

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan

Regulation 14 Document Published for Consultation

Woodham Walter Parish Council

www.woodhamwalter-pc.gov.uk

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Guy's Farm



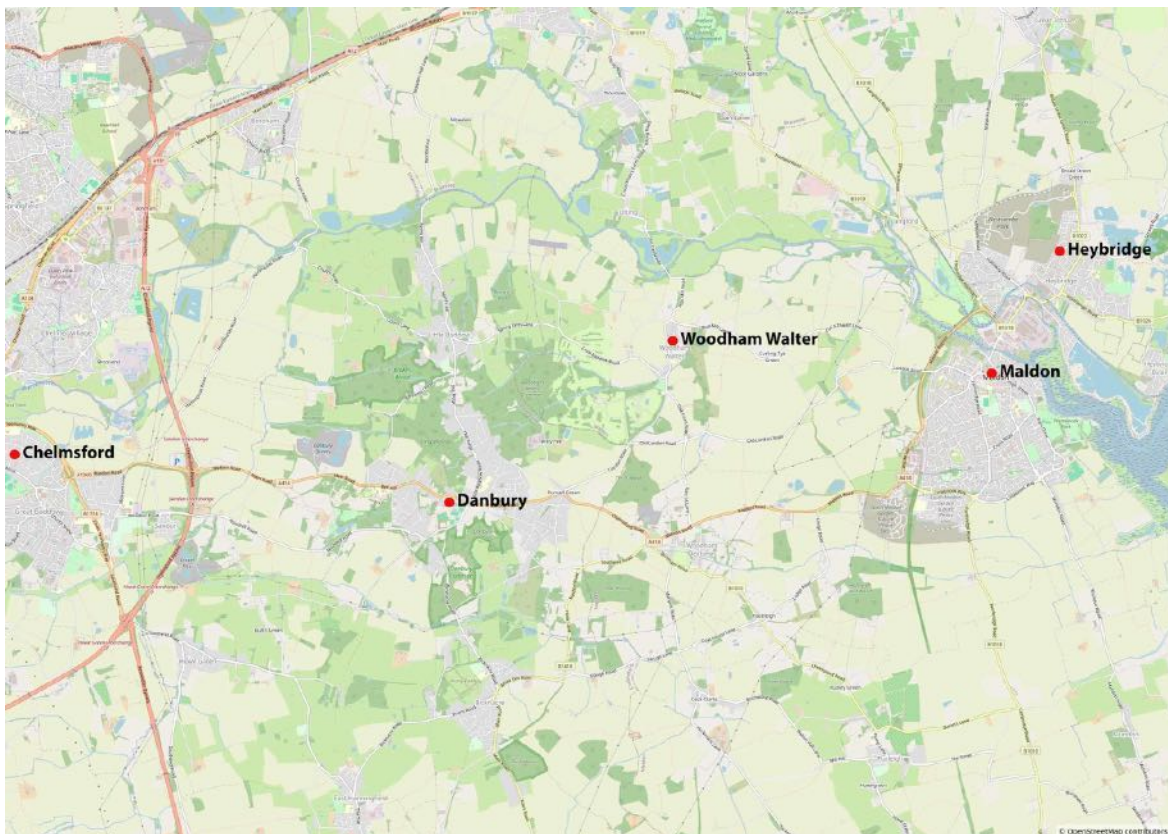
Guy's Farm

The village has developed over many years and has an established culture and presence that reflects the way of life that it represents. That should be valued, honoured, and not changed lightly; it is a cultural heritage. The Neighbourhood Plan is the shared vision, shaped by local voices and local values to support these sentiments and to create a stronger village for tomorrow.¹

1. Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan Overview

The Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan sets out a locally driven vision for the future of the village, guiding development, conservation and investment through to the year 2038. It has been prepared by the Parish Council in close consultation with residents, community groups, local businesses, landowners and MDC, to ensure that planning decisions reflect the needs and values of the people who live and work here.

Located within the Maldon District and set in the gently undulating countryside of rural Essex, Woodham Walter is characterised by its distinctive woodland, historic buildings, agricultural setting, and strong community spirit. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to conserve these qualities while allowing for small-scale, sustainable change that supports the long-term vitality of the village.



Map 1.
Location of Woodham Walter

¹ From anonymous comments from the WW Place Survey 2025

This Plan includes planning policies and proposals to:

- Support a limited amount of well-designed, small-scale housing, particularly to meet local needs such as downsizing and first-time buyers.
- Conserve historic buildings, woodland, hedgerows, and the traditional rural Arcadian character of the village.
- Protect and enhance community facilities, such as the Village Hall, The Bell, The Cats and Queen Victoria public houses, St Michael The Archangel Church, Woodham Walter Primary School Academy, Tadpoles Nursery School and Bell Meadow.
- Encourage improved walking and cycling connections between homes, green spaces, and local facilities, while addressing parking and highway safety issues.
- Promote environmental sustainability, including biodiversity-friendly development, habitat protection, and energy-efficient buildings.
- Safeguard the distinctive arcadian landscape character of the parish, including the Chelmer Valley, ancient woodlands, Woodham Walter Common and Conservation Areas.

The Plan has been shaped through extensive engagement, including surveys, public meetings and workshops, analysis of recent planning applications and aligns with national planning policy and the Maldon Local Development Plan.

Once adopted by local referendum, the Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the statutory Development Plan for the area, giving the community a stronger voice in how planning decisions are made and ensuring development reflects the unique character and priorities of Woodham Walter.

2. Introduction, Role and Background

2.1. The Role Of Neighbourhood Plans

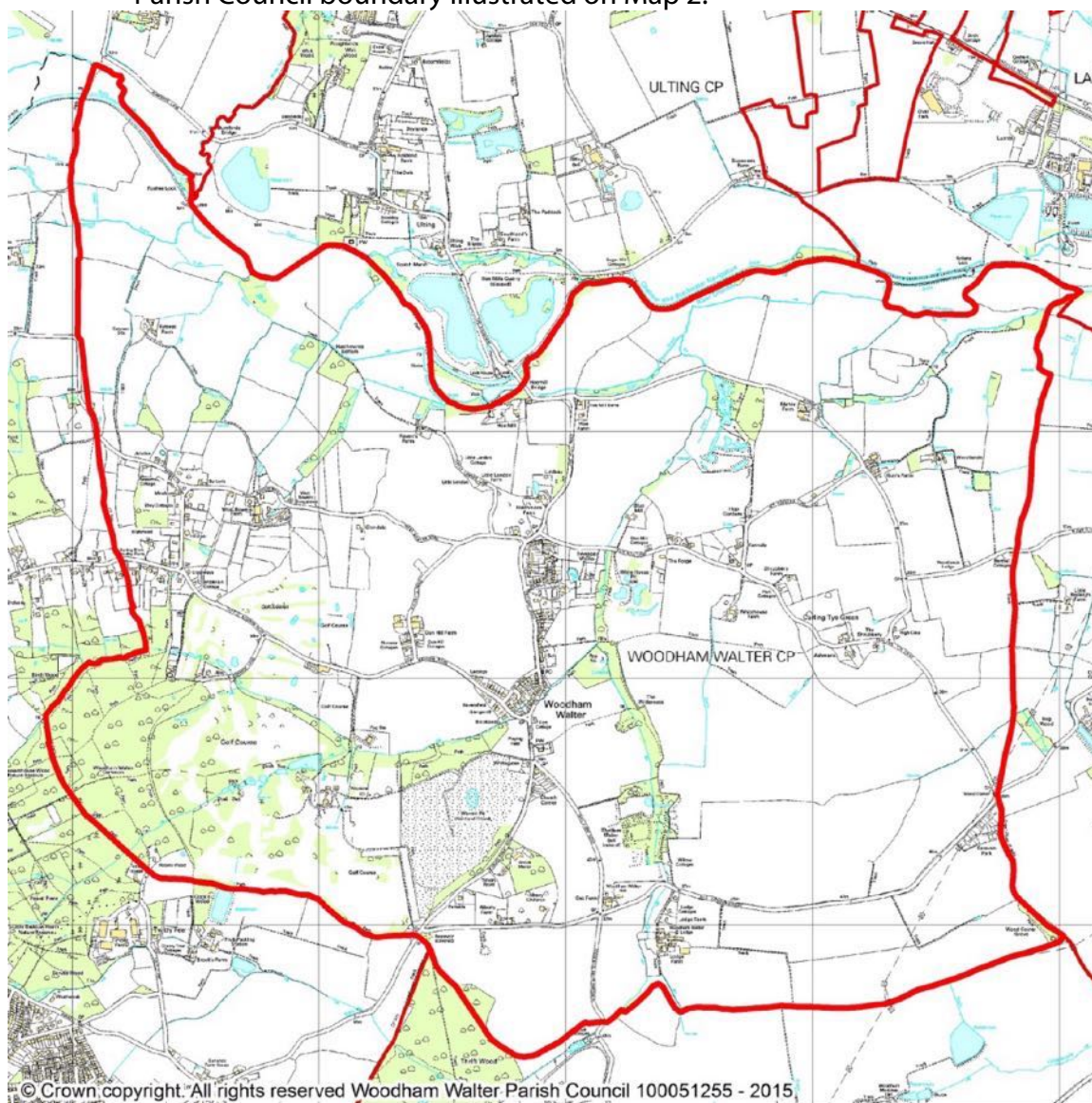
- 2.1.1. The Localism Act 2011, enacted by The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape development and promote better land use in their community by preparing Neighbourhood Development Plans. The aim of the legislation is to empower local communities to use the planning system to promote appropriate and sustainable development in their area.
- 2.1.2. A Neighbourhood Development Plan will enable the future of the places in which residents live and work to be defined, and to set out a vision and plan for the neighbourhood's future. After an examination and a community referendum, once adopted, the Plan will have equal weight as the Maldon District Council's Development Plan – which in turn must conform to the government's National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.1.3. To give a Plan practical effect, it must lead to practical and sustainable 'policies' for the neighbourhood area. The Plan must demonstrate a contribution to protect and/or improve the local environmental, economic and social conditions - or that consideration has been given to how any potential adverse effects arising from the proposals may be mitigated.

