

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan

Evidence Base Document

Heritage Assessment

Extract from Chelmsford Local Plan Evidence Base

Document specific to Danbury taken from:

Heritage Assessment Technical Note – March 2017

Addendum 2 for Danbury – April 2019

# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Work has started on a new Local Plan that will provide the planning framework for the future growth and development of the City Council's area until 2036. The new Local Plan will identify land for housing, schools, shops and jobs as well as areas for protection, such as open space and sites important for wildlife.
- 1.2 As part of the Local Plan process options for development are being considered, mainly concentrated at existing settlements, outside of the Metropolitan Green Belt. The selection of development areas will be informed by an evidence base comprising a range of reports and other information which supports the proposed options for growth. This report forms part of this evidence base and has been produced to define the heritage significance of designated and built undesignated heritage assets whose setting may be affected by development proposals. The objective is to inform the consideration of development options to ensure heritage significance is considered in accordance with local and national policy. This will include defining land where development may or may not have a heritage impact and recommending mitigation measures where necessary or desirable. This report does not cover undesignated archaeological remains, which should be subject to further assessment.
- 1.3 This report will inform future development options, which will be subject to assessment of a whole range of other constraints and opportunities in terms of development site allocation and delivery.
- 1.4 This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the setting of designated and built undesignated heritage assets in the vicinity of development sites under consideration.
- 1.5 This findings of this report are based on site assessment together with desk based research to define heritage significance. A variety of sources have provided background information, including:
  - Statutory List of Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest (Historic England)
  - English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens
  - Buildings of England: Essex (2007) Bettley and Pevsner
  - RCHME: Central & SW Essex (1916)
  - C19 OS Maps
  - Chapman and Andre Map 1777
  - Historic Environment Characterisation (Essex County Council)
  - Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates)
  - Essex Record Office Documents
  - Development site archaeological and heritage assessments
  - Local History information

## 2. BACKGROUND

### Designated and Undesignated Heritage Assets

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework defines Heritage Assets as:

*A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'*

2.2 Designated Heritage Assets are defined as:

*Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.'*

### Definition of Setting

2.3 The 'Setting of a heritage asset' is defined as *'The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.'* (NPPF, Annex 2)

2.4 'Significance' is defined as *'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'* (NPPF, Annex 2)

### Policy Objectives

2.5 Chelmsford City Council has a duty under section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 16 of the Act also requires authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of the building.

2.6 National and international policy recognises the value and significance of cultural heritage, the public interest in the preservation of particular assets and sets out mechanisms to ensure that it is taken into account in planning decision-making. Sites and features of special interest are protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as amended, and within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2.7 National planning policy guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the online National Planning Practice Guidance, and the Good Practice Advice published by Historic England (GPA1 Local plan making, GPA2 Managing significance in decision-taking in the historic environment and GPA3 Setting).

The NPPF sets 12 core planning principles for sustainable development, one of which is that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can contribute to the quality of life now and in the future. Heritage assets are irreplaceable and, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

2.8 The NPPF says that local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

2.9 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. (NPPF, paragraph 132)

2.10 English Heritage's Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance (2008) considers 'setting' to relate *'to the surroundings in which a place is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape. Definition of the setting of a significant place will normally be guided by the extent to which material change within it could affect (enhance or diminish) the place's significance.'*

2.11 In line with this guidance, the following sections will broadly discuss the significance of each building or group of buildings potentially affected by new development, considering the historic setting and then highlighting the various historical changes to that setting. The following paragraphs will then discuss which features are considered to be important to the building's setting and which are considered to detract from it by looking at the visual impact of the building, considering the impact of new development, considering current and historical linkages to other buildings and features, historic associations and identifying key vistas and views. This methodology is adapted from Historic England's Guidance on the Setting of Heritage Assets (July 2015).

2.12 The detailed policies on development management concern the need to clearly define the significance of any potentially affected site or area and the principles to be considered in determining any proposal for change potentially affecting heritage assets. There is an overall requirement to gather sufficient information to ensure an adequate understanding of the significance of an asset before any decisions affecting its future are made. A key concept in the NPPF is proportionality; that the

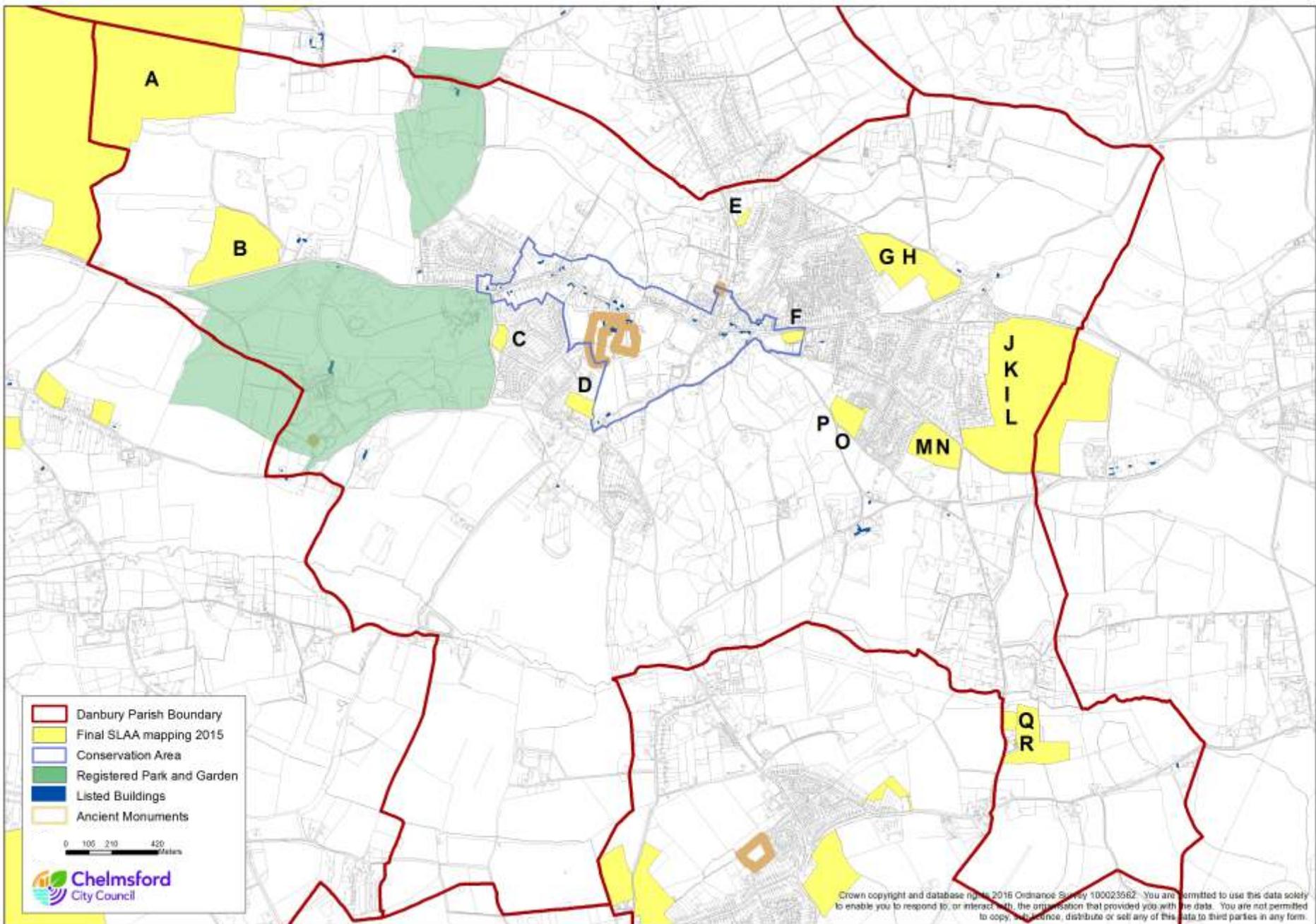
information required, efforts to preserve, and degree of public benefits necessary to offset any harm or loss of an asset should be based on an understanding of its significance.

