Variety of architectural design should be encouraged to add to the current diversity of character
- The Bridge over the Pant should be valued, protected and any necessary repairs carried out with the utmost sensitivity

Bridge End

Entering the village from Finchingfield the gradient is steeper than on the other main approaches to the village as it descends into Bridge End. Gibraltar Mill is visible to the south east. There is a contrast between the post-war bungalows visible to the right and the two storey weather-boarded house to the left of the road. Variety is immediately evident.

From here, development is primarily linear, leading into the centre of the village. 15th century Bridge Farm stands on the corner of Beslyn's Road, another Protected Lane, which leads off to the right with a range of residential developments including 'Clip Clops' - a commercial equestrian centre.

Boundaries to properties vary from black painted railings and beech hedges to red brick walls, some with flint infill panels and a variety of coping bricks. Some newer properties have no

defining boundary leaving a rather stark and undefined impression.

The arched, narrow red-brick bridge over the River Pant, first mentioned in 1551, is listed and a significant local land-mark with Pipers' Meadow, a water meadow maintained by the Parish Council, immediately on the left. The pedestrian footbridge was added in 1977. The bridge provides a harmonious link between the settlement at Bridge End and Bridge Street which leads to the Historic Centre.

Bridge Street

Bridge Street is another area of great interest and variety, with generally more modern houses and bungalows set back to the right and older cottages and houses to the left, most located directly against the pavement. A terrace of red-brick Victorian cottages built from locally made bricks dominates the left-hand side of the street.

▼ *Bridge End*



▼ *Bridge over the River Pant*





▲ Braintree Road

As with the approach from Dunmow, Braintree Road provides a gradual introduction to the village. Apart from Great Lodge, Park Hall and Little Lodge set far back, a mile outside Great Bardfield on either side of the road, the first significant signs of a settlement are the cottages and farm buildings of Bluegate Hall Farm. From here, a series of bends and a gentle gradient obscure any long distance view of buildings. The first view of the built environment is to the right across to Alienor Avenue and Bendlowes Road situated behind open fields. At the entrance to the village on the left is the location of an old plant nursery, outside of the Village Envelope, (RLP3 Village Envelopes).

Beyond this, Hall Villas and Squire's Mead, also to the left, sit well back behind a grass verge and front gardens, and have little visual impact as the first clear views of the Church come into sight. To the right, St Mary's Villas are

set well back from the road in an elevated position. The wide grass verges and mature trees create an impression of generous spaciousness, although some grass areas have drainage problems.

Further on, to the right, there is a variety of buildings including the old Parish Rooms, recently converted to a house, the Catholic Church and houses ranging from the 17th Century Vicarage cottage to more modern houses behind a narrow pavement.

Opposite, as the windmill ahead comes into view, the Historic Centre extends to include the Bardfield Centre, Bardfield Hall and the Church of St Mary. A modern vicarage, built in the 1980s to replace the large Victorian Vicarage now known as York House, adjacent to the church, is hidden behind a high wall. The road drops and bends to the left with a steep grass bank, protected

Design Guidelines

- No further building should be considered outside of the Village Envelope
- Deep grass verges and mature planting provide a gentle introduction to the village and should be conserved and appropriately maintained

by a white single rail fence and mature trees which form the boundary of Glebe meadow to the left. Beyond, looking towards the village, the wide greens on either side of the road introduce the pleasant, open aspect of Brook Street. At this point the Brook joins with other water courses before passing under the road and flowing behind Bridge Street to join the River Pant at Bridge End.

Building here started just before World War II as a council owned estate. Many of the homes are now privately owned. Accessed from the Braintree Road by Alienor Avenue and Bendlowes Road, the estate also includes Newland Avenue and leads via 'the Walk' to the playing fields.