2.2. A Neighbourhood Development Plan For Woodham Walter

- 2.2.1. The NDP for Woodham Walter will give those who live and work in the Parish a stronger influence on future planning and development decisions. Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their area and support sustainable development.
- 2.2.2. Once the NDP is 'made' i.e. when it has been adopted, it becomes part of the development plan for the Parish Designated Area and has the same legal status as other documents in the MDC Local Development Plan.

2.3. Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 2.3.1. Woodham Walter Parish was designated by Maldon District Council as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of creating a Neighbourhood Plan on 10th December 2024 under the Localism Act 2011. The Plan area follows the Parish Council boundary illustrated on Map 2.



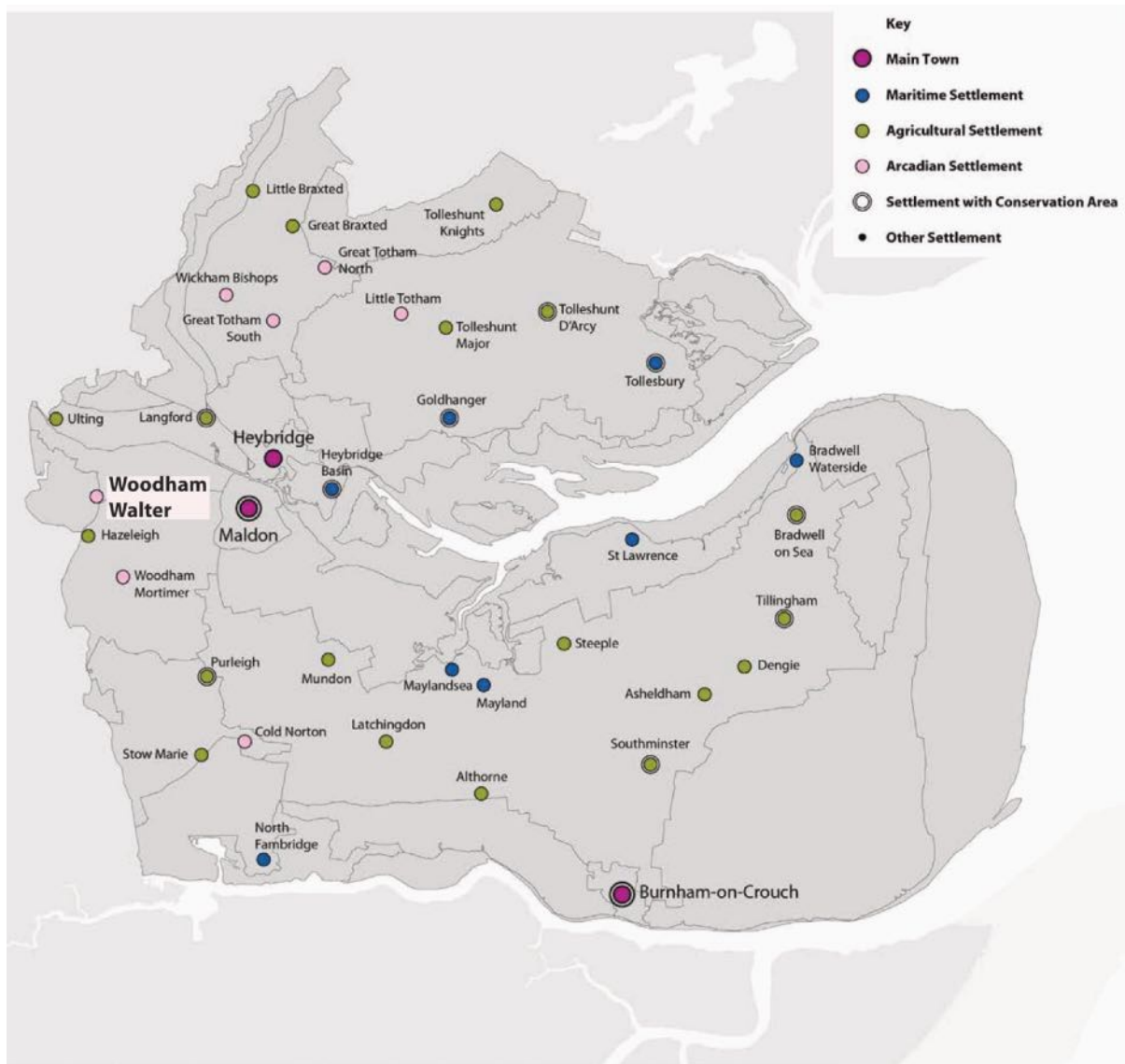
Map 2. Boundaries of Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area

2.4. The Representation of Community Views

- 2.4.1. The Plan has been prepared by local volunteers, supported by the Woodham Walter Parish Council and the Rural Community Council of Essex. Care has been taken to build up a clear picture and evidence base of local issues ambitions and opportunities.
- 2.4.2. The evidence is made up of two elements:
- Views of the local community.
 - Local fact-finding and research evidence .
- 2.4.3. To ensure that this Plan is a 'shared vision' amongst the community, a range of community engagement activities have been, and continue to be undertaken including:
- A Place Survey distributed to every household in the Parish in March 2025.
 - A Housing Needs Survey distributed to every household in the Parish in March 2025 prepared by the RCCE.
 - A Business Survey distributed to known businesses in the Designated Area in March 2025.
 - Regular updates available on the Parish Council website.
 - Regular updates in the monthly Parish Magazine delivered to every home in the Parish.
 - Regular monthly open meetings/workshops of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group.
 - Regular discussions at Parish events.
 - Reports to the Parish Council at the monthly meetings and Annual Meeting.
 - Posters displayed around the Village.
 - A full account of the informal consultations undertaken in developing the draft Plan is recorded in the accompanying Consultation Statement that will be available via the Parish Council website <https://woodhamwalter-pc.gov.uk>.
- 2.4.4. The Vision, objectives and policies which are set out in this Plan come directly from the views and opinions gathered through consultation.
- 2.4.5. The Plan is based on robust information and analysis of the local area; this 'Evidence Base' is available in full on the Woodham Walter Parish Council website. The evidence base was prepared by members of the community and the Steering Group together with the Rural Community Council of Essex. A full list of the evidence can be found in Appendices accompanying the Consultation Statement.
- 2.4.6. The NDP Steering Group has developed the content for the Plan, which includes planning policies and practical projects to be undertaken by the local community which will help to realise the vision and objectives.
- 2.4.7. There are several stages in the preparation of an NDP. As the draft Plan progresses, the policies and proposals will be tested to ensure that they are suitable as a planning tool when finally adopted.

3. Woodham Walter's Character

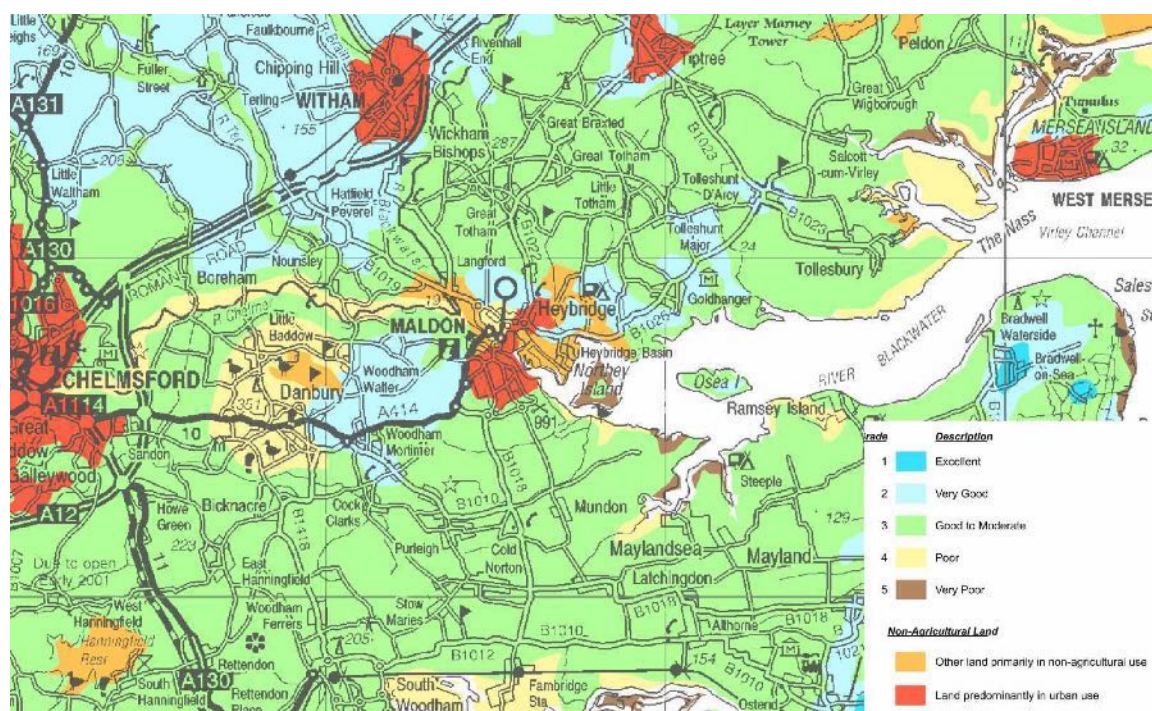
- 3.1. Woodham Walter is one of only six 'Arcadian' villages within the District of Maldon and is characterised by being a small, idyllic rural community that embodies peace, simplicity, and harmony with nature with long vistas across open countryside and uninterrupted space between settlements. It is approximately 3 miles west of Maldon and 7 miles east of Chelmsford.
- 3.2. Settlements that have been defined as Arcadian by the Maldon District Characterisation Assessment are Cold Norton, Great Totham (North & South), Little Totham, and Wickham Bishops, Woodham Mortimer, Woodham Walter.