- 2.13 The national guidance on the approach to the assessment of the contribution made by the setting of an asset to its significance, and of changes resulting from development is given in Good Practice Advice GPA3 Setting (2015) published by Historic England. Guidance is given on the range of factors and qualities that can define the contribution of adjoining land to the significance of any single asset or group of assets. The guidance aims for a consistent approach to the assessment of setting and the range of historic, visual and functional relationships of an asset to the surrounding land area. These include both physical attributes and perceptual values, depending on the nature of an asset and its past and present surroundings. Potentially significant views can be deliberately designed or incidental, or the result of later changes. A five step approach is proposed:
1. Identification of heritage assets which are likely to be affected by proposals.
  2. Assessment of whether and what contribution the setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset.
  3. Assessing the effects of proposed development on the setting of a heritage asset.
  4. Maximising enhancement and reduction of harm on the setting of heritage assets.
  5. The final decision about the acceptability of proposals.
- 2.14 In October 2015, Historic England published an advice note, Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans to offer support to those involved in the local plan site allocation process. A positive strategy for the historic environment in local plans can ensure that site allocations avoid harming the significance of heritage assets, including effects on their setting, while at the same time presenting possible opportunities for the historic environment. The guidance offers advice on the three key stages of the site allocation process: evidence gathering, site selection and site allocation policies.
- 2.15 The relevant local planning policy is provided by Chelmsford Core Strategy and Development Control Policies (Adopted February 2008). Policy CP9 on protecting areas of natural and built heritage and archaeological importance states that the council will seek to protect and enhance the borough's important historic environment, including heritage assets and protected lanes. Policy DC17 covers development proposals in conservation areas, DC18 concerns listed buildings and their settings, DC20 protects Registered Parks and Gardens, and policy DC21 covers development affecting archaeological sites.
- 2.16 While setting is largely a visual term (given that views are considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset), it (and, thus, the way in which an asset is experienced) can also be affected by other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Further, setting may also incorporate perceptual and associational attributes pertaining to the asset's surroundings.

## 12. DANBURY



Figure 1 Heritage Constraints



### **Site A – Hammonds Farm**

- 12.1 This land forms part of a larger development parcel at Hammonds Farm (also within Little Baddow and Sandon Parishes). The site within Danbury Parish is assessed as part of the Heritage Assessment undertaken for potential development at the Hammonds Farm Land (CCC, November 2016).
- 12.2 The Danbury portion of the site, is considered to form part of the setting to the grade II listed buildings at Great Graces, where it forms part of the wider rural setting, the landscape setting to Graces Walk (a seventeenth century avenue associated with Great Graces) and is crossed by important views from the east and west. Development of this land is likely to have a considerable adverse heritage impact.
- 12.3 The southwest corner of the parcel of land beyond Sandon Brook is considered to make no contribution to the setting of any designated heritage asset.

### **Site B – Land at Main Road**

- 12.4 The land at Main Road is also assessed as part of the Heritage Assessment undertaken for potential development at the Hammonds Farm Land (CCC, November 2016).
- 12.5 This land may have formed part of the original medieval deer or hare park at Danbury and was later part of Danbury Park and lies adjacent to St Cleres Hall. This site is considered to contribute to the setting of the Registered Park and Garden at Danbury Park and to the grade II listed buildings at St Cleres Hall. Development of this land is likely to have a considerable adverse heritage impact.

### **Site C – Well Lane**

- 12.6 The site lies to the east side of Well Lane, comprising an existing industrial estate. There are several designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the site:  
To the west on the opposite side of Well Lane, Danbury Park, a grade II Registered Park and Garden.  
c.100m north, Danbury Village Conservation Area, including a collection of grade II listed buildings at the junction of Main Road.
- 12.7 The site is part of the modern development on the east side of Well Lane. There is a clear change in character between the east and west sides of Well Lane and the site is not known to have any important associations with Danbury Park.
- 12.8 The Conservation Area and listed buildings to the north are visually separate from the site and there is unlikely to be any significant impact on the setting of these designated heritage assets.
- 12.9 It would be desirable to retain the trees to the verge in front of the site and use buildings set back and of a scale, form and materials which complement the locality.

### **Site D – Danecroft**

- 12.10 This site lies to the west of the Conservation Area and a group of listed buildings at Penny Royal Lane.

- 12.11 The rural character of the area is important to the setting of the Conservation Area and the adjacent listed buildings. There is a group of significant trees on the eastern part of the site.
- 12.12 Any harm to the setting of the adjacent designated heritage assets could be mitigated against, by limiting development to reflect the rough building line to backs of existing development on the east side of Southview Road (c.40m west of the Conservation Area), retaining the existing trees on the eastern part of the site, providing additional planting and using a low density development, maximum two storeys, reflecting the pattern of adjacent development.