▼ 17th Century Vicarage cottage



▼ Junction of Braintree Road & Alienor Avenue



▼ Roman Catholic Church



Bendlowes Road, Alienor Avenue & Newland Avenue

The Walk follows the course of an ancient bridleway leading to the earlier settlements at Bluegate Hall and Great Lodge. The estate was built carefully around it and, though it passes between back gardens, it retains some feeling of 'distance' from the development around it. Unfortunately one end has been barred by metal rails, to prevent cyclists speeding out into the road which spoils the view from the entrance of Bendlowes Road

The playing field occupies high land at the top end of the estate and comprises a large open field behind houses in Bendlowes Road, access being from The Walk. A fenced off area provides play equipment for younger children. The current pavilion is old and, though adequately maintained, the Parish Council are planning to replace it in the next few years.

Overall, the estate has matured well. Most gardens are bounded by trimmed hedges. There are several generous areas of grass verge which, together with many mature trees, provide a far more pleasant environment than many similar developments.

The estate comprises of a mix of two-storey, semi-detached houses and small semi-detached bungalows designed for the elderly residents. The bungalows are fully rendered and painted. The houses are brick built, many painted with some fully rendered. Private ownership has also enabled a number of extensions which have added to the variety and differentiation of the buildings.

▼ Bendlowes Road



▲ Junction of Alienor Avenue and Bendlowes Road

The entire estate has recently had its roads, kerbs and pavements renewed to a very high standard which has had a strong unifying effect as well as increasing safety for pedestrians.

Due to the lack of garaging and off-street parking there is much parking on the street. Behind the houses is an area originally designed as off-street parking. This area is owned by Braintree District Council and rented to immediate residents only for garaging and parking spaces. The District Council should be encouraged to improve this area. Although this area is unattractive it is not seen from the road. Unfortunately, it can be seen from The Walk and is detrimental to the area.

At the Braintree Road end of Bendlowes Road is a small modern development of four high quality houses. This is considered to be one of the best examples of recent developments



▲ The Walk, an ancient bridleway

in the village. It is a good example of a development which has been designed to overcome the problems presented by an awkward site.

▼ Wide greens and mature planting in Bendlowes Road



Design Guidelines

- Sensitive development through extensions should be permitted providing the character of the area is preserved
- Grass verges and mature trees should be maintained to ensure the 'green' aspect of the environment is preserved
- The ancient Walk should be carefully maintained in order to preserve its historical significance
- The playing field is a very important space for the village and though the facilities there could be improved this must be done in a manner that protects it both as recreational space and open green space behind the houses of Bendlowes Road



▲ *The Primary School*

The School

The village primary school, mainly red brick under a slate roof, was built in 1835 behind the School Green facing into Brook Street. It occupies a prominent site viewed from the village centre and was extended during the 1970s with little respect for the existing architecture. The security gate is particularly unsightly.

There is a reasonable sized playing field to the right, a small corner of which has been leased from the Local Education Authority by the Pre-School and the After School Club. Here in 1999 a Lottery funded building was constructed to accommodate both organisations.

To the left of the school, flint cottages wrap round the corner into Mill Road, with an electrical shop on the site of the former gas works, on the corner.



▲ *The Pre-School & After School Club*

▼ *Replacing flat roofed garages with pitched roof extensions in Mill Close*



Mill Close

Developed in stages since the 1960s, Mill Close is a collection of detached and semi-detached two storey houses bordering their own green. This itself is a visually important open space.

The building materials used for each house are a combination of brick and render. Mill Close enjoys a feeling of privacy on the edge of the village protected by a mature hedge of indigenous deciduous plants and shrubs with a wide grass verge to Mill Road. Several of the houses have had second storey extensions added above flat-roofed garages. This tends to improve the appearance of the houses, adding interest and variety to the roof-lines.