Map 3.
Arcadian Villages in the Maldon District Council Area²

² Source: Maldon District Characterisation Assessment, 2012.

- 3.3. As with most Arcadian Villages the Woodham Walter layout is characterised by small farms, with cottages and modern houses present along rural lanes. There are various dispersed groups of hamlets, each with its own specific but small historic core and defined settlement area.
- 3.4. Farmland in the Woodham Walter includes areas of Subgrade 3a (good quality) and Subgrade 3b (moderate quality) agricultural land, according to the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system based on a gradation system range of 1-5 with one being the best. This classification is based on factors like soil texture, stone content, and wetness limitations, with Subgrades 3a and 3b being part of the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land designation. Grades 1, 2, and 3a are considered the UK's Best and Most Versatile (BMV) farmland. The equivalent Natural England classification is Grade 2³. These grades are based on a survey for strategic planning rather than specific fields or farmsteads.

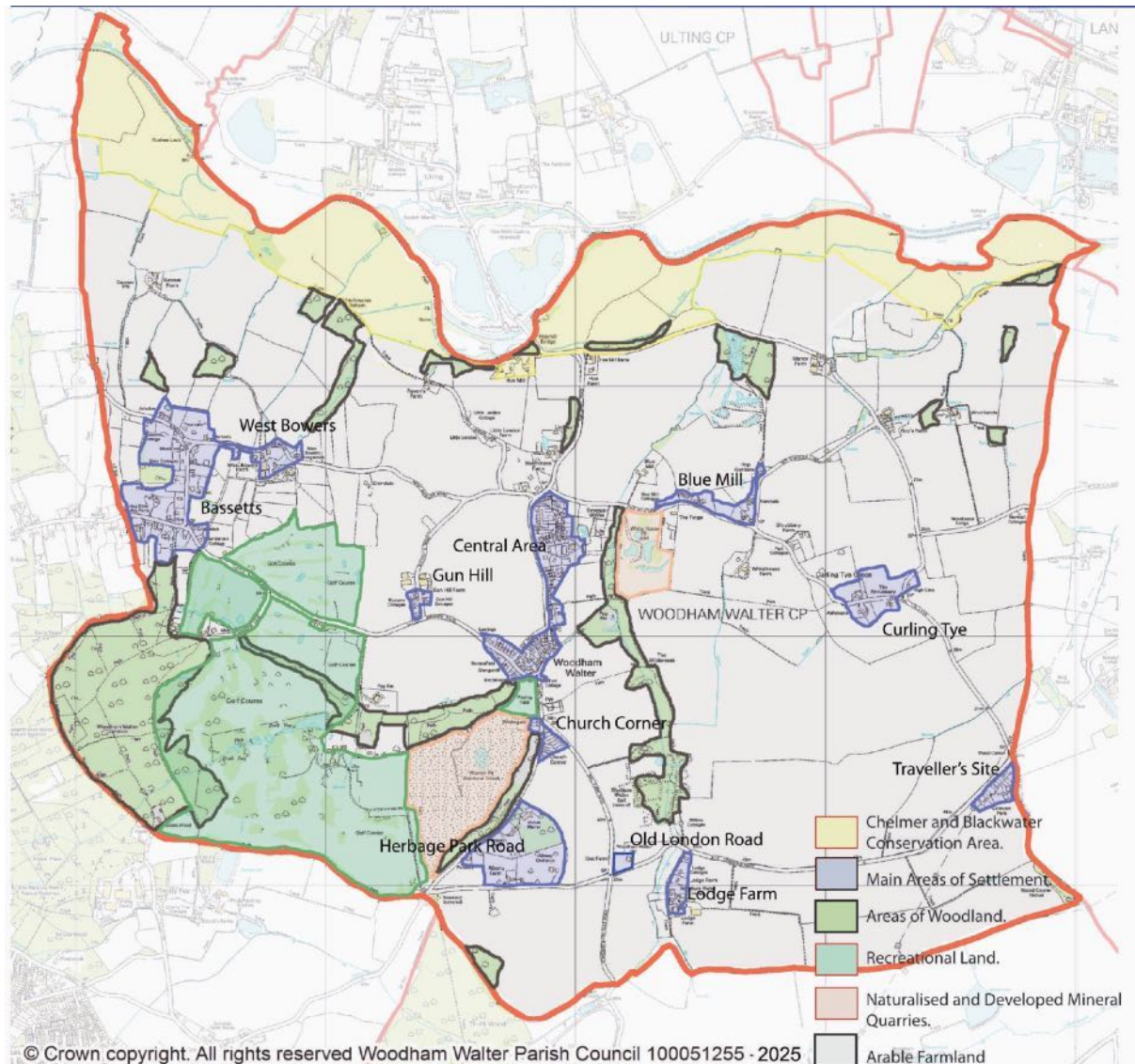


Map 4. Extract from UK Map of Agricultural Land Classification

- 3.5. Woodham Walter's central settlement area, now a Conservation Area, has focal points of the church, school and public houses together with Bell Meadow and playground, forming the heart of the village. This functions as a social and religious gathering place. The surrounding land is used for agriculture, reflecting the initial Arcadian people's reliance on natural resources for sustenance and for leisure activities, particularly golf and equestrian activities. Outlying settlements within the village all have their own character and area of defined settlement. Map 5⁴.

³ Source: Natural England - DEFRA

⁴ Source: Woodham Walter Village Design Statement



Map 5. Main Areas of Defined Settlement in Woodham Walter



WW's Victorian School

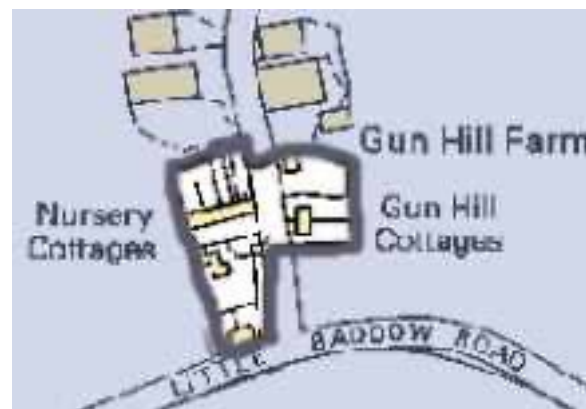


Bassetts Lane

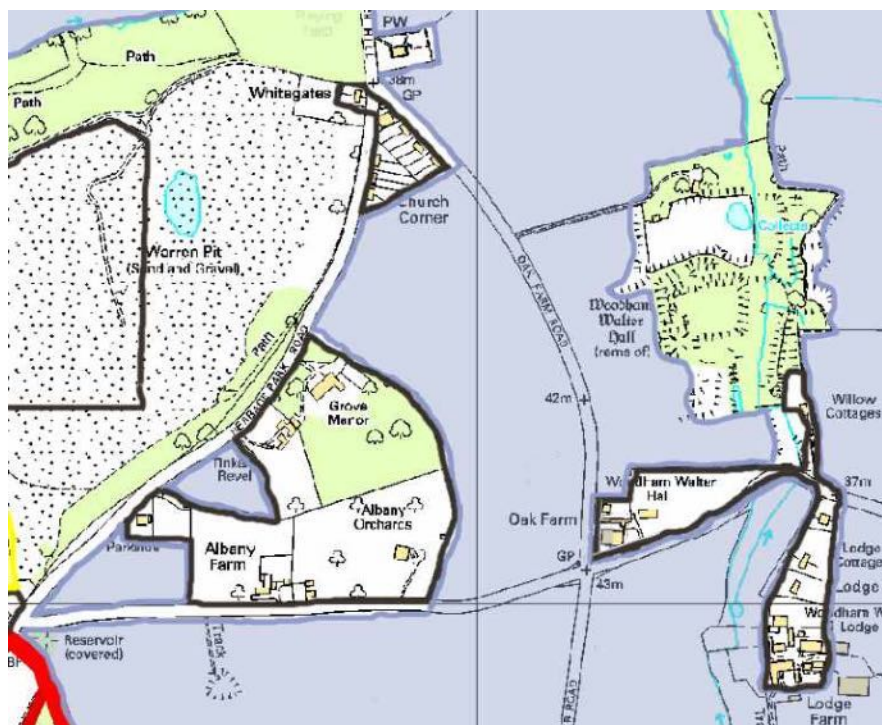
Boundaries of Larger Areas of Defined Settlement