#### **Site E – Little Baddow Road**

- 12.13 This site is set away from the village centre and would not impact on the setting of any designated heritage asset.

#### **Site F – Danbury Medical Centre**

- 12.14 This site has recently been developed as Danbury Medical Centre. The open pastoral character of this piece of land, known as Dawsons Field, is important to the character of this part of the Conservation Area and as a buffer from the modern development to the east. The medical centre was justified on the basis the design and siting to limit its impact and for the public benefits it delivered. Further development on this site would be harmful to the Danbury Conservation Area.

#### **Sites G and H – Lane East of Runsell View**

- 12.15 This land is currently subject to a planning application for 140 houses. There are a collection of listed buildings at Runsell Green, but the development site makes little significant contribution to their setting.
- 12.16 Garlands Farmhouse is immediately adjacent to the site. This is a late C18/early C19 timber framed farmhouse, which is grade II listed. The rural character of the area contributes to the setting of Garlands Farmhouse, reflects its historic function and offers important views to and from the listed building. Development of this site would adversely affect the setting and significance of Garlands Farmhouse.

#### **Sites I, J, K and L – East of Danbury**

- 12.17 This land lies to the east of the village. There are four grade II listed buildings at Gay Bowers Hamlet, three grade II listed buildings at Runsell Green and five grade II listed buildings on Southend Road. Each of these listed buildings is sufficiently distant from the development sites that there would be no significant impact on their setting. Part of Site I extends beyond the City boundary, within Maldon District, development here is likely to impact on the rural setting to the listed building group on Southend Road whose significance derives in part from their rural setting.

#### **Sites M and N – South East of Danbury**

- 12.18 This land is to the southeast edge of the village. There are four grade II listed buildings at Gay Bowers Hamlet to the south. Cape Cottage, Gay Bowers Cottage and St Joseph's Nursing Home are at least 280m from the site and are separated by dense woodland. Gay Bowers Farm is c.210m to the south, is well screened and the development site makes no contribution to its setting.

### **Sites P and O – Capons Lane**

- 12.19 This land lies to the south-east of the Conservation Area, which extends to Dawsons Field at its eastern-most limits. The landscape setting to the Conservation Area is important to the south, but this site is sufficiently distant and visually separate from the Conservation Area that it makes no important contribution to its setting.
- 12.20 There is a collection of four grade II listed buildings at Gay Bowers hamlet to the south. The rural setting to these buildings contributes to their significance. Cape Cottage is the closest to the development site, at c.250m south, however the site is sufficiently distant and features in no key views that it makes no contribution to the setting of the listed buildings to the south.

### **Sites Q and R**

- 12.21 The closest listed building is at Slough Farm (grade II\*), which is over 500m from this site and screened by an intervening dense woodland. There would be no adverse impact on the setting of any designated heritage asset.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

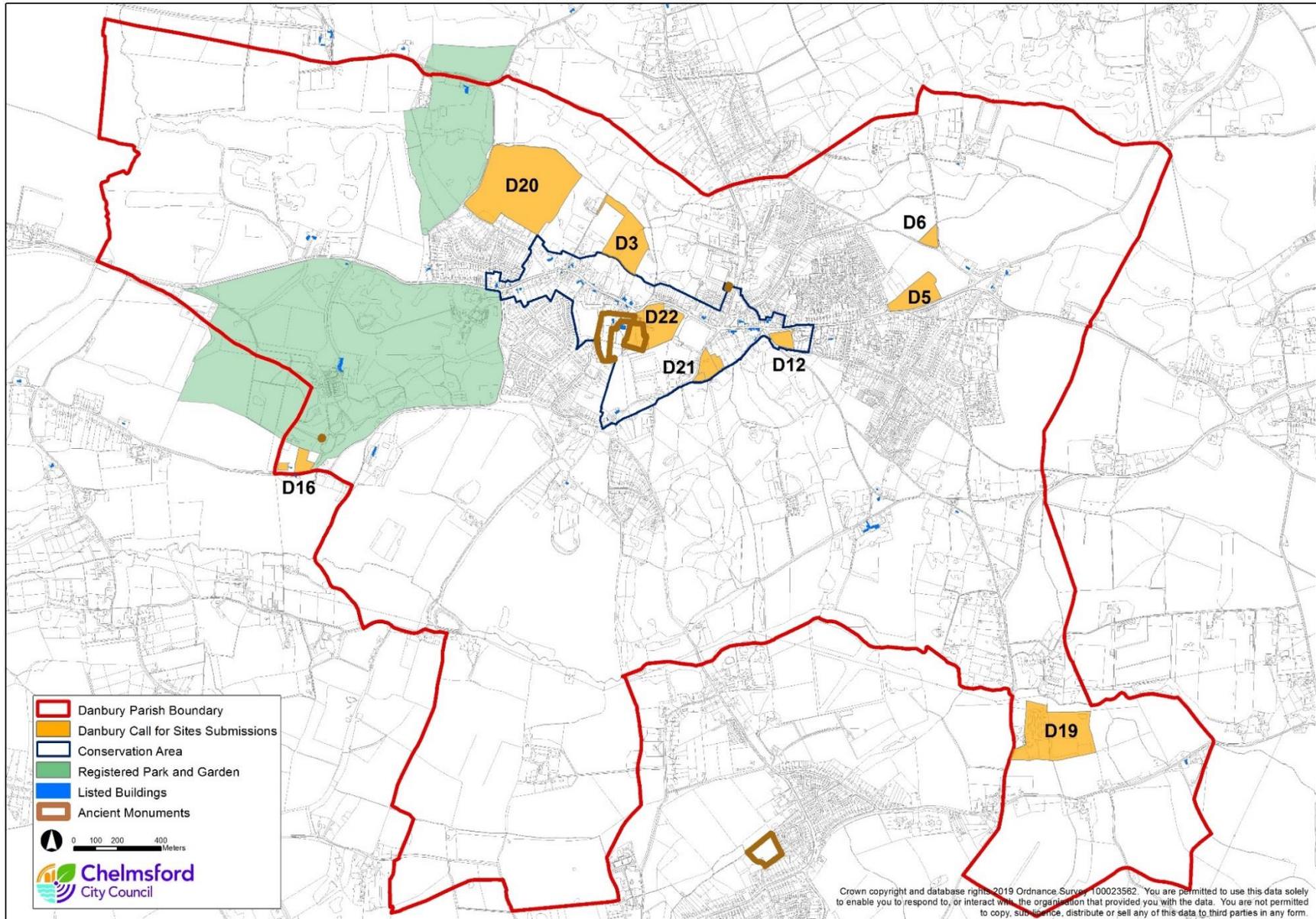
- 12.22 Development at site A is likely to have considerable heritage impacts, other than a small portion of land to the southwest. Sites B, F, G and H would also have considerable heritage impacts.
- 12.23 Sites C and D would have minor heritage impact, which could be mitigated through layout, design and landscaping.
- 12.24 Sites E, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q and R would have no significant impact on any designated heritage assets.