Design Guidelines

- Developments to the houses within Mill Close should continue to be permitted providing they add further interest to the existing buildings in a sympathetic manner. For example by replacing flat roof garages with pitched roof extensions. Any extensions must comply with the requirements of Policy RLP17 of the Braintree District Local Planning Review
- The boundary hedge and green should be protected and carefully and appropriately maintained

Design Guidelines

- Given its prominent position, any future alterations to the school should either be sympathetic to the original existing architecture and materials of red brick and pitched slate roofs or designed to enhance it
- Further built development on the school field should be resisted



▲ Gibraltar Mill

The area immediately to the left through this entrance could provide off street parking for staff and visitors to the school provided the sight lines at the entrance/exit are adequate. Any other form of building development should be resisted.

Exiting the village, housing development is mainly on the right side and varies from a thatched cottage to bungalows, chalets and two storey modern houses. No particular house style or position dominates, which again provides a 'gentle' entrance/exit to the village. Development opposite these houses should be resisted since there is no justification to emphasise ribbon development by duplicating it on each side of the road.

To the left is Gibraltar Mill which is visible from many directions approaching the village and, along with the Church, is an early visual introduction to the village.

Once past the houses, Mill Road is a minor route in and out of the village in comparison to the other four, rising gently past Claypit Hall, School Farm and Orger's Farm, twisting and turning towards Waltham's Cross. At both ends there are high hedges and towards Waltham's Cross, where the road becomes a sunken lane, these form



▲ Waltham's Cross

canopies across the road. Between Great Bardfield and Waltham's Cross there are views to the left across open countryside towards Finchingfield.

Waltham's Cross

This small hamlet has the look and feel of a very distinctive and secluded settlement accessed by sunken lanes and very restricted single track roads. There is a varied range of housing styles with thatched cottages to the left followed by farm buildings, surrounding the cross-roads, mostly concealed behind dense hedges and walls.

▼ Secluded house in Waltham's Cross



Design Guidelines

- The hedge and grass verge defining the extent of Mill Close should be appropriately maintained
- Any further development in Mill Road should avoid clusters of the same design and resist the option to balance the symmetry of the ribbon development which would reduce the overall interest
- The restricted width of Mill Road should be retained, thus limiting access to, and development of this area
- The high level of trees, hedges and verges should be maintained in this area



▲ Claypit Hall

Mill Road

Mill Road is another Protected Lane, (RLP 87 Protected Lanes), mostly single track road with no pavements, leading from School Green to Waltham's Cross over a distance of one mile. At the village end, a wide green verge to the left is backed by a mature hedge separating Mill Close from Mill Road. To the right is the back vehicular entrance to the school.

▼ Thatched cottages at Waltham's Cross





▲ North Place

Many villages boast a variety of buildings but few can rival Great Bardfield with houses ranging from the mid fourteenth century to the present day. There are 103 listed structures in the village, most of which are houses although other features such as post boxes and walls are included. There is an unusually large proportion of listed houses which are highlighted in red on the map in the centre of this Statement. The varying characters of the different areas have been described in previous pages and these descriptions clearly show that not all types of development are necessarily suitable for all areas.

The main consideration is that any development, whether new or an extension to existing, should respect the scale and design of adjacent properties. In the Historic Centre this will tend to

mean that traditional building forms and materials should be used although not slavishly reproducing old features, as this could easily result in pastiche. In areas of more modern housing such as Bendlowes Road or Mill Close, just as much care should be taken to ensure that new development harmonises with the existing built environment. Good design is usually simple and functional, employing materials appropriate to the use of the buildings. Cosmetic additions, for example, embellishments of glazing with surface applied leaded light details or 'bulls-eye' glass should be avoided.

Overall, the aim should be sympathetic but should not duplicate adjacent buildings as this would be contrary to the character of Great Bardfield and its rich variety of differing building styles.