Map 6. Central Area



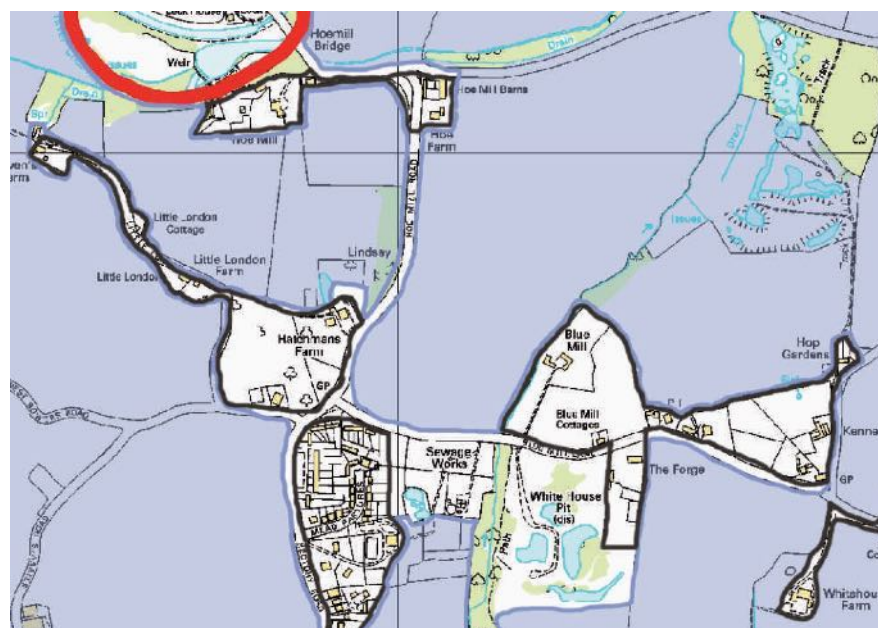
Map 7. Gunhill



Map 8. Church Corner, Oak Farm Road, Herbage Park Road and Lodge Farm



Map 9. Bassetts Lane, Little Baddow Road and West Bowers Road



Map 10. Little London, Little London Lane and Mill Blue Mill Lane

- 3.6. The Arcadian character is derived mostly from the qualities of the surrounding landscape. Buildings of varied architectural style fit into this character as they are integrated into landscape and relate to the unique environment.
- 3.7. The existing tree cover and vegetation, including grass verges are important aspects and should be retained and enhanced by additional planting of native and appropriate species. Hedges or other appropriate natural boundary treatments should be used to provide enclosure to front gardens. Open plan lawns are not appropriate in the Arcadian context.
- 3.8. The MDC Rural Facilities Survey classes the Village as of medium size. The criteria for this are that settlements have reasonable connectivity and could provide a commuter/shopper's bus service. They may provide some essential services such as shop, post office or primary school, and may provide some job opportunities for their residents, but in the main they look to towns and large villages to provide a greater range of community facilities, including medical facilities⁵. This status was challenged by the PC on the basis that there is no shop and the commuter and shopping bus service has been currently withdrawn essentially isolating the Village for those reliant on public transport.
- 3.9. The Village is small in population, being ranked 23rd of 34 settlements by size within the Maldon District; it is historic and retains a distinct rural character and close-knit community ethos, shaped by its heritage, landscape, and longstanding traditions. The village ethos is defined by values of respect for the natural environment, and active community participation. Residents take pride in maintaining the village's identity, ensuring that change is managed sensitively and in a way that respects its historical and environmental context.
- 3.10. There is support for a number of community initiatives and organisations, including the Parish Council, church groups, recreational clubs, a primary school and nursery school, all of which contribute to a strong sense of local identity. Community events and volunteer-led efforts, such as conservation work, social gatherings, Walters Third Thursday Café, Bell Meadow Day, Village Hall and local fundraising, reflect a collective investment in the well-being of the village.
- 3.11. Within the wider district of Maldon, Woodham Walter plays a role as part of the network of rural settlements that contribute to the district's agricultural base, biodiversity, and cultural heritage. Its green spaces, woodland (including areas like Woodham Walter Common), and proximity to the Danbury Ridge make it an important contributor to local biodiversity and leisure opportunities, attracting visitors and sustainable tourism.
- 3.12. After the World War II period, mineral extraction was a significant influence on the village with quarrying taking over orchards and soft fruit production. This saw a period of road widening and change of landscape. Since the last quarry closed, nature has reclaimed much of the land and has assisted in the formation of Bunsay Downs golf course and the Warren Estate holiday lodges. Being geologically situated on terminal moraine and glacial outwash areas, the accommodation of gravel extraction is a challenge so as not to change the rural and arcadian character of the village.
- 3.13. In the broader context of Essex, Woodham Walter exemplifies the challenges and opportunities facing rural communities particularly in balancing the need for

⁵ Source : MDC Rural Facilities Survey

limited appropriate development and mineral extraction, with the preservation of rural character within its defined settlement areas. It plays a supporting role in achieving Essex's strategic goals around rural sustainability, environmental stewardship, and cultural conservation.

- 3.14. The village's location, close to Maldon, Chelmsford, and Danbury, positions it well for contributing to the county's economy and infrastructure without compromising its intrinsic village identity. There are a significant number of residents who work from home, often running their own businesses and other residents commute to neighbouring urban areas and London, reinforcing Woodham Walter's role as a desirable, rural settlement within the commuter belt, while still maintaining its autonomy and distinctive rural atmosphere.
- 3.15. There are a number of local businesses, many being operated from homes, aside from agriculture, ranging from hospitality, entertainment, recreation, financial and insurance services, livery accommodation, wedding venue, arboriculturists, agriculturalists, dog groomers together with construction professionals and property development.

4. Woodham Walter's Brief History

- 4.1. Archaeological findings suggest early settlement in the area. A hoard of 108 silver sceatta coins dating to around 700 AD was discovered, and in 1991, three gold and bronze torcs were unearthed at Oak Farm, dating back to approximately 1000 BC.
- 4.2. A limited excavation in the Chelmer and Blackwater Valley within the Parish boundary confirmed the postulated Iron Age and Romano-British date for the enclosures and also revealed earlier prehistoric occupation in the area. Although the excavation was small, a tentative series of phase plans have been produced for the cropmark complex. The site is considered in relation to other cropmarks in the Chelmer-Blackwater Valley, as part of the programme of landscape studies in the area.⁶ These crop marks are listed as an Ancient Monument.
- 4.3. In the Domesday Book of 1086, Woodham Walter had a population of 18, and the land was held by Ralph Baynard, a Norman nobleman and follower of William the Conqueror. Arising from intrigue against King Henry I, Baynard's lands were forfeited and granted to Robert FitzWalter, a signatory of the Magna Carta. The FitzWalter family established a deer park and a moated manor house, Woodham Walter Hall, which was demolished in the 17th century the remains of which are listed as an Ancient Monument.
- 4.4. The Village has a significant number of heritage assets numbering twenty-nine in all either Listed Grade II or Grade II* and include Rushes Lock on the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. There are also two listed Ancient Monuments including the remains of Woodham Walter Hall in addition to three protected lanes.
- 4.5. An important landmark is the Church of St Michael the Archangel, consecrated in 1564. Commissioned by Thomas, Earl of Sussex, it is considered one of the earliest post-Reformation Church of England buildings, possibly the first purpose-built Anglican church in the country and the only Elizabethan church in Essex. It is Listed Grade II*.

⁶ Source: David Buckley, John Hedges, Deborah Priddy, 1987. 'Excavation of a Cropmark Enclosure complex at Woodham Walter, Essex, 1976



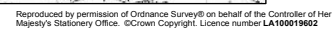
The Church of St Michael the Archangel

- 4.6. Other heritage assets within the Parish are included on the Locally Valued Non-designated Heritage Asset (LVNDHA) list and are shown on the Heritage Assets Plan. Map 15.
- 4.7. The introduction of piped water and sewage infrastructure occurred in the aftermath of the First World War, with electricity being supplied to the village in the post-Second World War period.
- 4.8. The post Second World War building programme extended the commercial life of the canal by transporting timber and other materials from Heybridge into Chelmsford. During the latter half of the twentieth century commercial traffic diminished and the growth of leisure craft increased with some residential moorings near to the Ulting bridge.⁷