**Chelmsford Local Plan  
Heritage Assessments**

**Technical Note Addendum 2 – DANBURY**



**April 2019**



## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This addendum supplements the Heritage Assessment Technical Note (March 2017). The 2017 report covers sites in the Danbury parish which were submitted to the Chelmsford Local Plan call for sites, which are not reassessed. This addendum assesses additional sites proposed as part of a later Danbury Neighbourhood Plan call for sites. This addendum follows the format of the methodology of the previous report.

## **2 The Sites**

### **D3 – Land North of Main Road**

- 2.1 This site lies in an area of low-lying land beyond Main Road, in a partly wooded area. The Danbury Conservation Area lies adjacent to the site and there is a collection of listed buildings on Main Road, including 64, 82, 100 Main Road and 2 Colemans Lane and Hillside. The wooded, rural context to the north contributes to the setting of the Conservation Area and forms part of the wider setting of the listed buildings.
- 2.2 The southern (minimum 50m) part of the site would have to be maintained as woodland to mitigate the impact of the development, but in heritage terms the northern part of the site could be developed with two storey housing with a landscape led approach. Access to the site would need to avoid overly engineered features within the Conservation Area.

### **D5 – Land North of Maldon Road**

- 2.3 Garlands Farmhouse lies to the northeast of the site on the edge of Runsell Green. This is a late eighteenth/early nineteenth century timber framed farmhouse. Further east lies a collection of listed buildings on Runsell Green. The development site was historically farmland associated with Garlands Farmhouse and the views across the site from Maldon Road contributes to the significance of the listed building. The development site is sufficiently separate from the listed building that placement of an area of open space at the eastern end of the site could retain a viewing corridor to protect significant views and further move the development away from the listed building. The harm to the setting of Garlands Farm could therefore be mitigated, but would have implications for site capacity. There would be no adverse impact on the setting of the listed buildings at Runsell Green.

### **D6 – Twitty Fee/Runsell Lane**

- 2.4 This parcel of land is northwest of Garlands Farmhouse on agricultural land historic associated with the listed building. It is set away from the listed building and would be peripheral in key views of the north and east.

There is scope for a small number of dwellings, designated as vernacular buildings in a small hamlet with generous landscaping, to mitigate the impact on Garlands Farmhouse.

### **D12 – Maldon Road/Gay Bowers Lane**

- 2.5 This was subject to a recent planning appeal for a care home, dismissed on the basis of the harm to the Conservation Area and the setting of the adjacent listed building. Previously, development of the eastern part of the site for the Danbury Medical Centre was justified on the basis of its design and the public benefits it delivered through provision of an essential healthcare facility. This western part of 'Dawsons Field' has a rural pastoral character, which provides a buffer between the historic core of the village and its modern expansion to the east. Its open character is an important feature within the Conservation Area. The harm through developing the site could not be adequately mitigated.

### **D16 – Woodhill Road**

- 2.6 The site lies adjacent to Woodside and Barberry (grade II listed buildings), Danbury Park Registered Park and Garden, and the icehouse within Danbury Park, a Scheduled Monument. The rural context is part of the setting to the adjacent listed buildings and the Registered Park and Garden and contributes to their significance. The impact of any development could be mitigated through the use of a few modest vernacular buildings within a landscape setting.

### **D19 – Hyde Lane / Slough Lane**

- 2.7 There are no designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the site.

### **D20 – Riffhams Lane / Elm Green Lane**

- 2.8 This site lies adjacent to the Riffhams Registered Park and Garden to the west and Danbury Conservation Area to the southeast. Riffhams is a Country House built c.1815 and set within a parkland overlooking a valley, where Humphrey Repton advised on the landscape design. The development site forms part of the rural context to the parkland and influences the experience of key views out of the site. To mitigate the impact on the Registered Park and Garden, a planting belt minimum of 50m width along the Riffham's Lane boundary is required, together with a limitation of building heights to two stories and vernacular built forms with a low-density edge to the Riffhams Lane site and the southern edge adjacent the Conservation Area.

### **D21 – Mayes Lane/ Copt Hill**

- 2.9 This site lies within the Danbury Conservation Area. The large gardens, mature trees and rural character in the vicinity of the site contribute to the character of the

Conservation Area. No more than two dwellings of an appropriate design may possible on the site, whilst retaining sufficient landscape setting.

**D22 – Land at Frettons, Main Road**

- 2.10 This site lies within the Danbury Conservation Area and adjacent to a collection of listed buildings set around St John the Baptist Parish Church. Danbury developed historically as two distinct settlements, centred on the parish church and Eves Corner. The open setting created by this parcel of land is important in providing separation between the centres of development, contributing to the rural character of the village and the setting of Frettons (grade II listed), St John the Baptist (grade I listed) and the iron age Hill Fort (Scheduled Monument). No mitigation could adequately avoid harm to these designated heritage assets.

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13. HAMMONDS FARM



Figure 1 - Extent of study area



## **Location**

- 13.1 Hammonds Farm is 4.4km east of Chelmsford City Centre. The landholding extends to a large estate centred on the historic farm, encompassing part of the parishes of Danbury, Sandon and Little Baddow.
- 13.2 The study area (figure 1) includes the land roughly enclosed by the A12 to the west, the A414 to the south, New Lodge Chase to the east and Hurrells Lane to the north. Where the setting of designated heritage assets beyond the study area may be affected, they are also assessed.
- 13.3 The underlying geology is London clay, with underlying deposits of silt, sand and gravel.