Design Guidelines:

New buildings

- New buildings, in any area, should respect the scale and design of adjacent buildings
- Building details such as doors, windows and roof pitches should be designed with regard to existing buildings in the vicinity
- In the limited opportunities that exist, small affordable 'starter homes' should be the priority
- Any new developments should include adequate car parking discreetly positioned within the curtilage of the site
- Wherever possible mature trees and shrubs should be conserved
- Any new agricultural buildings should be designed and sited to minimise the effect on the overall landscape and special landscape area (RLP78 and RLP79)



▲ Ranmore - sympathetic new building

Extensions and alterations to existing buildings

- Original materials or materials which are sympathetic to the existing building should be used
- Details such as windows, doors and roof pitches should reflect those of the original building
- Careful consideration should be given to the visual impact of extensions, and particularly conservatories, when they are visible either from the street or from public thoroughfares such as footpaths, bridleways etc
- There should be no unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties, including privacy, overshadowing and loss of light (RLP17)
- Wherever possible mature trees and shrubs should be conserved

▼ 14th Century The Gables



▼ 20th Century Flintstones



Roofs

- Dormer windows are a common feature in many roofs but should remain as minor incidents in the roof plane. They blend best into the rooflines visually when their pitch is the same as that of the main roof. This should be encouraged in preference to flat dormers which in most situations appear less integrated within the main roof structure
- Any replacement or extension to existing roofs should be to match existing. This applies in all areas of the village but is particularly important in the Historic Centre and Conservation Area where most roofs are clay peg-tiles, slate or thatch
- Roof windows and sky-lights should be kept to the least visible locations in the Historic Centre and Conservation Area
- The use of flat roofs, particularly in the Historic Centre and Conservation Area should be avoided wherever possible
- Chimneys add further interest to the sky-line and should be retained and encouraged on extensions where appropriate

Walls

- Any extension, repair or alteration to existing building walls should be to match existing whether in render, brick or weatherboarding
- Where old timber framed buildings are in need of re-rendering this should be in lime mortar which enables the building to breathe, keeping the timbers dry and avoiding infestation

Doors and windows

- In the Historic Centre and Conservation Area replacement windows should match the original in both style, size and material. This does not necessarily mean matching to existing which could already be visually unacceptable. In such locations the use of UPVC, stained or sealed doors or windows is not appropriate and especially not on older buildings



▲ Thatching at Bridge End

Services

- Items such as meters, flues and ventilation grilles should be positioned on the sides or backs of buildings and not visible from the front
- In new buildings and extensions to existing, drainage pipes should not be exposed on the outside of the building. Where they are required, they should be metal and not UPVC
- Where possible TV and radio aerials should be concealed in roof spaces. Satellite dishes are not generally permitted on listed buildings but anywhere in the Conservation Area they should be concealed from public view



▲ Clay pegtiles relaid on lime mortar with gabled dormer windows

▼ Chapel Cottage renovated using lime mortar



Additional Features

Car Parking & Traffic Problems

Although over 76% of vehicle owners are able to park on a drive or in a garage, parking is still a major issue. Locations which cause the most concern are Bridge Street (parking, speeding and inconsiderate driving) the junctions of Brook Street/ High Street, Vine Street and the junction of the High Street and Bell Lane and Braintree Road.

Street Lighting/Light Pollution

There has been no demand for additional street lighting following the increase in installations over the past five years; however a level of consistency is required. Concern has been expressed regarding the colour and quality of street lighting and light pollution caused by bright external lighting on individual properties.



▲ Example of sign congestion

Signs

Although some directional and general highways signing is essential, there is a strong feeling that these and other signs should be kept to a minimum in a rural setting such as Great Bardfield. Visually obtrusive signage is not necessary to differentiate the few shops in the village and should be resisted.

▼ Concrete bollards should be replaced with cast-iron



Walls & Boundaries

Low boundary walls in brick and flint are common throughout the parish and are an attractive feature particularly in the Historic Centre

Overhead Cables

Poles and cables for overhead telephone and power supplies are quite intrusive in some areas of the village.

Business/Commercial Premises

Any new developments should blend in with their setting and existing businesses should be encouraged to continue (or change) to complement the street scene.