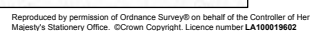


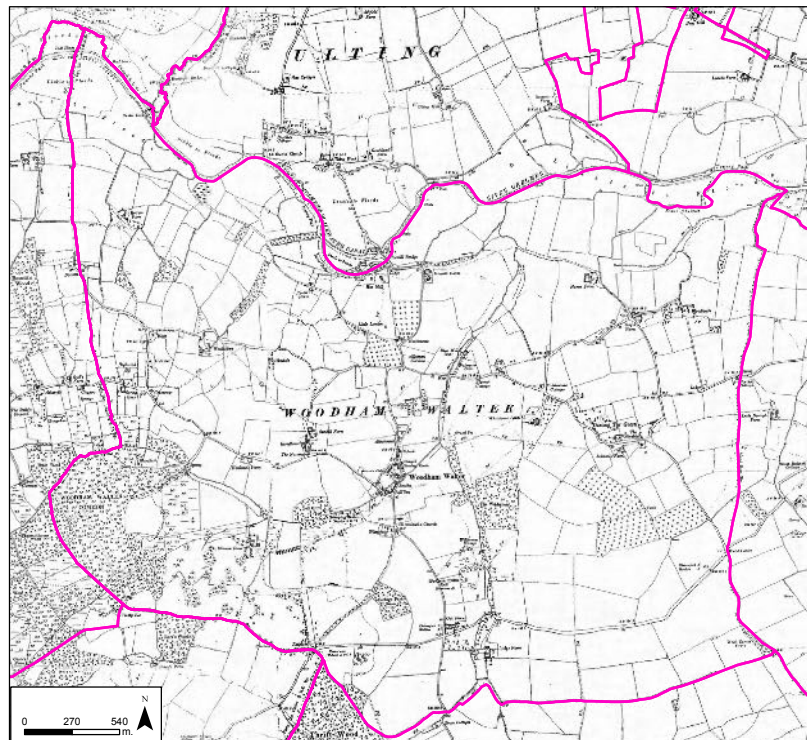
Map 11. Chapman and Andre Map of Woodham Walter 1777

⁷ Source: Patricia Ryan, 'A Village History, Woodham Walter'



Map 13.
Woodham Walter Village Centre 1897





Map 14.
Woodham Walter Parish 1920

4.9. Heritage Assets

Schedule of Listed Buildings⁸

Ashman's Farmhouse and Barn Grade II, Curling Tye Lane
Bannister Cottage Grade II, 2 The Street.
Barn and complex Grade II, Whitehouse Farm Curling Tye Lane.
Bassetts Grade II, Tofts Chase.
Black Cottage (now Blackberry Cottage) Grade II, Curling Tye Lane.
Blue Mill and Mill House Grade II, Blue Mill Lane
Cart lodge Grade II, Curling Tye Lane.
Church of St Michael Grade II*, Church Hill
Elwy Cottages Grade II, Bassetts Lane.
Granary Grade II, Curling Tye Lane.
Guy's Farmhouse Grade II, Manor Road.
Hoe Mill House Grade II, The Causeway.
Little London Cottage Grade II; Little London Lane.
Little London House Grade II, Little London Lane.
Mead House (Old Rectory) Grade II.
Woodham Walter Milestone Grade II, Old London Road
Pump Grade II, Blue Mill Lane.
Ravens Farmhouse Grade II, Little London Lane.
Retreat Farmhouse Grade II, Woodham Walter.

⁸ Source: Woodham Walter Village Design Statement and Historic England

Ruins of Old Woodham Walter Hall Grade II, Old London Road.
Rushes Lock and Lock Gates Grade II, Bumfords Lane.
The Bell Inn Grade II, Little Baddow Road.
The Cats Grade II, Blue Mill Lane.
The Shrubbery Grade II, Curling Tye Lane.
The Warren House Grade II, The Warren
Weir at Rushes Lock Grade II, Bumfords Lane, Ulting.
West Bowers Hall Grade II*, W Bowers Road.
Wingtons Grade II, 2 The Street.
Woodham Walter Hall Grade II, Old London Road.

Ancient Monuments

Remains of Woodham Walter Hall
Crop Marks East of Hoe Mill

Locally Valued Non-Designated Heritage Assets

1 Rectory Road
1 Redgates, Old London Road
2 Rectory Road
2 Redgates, Old London Road
Almshouses Rectory Road
Ash Cottage rectory Road
Cast-iron fingerpost, opposite the Bell The Street
Church Cottage Herbage Park Road
Former stables, The Warren Old London Road
Gunhill Farmhouse Stivvy's Road
Hoe Farm Barns, Hoe Mill Road
Hoe Farm House, Hoe Mill Road
Linton House
Lodge Farm, Old London Road
Manor Farm
Nursery Cottages Stivvy's Road
Nursery Villas Little Baddow Road
Red K6 telephone kiosk, The Street
Tadpoles Nursery, The Street (formerly Chapel Stores)
The Queen Victoria Public House The Street
Village Hall, Rectory Road
Women's Club, Top Road
Woodlands Lodge, Cut A Thwart Lane
Woodlands, Cut A Thwart Lane

Protected Lanes

Manor Road
Stivvy's Road
West Bowers Road

- 4.10. **Woodham Walter Common**, an 80-hectare Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Parish Council. This area features oak and hornbeam woodlands, rich valleys, and diverse wildlife ranging from muntjac deer to nightingales, dormice and Barbastelle and Pipistrelle bats. The area is a core component of the forthcoming Essex Local Nature Recovery Network. It is recognised for its ecological connectivity and biodiversity value and is central to the nature recovery in the County.⁹
- 4.11. **Bell Meadow** was acquired by the Parish Council for community purposes and affords a public open green space that has a 'wilding' garden, a children's playground and a football area. It is used for a bi-annual village celebration of rural life known as Bell Meadow Day'. The 're-wilding' of a section of Bell Meadow includes a bug hotel locally known as 'Buggingham Palace'.



The Re-Wilding Garden on Bell Meadow

- 4.12. **The Village Hall**, constructed in 1928 and designed by J. Richardson on land purchased from Mr J Pennock. It was completed in the December of 1928 at a cost of £570 and opened on the 15th December 1928. The builder was Mr T Pennock of Great Baddow. The Hall has a certificate recording the adoption by the Village of HMS Rockrose, K51, a WWII Corvette convoy escort.



The Village Hall



- 4.13. **The Victorian School** was constructed in 1873 and has a 21st C extension as well as more recent external teaching facilities. It has, since June 2025 been known as Woodham Walter Church of England Primary Academy. It has a rich history intertwined with the village's development. Established records date back to 1913. The school has evolved over the years,

⁹ Source: Essex Wildlife Trust

adapting to the changing educational landscape while maintaining its strong ties to the local community and the Church of England,

4.13. **The old non-conformist chapel** was first built as a Congregational Chapel in 1881.



Services and a Sunday School were held in the chapel until after World War II¹⁰. A small timber-framed building clad in white-painted weather-boarding with natural slate roof. It was subsequently converted to the village shop until 2013 when it became the home of Tadpoles Nursery School.

4.14. **The Almshouses** were constructed in 1908 by the sons of a former Rector of the Parish. The pair of houses was specifically for the 'poor or those in ill-health who are unable to keep themselves by their own exertions'. It is a single-storey, red-brick building with a clay-tiled roof and features pairs of lancet-shaped gothic-style windows.



The Almshouses

4.15. **The Women's Club** was founded in 1906 following the needs of village women in childbirth. The driving force behind the movement, one Dr Chaplin, presented the club with her former summerhouse, a timber framed and boarded structure with a slate roof that remains in place and is greatly used to this day as a clubhouse.