## **Historic Background**

- 13.4 The Chelmer Valley provides rich archaeological evidence; the fertile land was home to hunter-gather communities in the Mesolithic period.
- 13.5 To the north of the valley, at Springfield Lyons, there was a Neolithic enclosed camp and Bronze age circus, which would have been a prominent landscape feature. Archaeological evidence suggests a community deeply involved in agriculture with advanced tools. This pattern of dispersed communities reliant on agriculture continued into the Roman period.
- 13.6 There is Roman brick re-used at St Mary's Church, Little Baddow and St Andrew, Sandon, evidence of the areas development as part of the agricultural setting to the Roman town of Caesaromagus at Moulsham.
- 13.7 Danbury, Little Baddow and Sandon are mentioned in the Domesday Book. The fertile land at Hammonds Farm has served the areas agricultural land use for millennia. Many of the farmsteads are of probably Saxon or Norman origins, including Hammonds, Phillows and Little Baddow Hall. Many of the field boundaries are of ancient origins. Hammonds probably takes its name from John Hammond recorded in 1387. A deer park was established at Danbury Park in the late thirteenth century
- 13.8 Great Graces was built c.1540 as a grand brick mansion. It takes its names from the Le Gras family, Lords of the Manor in the thirteenth century.
- 13.9 The Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation was opened in 1797 providing an important trade route from Chelmsford to the sea lock at Heybridge. Its commercial use gradually declined when the railway reached Chelmsford in 1842. It is now used for recreation.
- 13.10 The landscape of isolated farms, cottages, woodlands, lanes and tracks largely remains unchanged from the nineteenth century, although many field boundaries have been lost in the twentieth century. There was much rebuilding in the nineteenth century with the replacement of Hammonds Farmhouse, a new house at Riffhams, alteration of Phillows and St Cleres Hall.
- 13.11 The A12 bypass was constructed in the 1970s and is a visual and audible intrusion into the rural area.



Figure 2, Chapman and Andre Map, 1777



Figure 3, 1st Edition OS Map, 1873/4

## Area Assessment of Designated and Built Undesignated Heritage Assets

- 13.12 The following gives accounts of designated and built undesignated heritage assets and sets out how their setting contributes to significance. Plans are annotated to indicate where development proposed may or may not have an impact on setting. This is based on the assumption of moderate density housing development of predominantly two storeys with public and private open space, community facilities and retention of landscape features.
- 13.13 Areas annotated red are where there is likely to be an adverse impact on setting which contributes to significance, orange where there may be a limited impact on setting which requires careful design and mitigation measures and green where there is likely to be limited or no heritage impacts. The coloured areas refer to a development area which would include landscaping and open space, rather than being fully developed. This assessment is based on a number of unknown assumptions which seek to address probable impacts, but any future schemes would have to be fully assessed for their impact.

### Maldon Road

- 13.14 Sandon Brook Place is a large late nineteenth century house now converted into flats. It was historically known as Potash Farm and one of the historic farm buildings remains to the north-east (now converted into a house). The front elevation has two gable wings to each side with bay windows and a central two storey gable projection, giving an imposing appearance. There is attractive brick detailing, including hood mouldings to the windows and a colonnade to the east elevation. It was used as a boarding school from the mid twentieth century until 1995.
- 13.15 The building can be considered as a non-designated heritage asset due to its architectural interest and community value as a local landmark and long term function as a school.
- 13.16 The setting of the building which contributes to its significance is confined to the treed grounds to the frontage and its immediate surroundings. The former playing fields and agricultural land to the north make no contribution to the significance of the building.



Figure 4, Sandon Brook Place

## Danbury Park

- 13.17 Danbury Park is a c.100 acre site bounded by the A414 to the north, Well Lane to the east, partly by Woodhill Lane to the south and farmland to the west. A deer or hare park is thought to have been founded in the late thirteenth century at Danbury. The present extent of the park largely remains from the sixteenth century, when Sir Walter Mildmay extended the boundaries and built a mansion.
- 13.18 The park is designated as a Registered Park and Garden on Historic England's inventory of special historic interest at grade II. The present house and Main Lodge, dating from the 1830s are also grade II listed. The park and its buildings are of considerable aesthetic and historic interest and are justifiably designated.
- 13.19 The present house has a designed view to the west on the axis of an avenue. The land at Hammonds Farm, beyond the A414, would be well screened and is peripheral to the key views. The eighteenth century landscape design associated with the former house includes many planned views into the wider landscape, including towards key landmarks in the distance. These views are now partly lost due to extensive tree growth in the park. However, many of the key views remain, including those towards Chelmsford Cathedral and St Marys Church Great Baddow. A designed view towards All Saints Church Springfield remains and crosses the study area at the southern part of the site, adjacent the A414. The fall in land means that this view would not be adversely affected by domestic scale development on the land at Hammonds Farm.
- 13.20 The separation between the park and the potential development site mean that there would be no adverse impact on its setting.



**Figure 5**, Danbury Palace c.1880

## Main Road

### St Cleres Hall

- 13.21 St Cleres Hall is on the north side of Main Road, south of the main village settlement. The manor of Danbury was centred on St Cleres Hall in the medieval period. The de Clare family are first mentioned in 1246. In 1282 William de Clare was given licence to empark (creating or enlarging a deer or hare park). The location of this park is unknown, but it could be the teardrop shaped site to the southwest (now bisected by the A414), or another site remote from the hall.
- 13.22 The present house dates from the mid nineteenth century and is a replacement of a sixteenth century building. It is a red brick building in a Tudor style, a common feature to Danbury village. The house is grade II listed, justifiably so as an mid nineteenth century building of architectural interest.
- 13.23 The adjacent barn is also grade II listed, justifiably so as a seventeenth century or earlier vernacular building with group value with the hall. There is another traditional barn to the north and other modern outbuildings.
- 13.24 The grounds are well treed and include a recently planted avenue. The rural landscape to the east and west, and the relationship with Danbury Park to the south form part of the setting and contribute to significance. The land to the immediate north contributes to the rural environment, beyond which the modern gravel extraction has decimated the landscape and makes little contribution to setting.