▼ Hitchcocks' store



▲ The Vine public house

Street Furniture

While a co-ordinated programme of street furniture, e.g. benches, litter bins, signs, etc, has never been considered, there are no particularly unattractive examples within the village.

▼ Bench and litter bin



Design Guidelines:

- Any new development, residential or commercial, must provide sufficient off street parking and no existing provision should be lost by development or change of use. Off street parking should be designed to be unobtrusive to the street-scape. Bollards, yellow lines and similar urban forms of traffic control should be avoided where possible
- Street lighting should suit the rural setting. Lamps should give a white light and no yellow sodium lamps should be used. Lighting should be the minimum for security purposes and should minimise pollution and spillage while not causing hazardous driving conditions in accordance with Policy RLP65 of Braintree District Local Plan Review
- New traffic signing should be kept to the minimum allowable under highways regulations. Shop signs should complement the rural setting and internally illuminated box signs should be prohibited
- All development should:
 - (i) retain, repair or improve existing boundary walls and stonework
 - (ii) incorporate low boundaries of natural features relating to those used on neighbouring plots (stone, brick, hedges)
 - (iii) use native hedging plants rather than exotic conifers
- Utility companies should minimise visual impact of their installations. Re-siting of overhead cables should be encouraged
- Designs of commercial premises should complement the rural setting. Developments must have adequate parking and, where possible, be encouraged to provide additional parking for residents. Village shops and pubs should be supported and discouraged from change of use to businesses that do not benefit the community
- Street furniture such as benches and litter bins should be of a design that blends well with the rural village environment. Where existing street furniture is replaced this should be taken into account although a uniform urban approach to such items is not considered necessary or appropriate

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. These 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.

However, all alterations affect the building and its surroundings as well as the overall look of the village so please make your own assessment 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 the property and area?
- Are any of these features out of character with the property or with the adjacent properties or with the design guidelines in this Design Statement?
- Think about the alterations you are considering. How do they affect the positive distinctive features of your property? Do they complement the character of the local area? If not, how could you change them so that they do? Alternatively is there the opportunity to remove any uncharacteristic features?
- Contact Braintree 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 which is subject to much stricter control or in the conservation area? If so, amongst other restrictions, this means you will need permission to cut down or significantly reduce the size of trees. Please note that most works to a listed building will require listed building consent. Permission is also required for demolition within conservation areas
- If you are in doubt, employ an architect or seek professional advice on your proposals. The local planning authority is also happy to provide advice prior to the submission of an application