The Women's Club

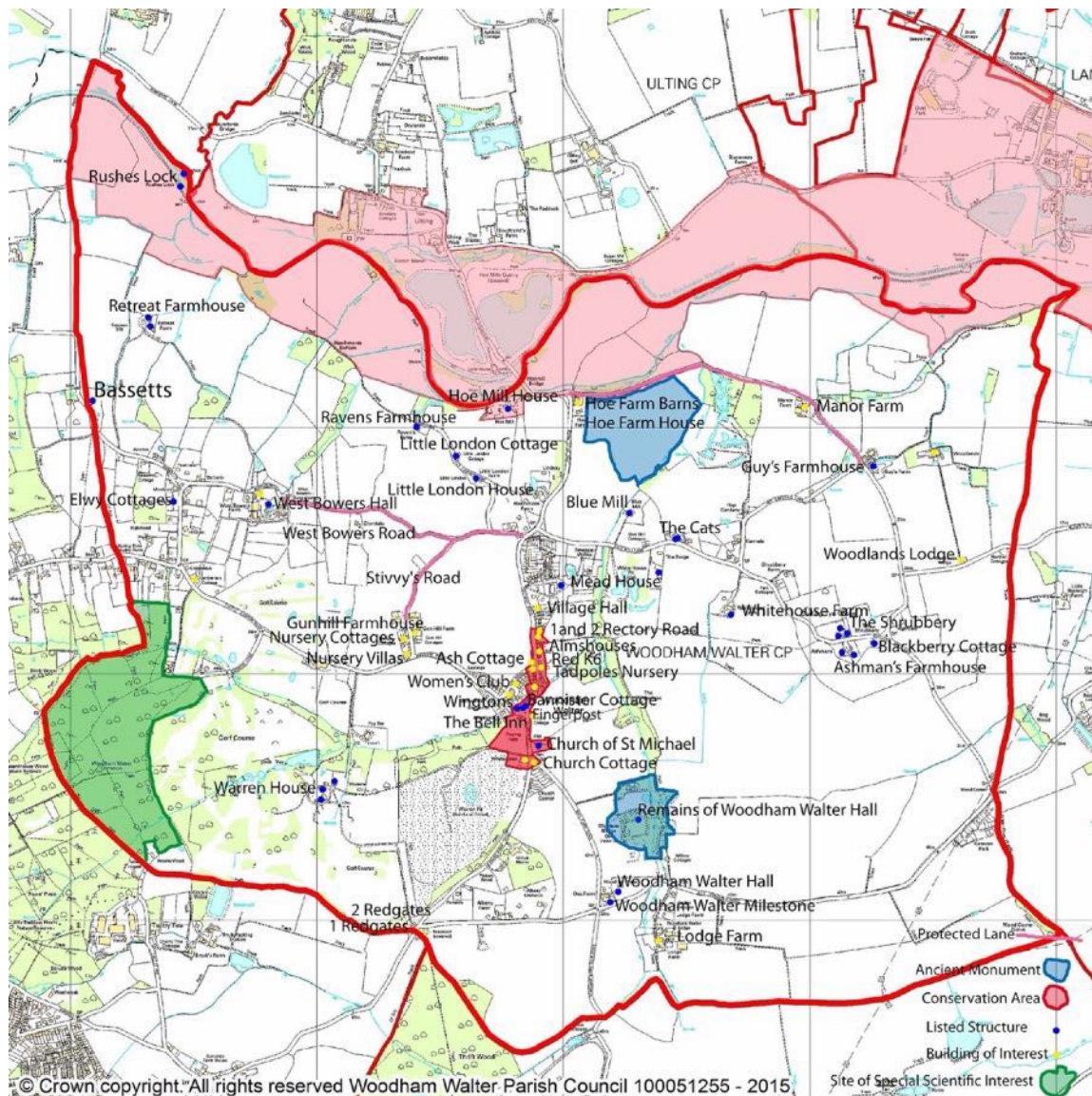


Across The Village From the Church



View 21 From Bunsay Downs

¹⁰ Source: Woodham Walter by Paricia Ryan



Map 15. Map of Heritage Assets

5. Woodham Walter Today

- 5.1. Today, Woodham Walter is a tranquil rural community with a population of 582¹¹ people. It offers scenic countryside views, historical sites, and a strong sense of local heritage.
- 5.2. The village Arcadian architecture features vernacular styles that over time have been adapted to the climate and available materials, with sloping roofs to prevent heavy snow accumulation and functional, compact forms examples of which are illustrated in the VDS.
- 5.3. The several original and separate settlements have over the years retained their individual identities whilst simultaneously maintaining their position in the united community. In particular, the number of dwellings in Woodham Walter increased significantly during the latter half of the 20th century as a result of the infill

¹¹ Source: UK Office for National Statistics

developments of Brook Close, Mead Pastures, Spar Hawkes and more recently by the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings at the Oak Farm Road, Old London Road and Tom Tit Lane crossroad junction.

- 5.4. More detail can be found in Character Assessment and Design Guide of the individual defined settlement areas.¹²
- 5.5. Woodham Walter is primarily agricultural with a central core and dispersed residential areas, having some significant demographic differences to the English national average. The data from the 2021 census demonstrates that there is little movement in the population levels that in the 2001 census numbered 583, in the 2011 census numbered 532 and in 2021 census numbered 582¹³. These numbers compare with the population in 1891 of 491 and in 1861 of 598¹⁴.
- 5.6. A large proportion of the population is approaching retirement age or fully retired (chart 1).
- 5.7. There is a difference between the Woodham Walter age profile and the national average in Chart 2. This illustrates a marked variance in the proportion of older people, 30% compared to 19.9%, nationally and conversely an under-representation in the younger adult population. The proportion of children is under 2% lower than the national average.

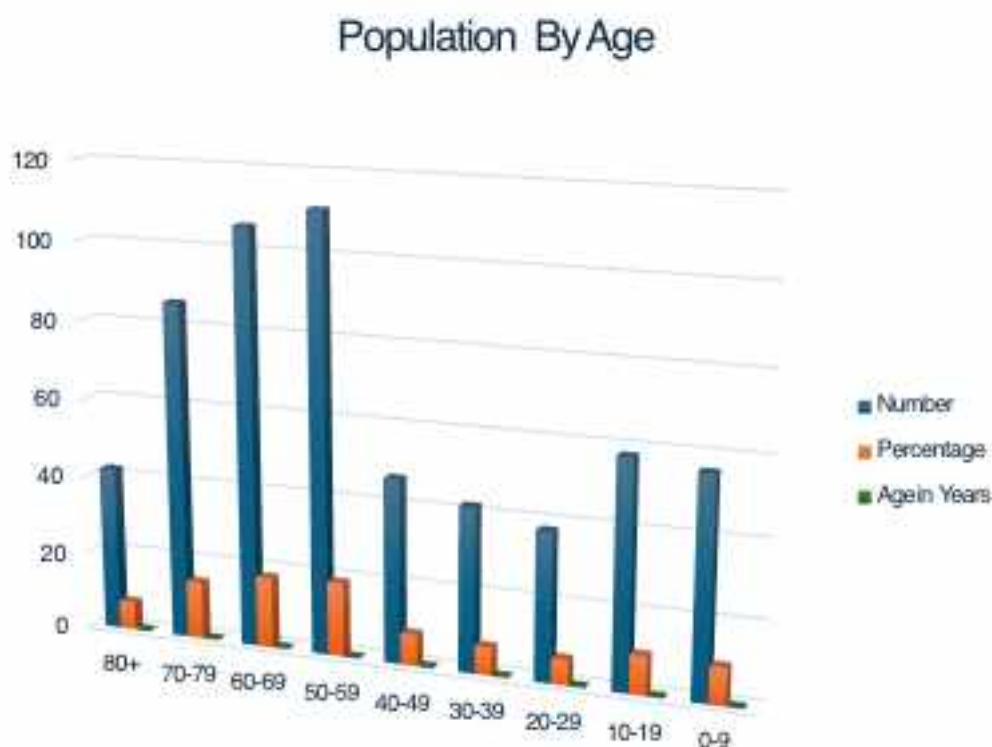
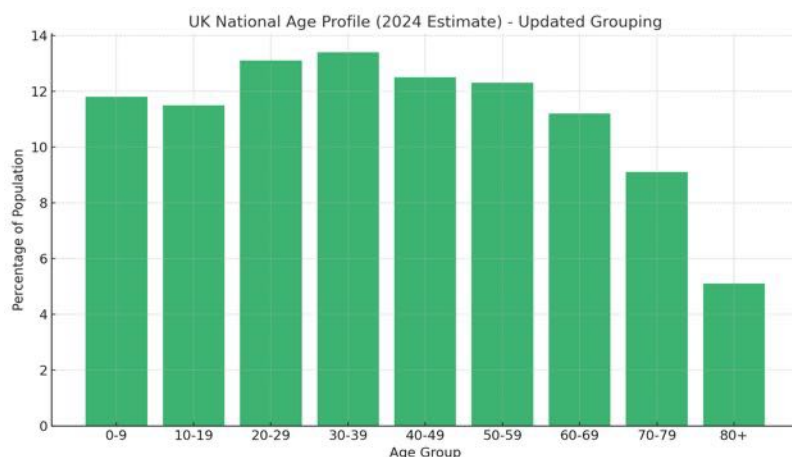


Chart 1.
Woodham Walter Population By Age

¹² WW VDS

¹³ Source: UK Office for National Statistics

¹⁴ Source: Research by Paricia Ryan



Bar chart showing the estimated UK national age profile for 2024. Each bar represents the percentage of the population within a specific age group, highlighting the broad distribution across age brackets.

Chart 2.

National Population By Age

- 5.8. Consultations within the Village and the Housing Needs Survey consistently report that residents are keen to attract younger people to Woodham Walter. However, it is likely that high house prices and the need to have personal transport because of the lack of amenities together with infrastructure limitations are a deterrent.¹⁵ The amount of rented property through housing associations or privately is significantly below the national average of 17% in the social rented sector, which includes housing associations and local authorities. Owner-occupiers remain the largest tenure group, with 88% of responding households either owning outright or owning with a mortgage.
- 5.9. Properties rarely come up for sale with prices in Q2 of 2025 varying from 2-bedroom property £450,000, 3-bedroom property £500,000, three 4-bed properties £490,000-£600,000 up to £5m for a larger property¹⁶. To fully purchase the cheapest property for sale on the open market (2-bed house at £450,000) assuming the availability of 10% deposit for a first-time buyer and assuming a multiple of 4 x annual salary for a mortgage, the buyer would need a salary of around £101,250¹⁷.

Dwelling Type	Woodham Walter		England		Essex	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Detached	158	62.70%	5,368,859	22.91%	191,338	30.54%
Semi-Detached	61	24.21%	7,378,304	31.48%	197,039	31.45%
Terraced	10	3.97%	5,381,432	22.96%	124,599	19.89%
Purpose Built Flats	1	0.40%	3,999,771	17.07%	93,638	14.95%
Flats: In Converted House	0	0.00%	821,153	3.50%	6,623	1.06%
Flats: In Commercial Building	3	1.19%	197,967	0.84%	4,034	0.64%
Caravan/Temporary Accommodation	19	7.54%	99,894	0.43%	5,241	0.84%