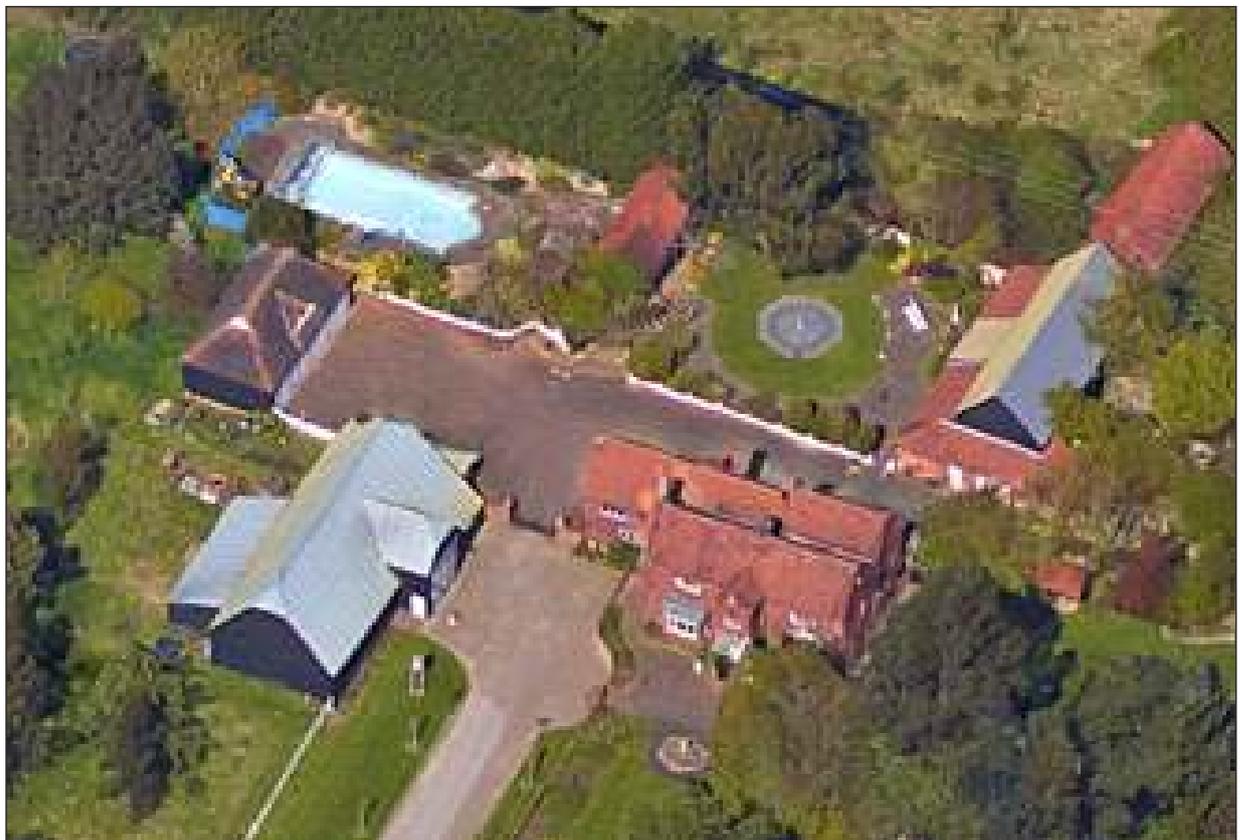


Figure 6, St Cleres Hall

## **Woodhill Road**

- 13.25 Sandon Village and a collection of isolated farmsteads and cottages lie along Woodhill Road to the south of the study area. This includes nine grade II listed buildings, the grade II\* listed Church of St Andrew and the old Rectory, together with Sandon Village Conservation Area centred on the village green.
- 13.26 The rural setting of this collection of designated heritage assets contributes to their significance, which includes the compact nature of the village and the land between the A414 and Woodhill Road.
- 13.27 There are significant views to the tower of St Andrews Church from the north, which should be retained in any development at the Hammonds Farm land, but otherwise the land to the north of the A414 makes no contribution to setting of the designated heritage assets at Sandon.

## **Hurrells Lane**

- 13.28 Water Hall is an exceptionally well preserved in-line hall house dating from c.1400. It is grade II listed, the completeness of its timber frame and plan form would justify listing at a higher grade.
- 13.29 It was historically known as Belmers. Hurrells Lane is an ancient route. The setting is rural and contributes to the significance of the building. Landscape character has been eroded by the loss of field boundaries and the creation of an agricultural reservoir.
- 13.30 Development should be avoided east of Sandon Brook, where the rural setting to Water Hall is important. To the west of Sandon Brook, the alignment and rural character of Hurrells Lane should be preserved.

## **Hammonds Road**

### **Rumbolds House**

- 13.31 Rumbolds House is a timber framed farmhouse, associated with Rumbolds Farm to the northwest. A house in this position is depicted on the Chapman and Andre Map of 1777 which fits with the appearance of the present building, albeit altered and extended. The house is likely to be too altered to be included on the statutory list, but has some character as an eighteenth century timber framed house and should be considered as a non-designated heritage asset.
- 13.32 The farm buildings to the northwest all date from the twentieth century and are of no interest. The A12 is an intrusive feature, both visually and audibly. The course of Hammonds Road was altered when the A12 bypass was constructed in the 1970s. The field boundaries have largely been removed in the second half of the twentieth century. The track which runs east from the house relates to an ancient field boundary and should be preserved. The design and layout of new housing adjacent Rumbolds House would need to avoid being overly dominant and use traditional scale, forms and materials.

## Hammonds Farm

- 13.33 Hammonds Farm comprises a farmhouse, traditional farm buildings and modern farm buildings. The farmhouse dates from c.1820 and is grade II listed, justifiably so as a fine Regency farmhouse.
- 13.34 A coach house to the east, barn to the south and sweeping drive to the front of the house remain. Historically there was an orchard to the north of the house, now the garden.
- 13.35 Modern agricultural buildings to the south dominate the setting of the listed building and the wider landscape.
- 13.36 The A12, pylons and power lines, loss of field boundaries and the creation of a large agricultural reservoir impact on landscape character.
- 13.37 There is a largely flat landscape between Hammonds Road and Sandon Brook to the east, which allows extensive views towards the formal frontage of the farmhouse. The area along this section of Hammonds Road affords long distance views towards Great Graces and St John the Baptist on Danbury Hill. Graces Walk, an avenue of seventeenth century origin aligned west from Great Graces is a significant landscape feature.
- 13.38 The landscape west of Hammonds Road extends down to the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, with meadows at the base of the valley and arable land on the valleysides. This landscape character is evident for much of the Navigation and is an essential feature to its setting, whilst also forming part of the rural setting to Hammonds Farm.
- 13.39 Development should be avoided to the land west of Hammonds Road. It would be desirable to improve screening to the A12 and reverse modern landscape changes, including the reservoir and pylons. To the east of Hammonds Road the historic Hurrells Lane and Graces Walk should be retained and a rural margin preserved. Key views of landmarks should be retained, including back towards Hammonds Farm and