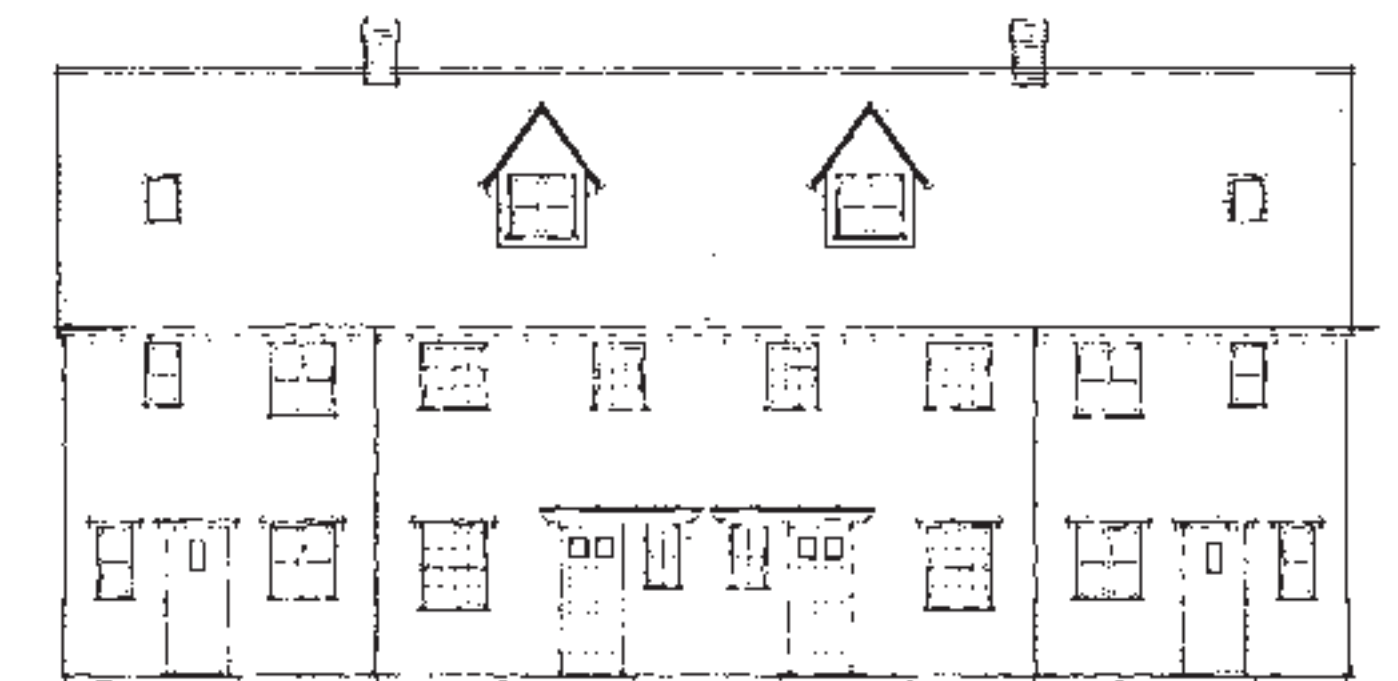
Useful Contacts

Braintree District Council
Development Director
(Planning & Building Regulations)
Tel. 01376 552525
Fax. 01376 557787
Email. planning@braintree.gov.uk

Braintree District Council
Operations Director
(Environmental)
Tel. 01376 552525

Essex County Council
Listed Buildings Officer
Tel. 01245 437337

Essex County Council
Highways (Road conditions,
Traffic Management)
Tel. 01245 240186
e-mail:
highways-midarea@essex.gov.uk



Conclusion

Some villages are pleasing to look at but not particularly pleasant to live in. Others are visually uninspiring but are enjoyable to live in.

Great Bardfield enjoys the best of both because it looks good and has a community spirit which makes it a pleasure to live in.



▲ *Memorial Green - Remembrance Sunday 2004*

At its centre, socially, is a thriving primary school, pre-school and after-school/breakfast club which bring parents together, both in the playground and at the many social events connected to it.

Outside of the school there are many clubs and societies enabling villagers of all ages to meet and socialise. In a recent copy of the Bardfield Times the Town Hall diary showed 40 bookings from 14 separate organisations and individuals in just one month. Also a surprising number of shops are supported compared to villages of similar size. It would be difficult to reduce this community spirit as it lives within the villagers themselves.

It would be far easier to neglect the visual aspects of the village and this Village Design Statement seeks to help prevent this. The Design Guidelines contained have been agreed with



▲ *Community Information Point*

Braintree District Council and thus any future development, whether new or to an existing building, should observe them.

Added to this, it is now easier to inspect planning applications lodged with Braintree District Council without visiting Causeway House. Copies of all planning applications made within the parish can be viewed at the Community Information Point located next to the Town Hall.

The introduction states “the Statement is about managing change in the village, not preventing it”. Of course the village will continue to develop and this Design Statement has reiterated what villagers said in the recent Village Appraisal.