Chart 3. Woodham Walter Dwelling Type Schedule¹⁸

¹⁵ Source RCCE Housing Needs Survey

¹⁶ Source Rightmove

¹⁷ Source RCCE Housing Needs Survey

¹⁸ Source RCCE Housing Needs Survey

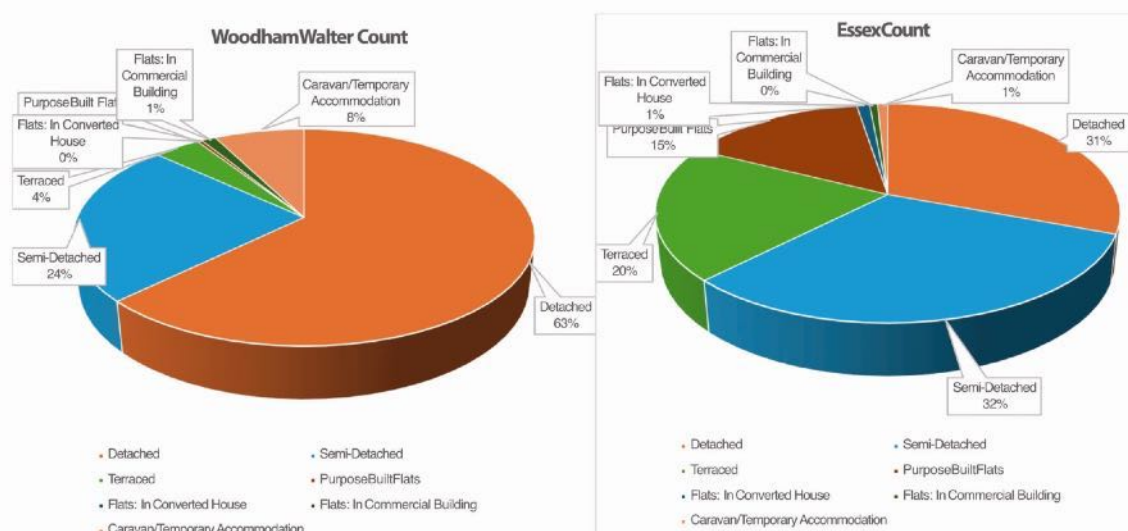


Chart 4.
Dwelling Types¹⁹

6. Vision for the Future

6.1. The future vision is for an inclusive, and where possible a sustainable village that preserves its rural character whilst sensitively embracing the challenges and changing socio-economic needs of its residents and environment. The Arcadian village may be viewed as a cultural landscape, which includes not just the physical space but also the social and cultural interactions that take place. The Plan seeks to protect this heritage through heritage designations, and community-based planning to ensure the preservation of both the tangible and intangible elements of the Arcadian identity.

6.1.1. Cultural landscapes are important because they provide insight into how people have interacted with their environment across history and reflect cultural identity and heritage.

6.1.2. A cultural landscape is defined as being a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources, that has been shaped by human activity and reflects the values, practices, and history of a society. It represents the combined work of nature and humans over time. There are generally three types of cultural landscapes:

6.1.3. Designed Landscapes – deliberately created by humans (e.g., parks, gardens, planned cities).

6.1.4. Organically Evolved Landscapes – developed over time through human interaction with the environment, often in response to social, economic, or environmental factors (e.g., agricultural terraces, rural settlements).

6.1.5. Associative Cultural Landscapes – primarily valued for the religious, cultural, or historical associations with a place, rather than physical design (e.g., sacred mountains, pilgrimage routes).

6.2. The intent is to make the Parish a great place to live that will be protected and enhanced as a result of the Plan, assisted by the excellent community spirit keeps the Village as a place it can be proud of. With facilities and services being maintained or

¹⁹ Source Census 2021

improved so that all members of the community can meet day-to-day needs and minimise the need for a car.

- 6.3. The Village contains a number of much-valued amenities such as the public houses, the church, the Village Hall, Bell Meadow, the golf courses and Woodham Walter Common which the Plan will help protect and support. Very modest growth in new housing, built to high environmental standards, will help sustain these valued assets, helping to meet local housing need and be sensitively integrated into the Parish, taking account of local characteristics and settlement patterns, strengthening and reinforcing the positive character of both the Village built and natural environments.

7. Objectives

- 7.1. **Community Well-being:** To ensure that any development of housing will be contained within the defined settlement areas (Map5) not precluding possible windfall proposals, in conformity with the Housing Needs Survey and the VDS; that any commercial enterprises will be supported where conversion of redundant agricultural buildings is proposed and that community spaces will be retained and enhanced, with services accessible to all.
- 7.2. **Environmental Sustainability:** To protect and enhance the local environment, promote green spaces, wildlife corridors and encourage sustainable living.
- 7.3. **Heritage Preservation:** To maintain and protect the historical identity of Woodham Walter while enabling balanced development in the broadest sense by focussing on preserving the cultural and architectural heritage of the community, reflecting its historical and agricultural foundation.
- 7.4. **Transport and Connectivity:** To improve transportation options and connectivity to nearby towns and cities while minimizing traffic congestion and enhancing road safety.



Chart 5. Objectives

7.5. Development Criteria:

All proposals for new development (residential, commercial, or mixed-use including extensions and retrofit) must demonstrate that they:

7.6. Minimise Carbon Emissions:

- 7.6.1. Incorporate measures to reduce energy consumption, such as passive solar design, high-performance insulation, and low-carbon technologies.
- 7.6.2. Achieve energy efficiency ratings that meet or exceed local and national building regulations.

7.7. Promote Sustainable Transport:

- 7.7.1. Provide adequate and safe cycling and pedestrian facilities within the development.
- 7.7.2. Prioritize sustainable modes of transport by integrating public transport hubs, car-sharing schemes, and electric vehicle charging points.
- 7.7.3. Encourage car-free housing in areas with high public transport accessibility.

7.8. Enhance Green Spaces:

- 7.8.1. Protect existing green spaces and create new parks, community gardens, and biodiversity zones.
- 7.8.2. Incorporate green infrastructure such as green roofs, rain gardens, and permeable surfaces to manage stormwater and enhance ecological value.

7.9. Water Efficiency and Management:

- 7.9.1. Incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage water runoff and mitigate flood risks.
- 7.9.2. Promote the use of water-efficient appliances, rainwater harvesting systems, and greywater recycling in new developments.

7.10. Design for a Climate Emergency:

- 7.10.1. The Parish Council recognises the pressing need to respond to the climate emergency through all new development. This policy supports the transition to a low-carbon future in line with national legislation, the Climate Change Act 2008, and the UK Net Zero Strategy. Development proposals must show how they incorporate climate-responsive principles through a Sustainability Statement submitted as part of the planning application.
- 7.10.2. This policy is in line with MDC's Climate Action Strategy and reinforces the role of neighbourhood planning in driving locally led solutions to global challenges.

8. Spatial Strategy

- 8.1. Maldon District Council has identified sites across the District suitable for residential development, including affordable housing. The sites are being technically assessed in terms of their suitability, availability and achievability, which does not include viability, for the period of the next Local Development Plan which at present will be up to 2043 and is currently the likely end period of the new MDC plan.
- 8.2. This technical assessment procedure is an initial policy of high-level assessment and follows the requirements of Government policy on assessing sites known as The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)²⁰. HELAA forms a key

²⁰ Source: Maldon District Council

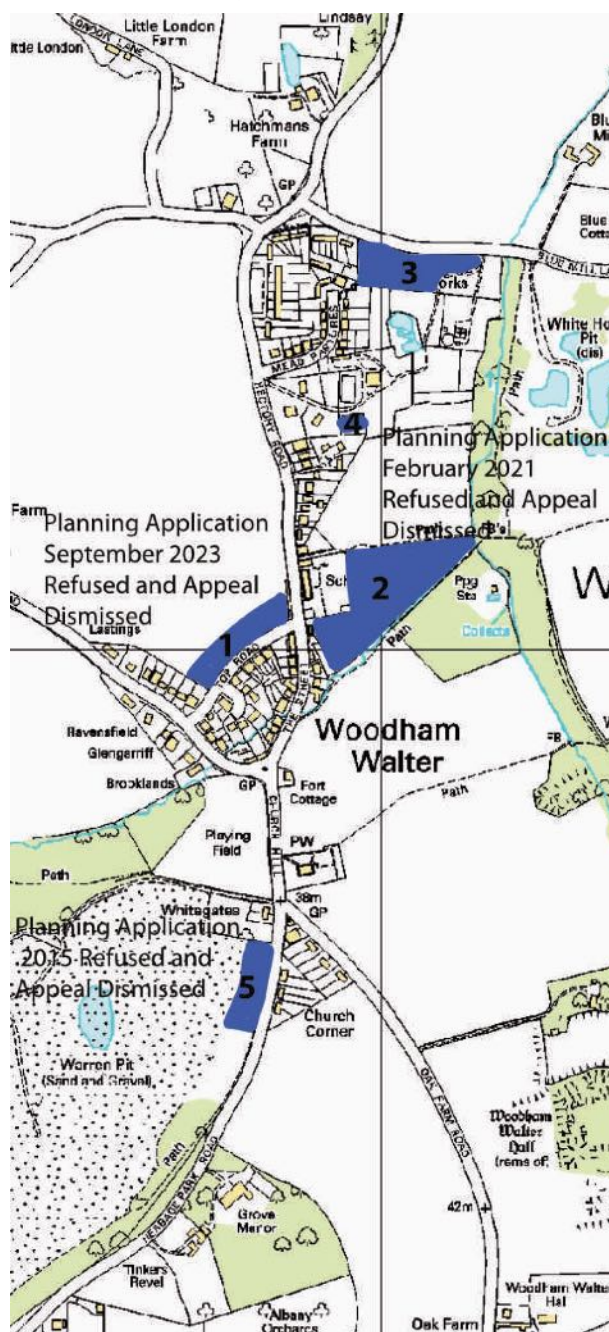
component of the evidence base to inform policies and the choices for land for development in the review of the Local Development Plan. More detailed assessments for the sites that could be taken forward as of October 2025 are on-going

8.3. A site assessed as falling into the acceptable category does not mean that planning permission will be automatically granted. It is for the Local Development Plan to determine which of those sites are the most suitable to meet those needs following public consultation on the suitable growth options dependent upon the extent of policy and practical constraints including energy-efficiency and sustainability.