**Figure 7**, Hammonds Farm, First Edition OS plan (surveyed 1873-4, published 1881)



**Figure 8**, Hammonds Farm from the south

### **Phillows Farm**

- 13.40 Phillows farmhouse is of seventeenth century origins, with substantial rebuilding and encasing in red brick in the mid nineteenth century. It is grade II listed, justifiably so on account of its architectural and historic interest.
- 13.41 There are the remains of a moated enclosure and a double courtyard of nineteenth century outbuildings, now in commercial use.
- 13.42 The wider rural setting and the landscape character of isolated farmsteads form part of its significance. There has been some loss of field boundaries to the east and west, but the landscape framework remains.
- 13.43 There are a number of key views in the vicinity of Phillows Farm to key landmarks in the distance, including Danbury Hill.
- 13.44 To the west, the rural landscape is significant to the setting the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation and the isolated farmsteads. To the east of Hammonds Road development should retain an open setting to Phillows, retain Hurrells Lane, maintain key views and pay particular attention to the scale and form of development, edge treatment and landscape screening.



**Figure 9**, Phillows Farmhouse

## **Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation**

- 13.45 The Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation was formed in 1797 as a navigable waterway using the existing river network, to allow a trade route between Chelmsford and Heybridge. The Navigation is designated as a Conservation Area for its entire length, justifiably so for its special character and historic interest.
- 13.46 The Conservation Area boundary roughly follows the line of the valley floor. The water meadows and arable use of the valley sides give a rural character, essential to the significance of the Conservation Area.
- 13.47 There are a number of listed bridges and locks associated with the Navigation, including Cuton Lock and Stoneham's Lock adjacent to the study area. Both date from c.1797 and are grade II listed. Their significance lies in construction and association with the Navigation.
- 13.48 The GHQ defence line was built in 1940 in advance of potential German invasion and used the line of the navigation as a natural defence supplemented with pillboxes and gun emplacements. Remnants of these defences remain at the base of the valley.
- 13.49 Any development should avoid the valley sides and protect views from the base of the valley, by ensuring the development is limited east of Hammonds Lane and the edge treatment in terms of building placement, scale, form, rooflines, materials and landscaping are carefully considered.

## **Graces Lane**

### **Great Graces**

- 13.50 Great Graces is the remains of a large mid sixteenth century house. There is also a brew house, barn, outbuildings and historic boundary wall which date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Each of the buildings are grade II listed, justifiably so as a collection of buildings with historic and architectural interest.
- 13.51 The house was built c.1540. In hearth tax returns of 1672 it possessed 26 hearths, compared with 7 or 8 at Little Baddow Hall, Riffhams and Pillows, showing its high status. Graces Walk is a seventeenth century avenue which extends west from Great Graces. This avenue is a significant landscape feature.
- 13.52 The rural setting and views to and from Great Graces are part of its setting and contribute to its significance. To the east of Sandon Brook the rural setting should remain. To the west of Sandon Brook there is scope to provide development, if Graces Walk is preserved, its planting reinstated and a buffer maintained.

### **Riffhams**

- 13.53 The Riffhams estate covers 20ha split by Graces Lane. The house is a fine Regency mansion built 1815-17, set within a parkland laid with advice from Humphry Repton in 1815. The house is grade II listed and the park included at grade II on the Register of Parks and Gardens, justifiably so for their design interest.

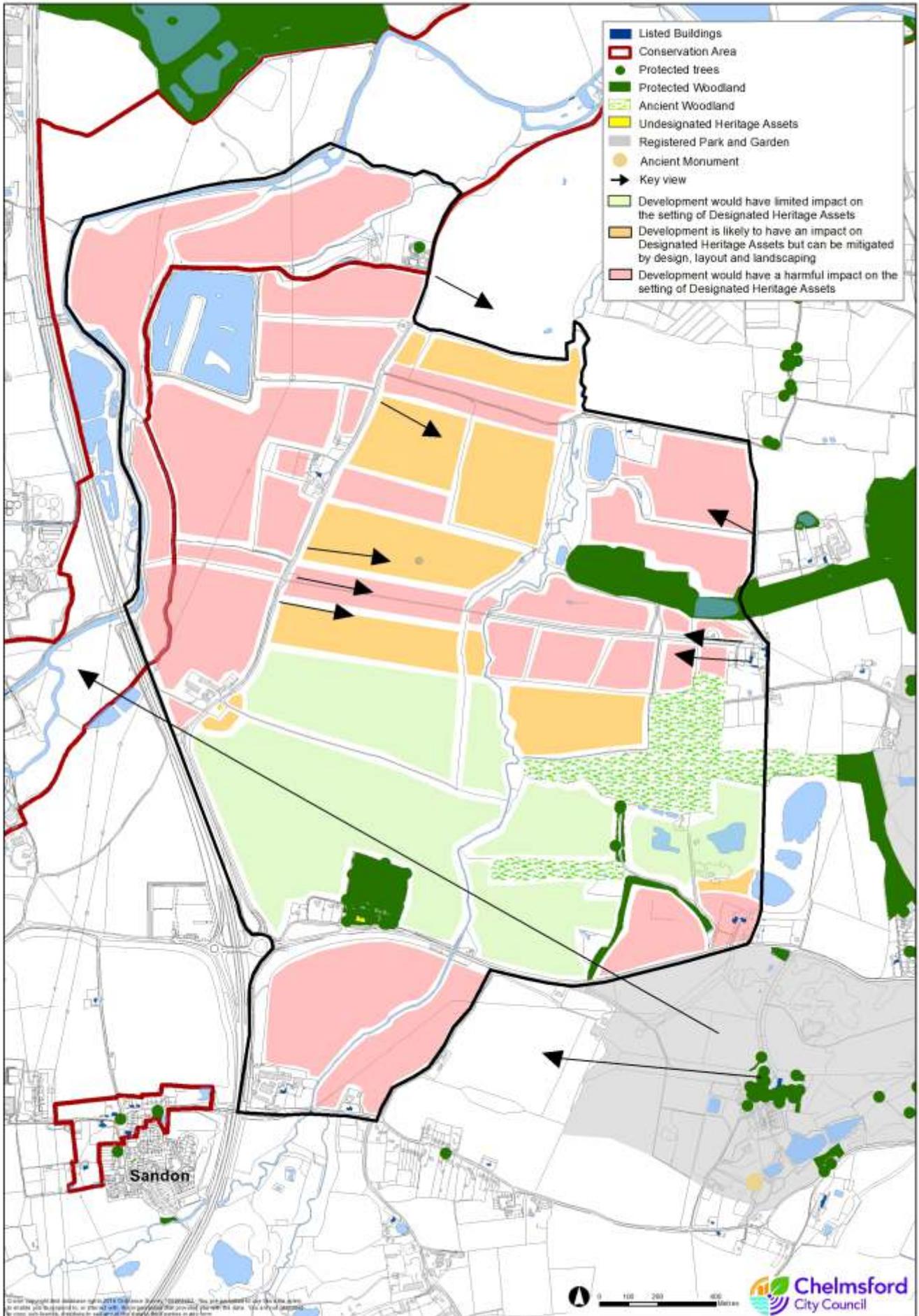
13.54 The rural setting to the house and park, in a wooded, gently rolling landscape is significant to its setting. There are designed views across the valley to and from the house, but the dense ancient woodland to the west provides screening and separation from the land at Hammonds Farm. The fall in levels and separation, together with the need to protect the land to the immediate west for the setting of Great Graces and St Clere's Hall means that development west of Sandon Brook would have no adverse impact on the setting of Riffhams and its registered park.