Responses indicated that any further development of large executive houses would be unpopular but there is a need for smaller properties that would prevent young villagers having to move out of the village to find affordable



▲ *Villagers at a VDS exhibition at the School Summer Fete*

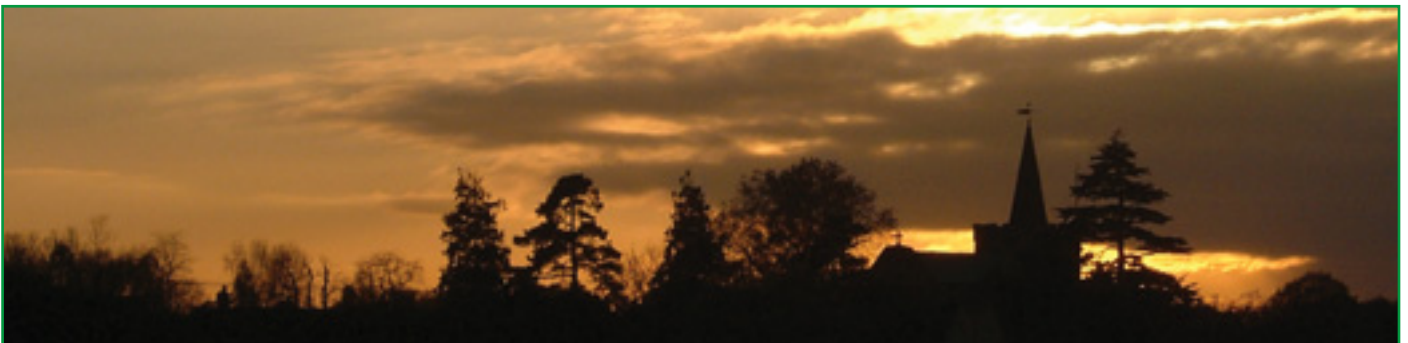
accommodation. Any new development on infill sites within the village envelope should be for starter homes, although this can only be encouraged rather than imposed within the planning system at present.

It is possible for the village to initiate a housing scheme to provide affordable accommodation for rent or shared ownership for local people. This would be on an 'exception site' outside the village envelope which may not have popular support, presenting Great Bardfield with a dilemma.

Any new developments should be sympathetic in scale and detail to the surrounding buildings. The Design Guidelines shown in green together with the accompanying text express the qualities that local residents feel strongly about and have expressed in full consultation during the production of this Statement.

It is hoped that the Great Bardfield Village Design Statement will help those involved in development within the village to ensure that all new development is designed and located to show respect for locally held values and to meet local needs.

▼ *St Mary's Church at sunset*



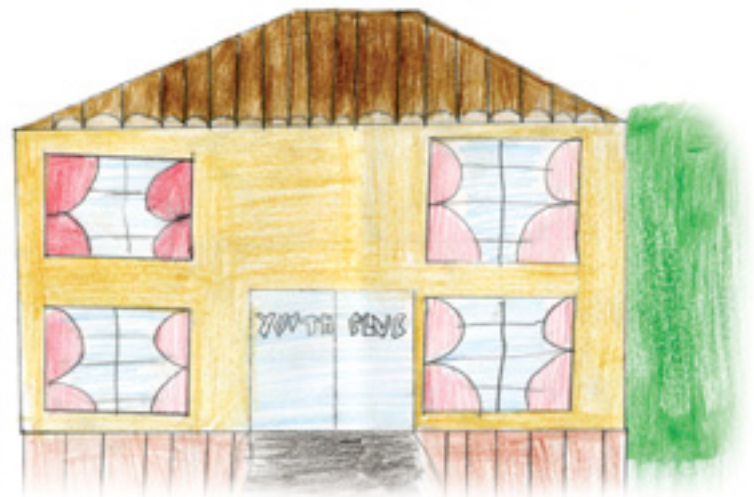


▲ Primary School children's workshop



I like the bridge because it has
a lot of ducks

Nayma Islam



I would like the youth
club hut to improve.

Dace Sainsbury



I like The Shops

Lily Turnbull

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Further copies of this document are available from:
Great Bardfield Parish Council (Community Information Point)
Braintree District Council (Planning Department)