## CONCLUSIONS

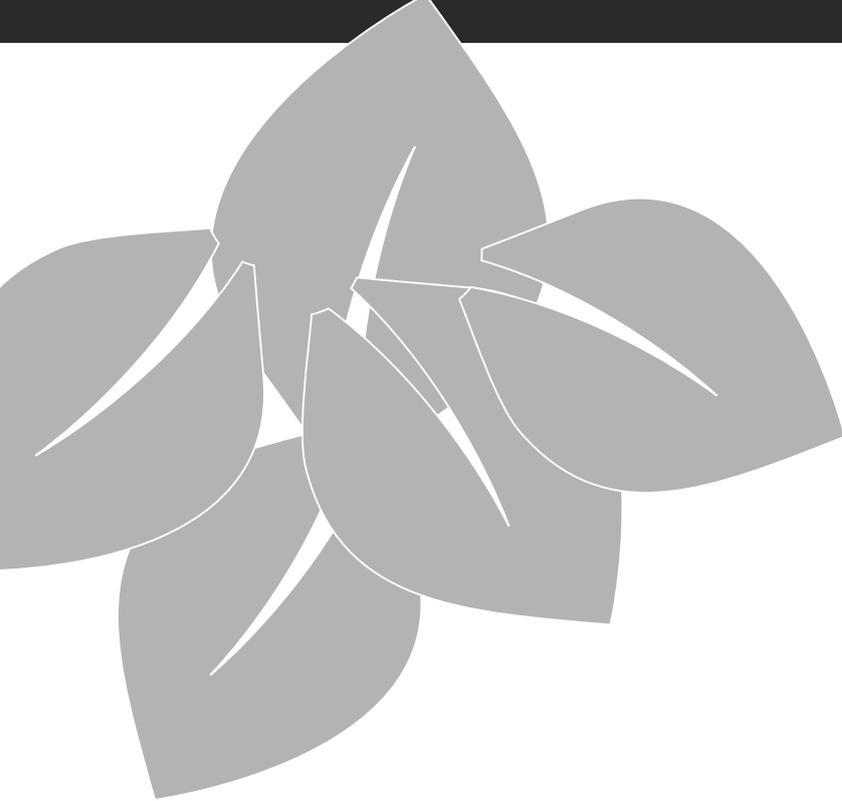
- 13.55 The land at Hammonds Farm has a diverse character and a range of designated and undesignated heritage assets, which are of local and national importance. The landscape is the dominant feature, with the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation at the base of the valley, rising towards Danbury Hill.
- 13.56 There are isolated farmsteads at Hammonds Farm and Pillows Farm, the remains of a grand mansion at Great Graces, and Graces Walk, an impressive avenue. The area is crossed by many distinctive views to landmarks in the distance, including Boreham House and the parish churches at Sandon, Danbury and Little Baddow.
- 13.57 The rural character of the area has been eroded by modern agriculture, the loss of field boundaries, reservoirs, grain stores, pylons and intrusion of the A12. However, the landscape framework and rural character remains, including historic lanes and field boundaries, and woodlands to the east. Large scale development provides the opportunity to reverse or mitigate these impacts.
- 13.58 The plateau between Hammonds Road and Sandon Brook provides an opportunity for development where the impact on designated and non-designated heritage assets would be minimal or capable of being mitigated against. The setting of the Navigation to the west of Hammonds Road is significant and should be protected, as should Graces Walk, Hurrells Lane and setting to other listed buildings.
- 13.59 Principles for the land at Hammonds Farm
- Maintain a buffer to designated heritage and non-designated heritage assets to protect their setting where this is part of their significance; see plans in appendix 1.
  - Avoid areas annotated red. Concentrate development in areas of least heritage impact (green). Where development is within sensitive locations (orange) use open space, planting belts, low density and careful design and materials to avoid or minimise harm.
  - Retain field boundaries and work within the existing landscape framework.
  - Protect the valley sides to the navigation, west of Hammonds Road and east of Sandon Brook.
  - Celebrate the areas heritage in new developments, for instance in place and road names, public art, community projects, design and links with adjacent heritage sites.
  - Undertake archaeological evaluation at an early stage to inform site allocation and master planning.
  - Provide improved screening to the A12.

- Reinststate meadows to the west of Hammonds Road, consider removal of agricultural reservoir and routing existing power lines below ground.
- Protect key views to landmarks, including those to Danbury, Sandon and Little Baddow churches.
- Protect existing woodlands, trees and field boundaries, particularly east of Sandon Brook.
- Reinststate the avenue planting to Graces Walk and maintain a landscape setting.
- Provide footpath links to the Navigation.

**Figure 13 - Plans indicating where setting contributes to significance**







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