8.4. Three sites have been identified in Woodham Walter by MDC of which Top Road (1) and the land adjacent to the school (2), both sites being outside of the defined settlement area, have been subject to recent planning applications. Both of the applications were recommended for refusal by the Parish Council after public meetings, refused by the District Council as the local planning authority and both dismissed at appeal. The third is land between Mead Pastures and Blue Mill (3).

8.5. Other sites suggested by respondents to the HNS include land behind Spar Hawkes (no access and effect on the setting of an historic asset) (4), ribbon development along Herbage Park Road (5), wildlife site that has also been rejected for planning permission. Land along Bassetts Lane was also identified.

8.6. There was however a strong response, 60% strongly agreed or agreed, from Residents who considered that housing outside of the areas of defined settlement would be inappropriate. An overwhelming 75% of residents wished to see the natural environment, trees, hedgerows and views protected from future development and 63% of residents wished to see the historic settings of buildings, environment, field layouts and archaeology protected from any development.



Map 16. Identified Possible Development Sites

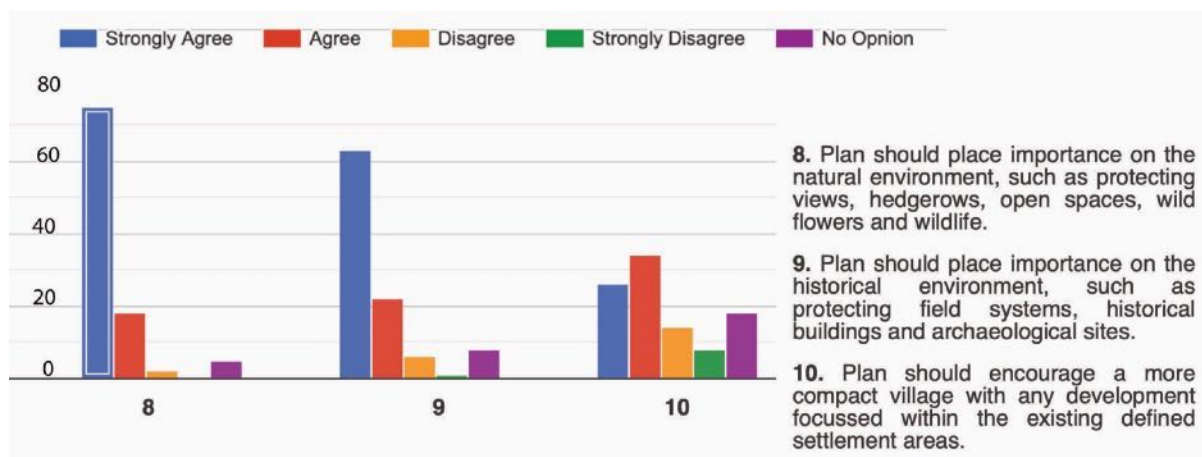


Chart 6. Place Survey Questions and Answers

- 8.7. The NPPF sets out the benefits of early pre-application engagement as significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community. This encourages applicants to “work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.”²¹
- 8.8. Community involvement at an early stage can change the form and nature of a development for the better – it affects land use. The National Design Guide highlights the vital role that communities can play in the design process. This encourages and supports a higher standard of local community engagement in the design process of development proposals.

9. Housing Need.

- 9.1. The HNS analysis indicated a small, sensitively designed development of up to 10 homes was needed including:
- 6 affordable rented homes (1–3 bedrooms).
 - 2 shared ownership homes.
 - 2 open market bungalows to support local downsizing.
- 9.2. The suggested mix reflects the diversity of need within the parish and aims to support younger residents, families, and older people wishing to remain in Woodham Walter.
- 9.3. However, views on new housing were mixed with 61% of respondents of the HNS supporting a small-scale development (4–8 homes) to meet local needs. Conditional support favoured modest, well-designed, homes that respect the village’s character and are supported by appropriate infrastructure. The Place Survey indicated a different outcome suggesting a maximum of 6 dwellings were required.

²¹ Source: NPPF

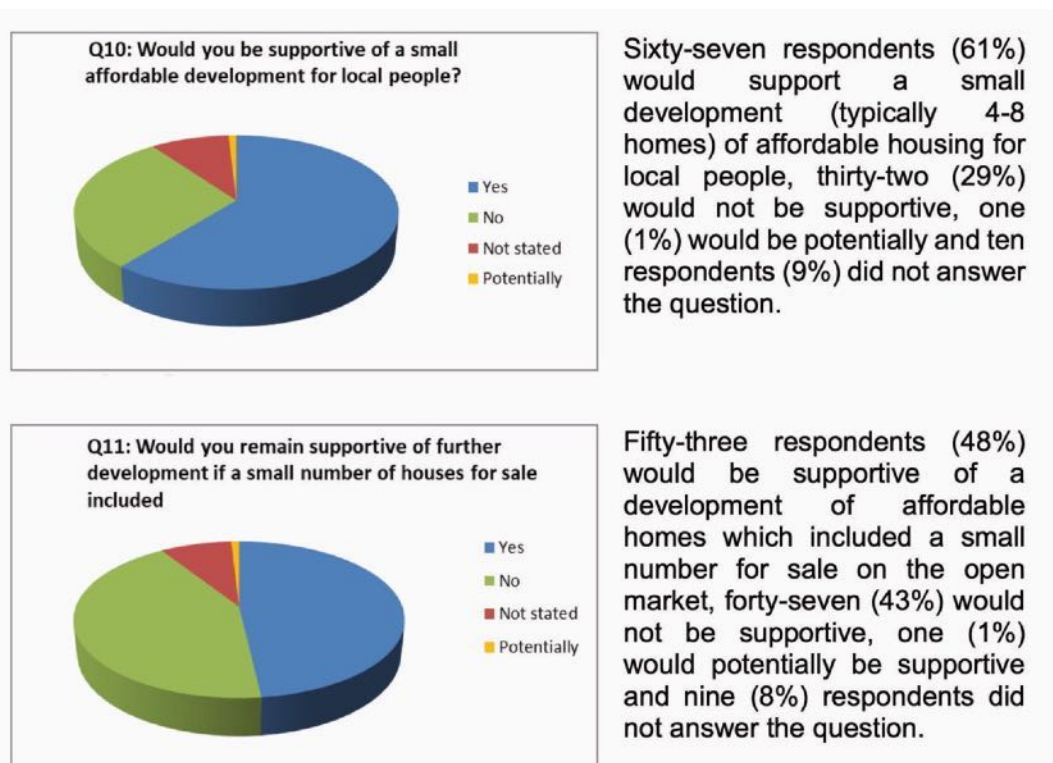


Chart 7. Support For Development²²

10. Design and Construction Principles for Energy-efficient and Sustainable Development

10.1. Design and Construction Principles for New Housing and Extensions

- 10.1.1. Proposed development should reflect the traditional rural vernacular in building materials, layout, and landscaping in accordance with the VDS guidance.
- 10.1.2. Passive solar design by encouraging building orientation and layout to maximize natural light and passive solar gain.
- 10.1.3. New development, alteration or extension should have improved thermal efficiency by the use of high-quality, thermally efficient building materials, to achieve a standard equal to or better than Passivhaus or BREEAM.
- 10.1.4. Sustainable materials locally sourced or low-carbon and recycled or renewable materials should be used where they complement or add to the character of the building, building complex or the place.
- 10.1.5. Homes should be designed to provide adaptability for future changes, such as increased homeworking and aging populations.

10.2. Energy Efficiency Standards

- 10.2.1. All new developments must meet or better current UK building regulations for energy efficiency as well as constructional requirements.

²² Source RCCE HNS

10.2.2. Integration of renewable energy with the incorporation of on-site renewable energy sources, such as solar photovoltaic panels and efficient heating systems with the use of low-carbon systems, such as air source or ground source heat pumps.

10.2.3. Installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging points to all new dwellings.

10.3. Water Efficiency and Management

10.3.1. Low-flow toilets, taps, and showers to be specified to reduce water consumption.

10.3.2. Rainwater Harvesting to collect and reuse rainwater for non-potable purposes such as water butts or collective systems for grey water.

10.3.3. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS): Implement SuDS to manage surface water runoff and reduce flood risk.

11. Principles of Sustainable Development:

All development within the Neighbourhood Plan area must adhere to the following principles:

11.1. Environmental Sustainability:

11.1.1. Minimize negative impacts on the natural environment, including air, water, and soil quality.

11.1.2. Incorporate energy-efficient designs and renewable energy solutions such as solar panels, heat pumps, and sustainable materials.

11.1.3. Protect and enhance biodiversity through the conservation of green spaces, wildlife corridors, and the creation of ecological networks.

11.1.4. Ensure the efficient use of resources, including water, energy, and building materials, by promoting high standards of construction and low-carbon technologies.

11.2. Social Sustainability:

11.2.1. Promote affordable, accessible housing that meets the needs of a diverse population, including families, older residents, and those with disabilities.

11.2.2. Provide infrastructure that supports social inclusion, such as accessible public transport, schools, healthcare, and community spaces.

11.2.3. Encourage active lifestyles by incorporating pedestrian and cycling pathways, green spaces, and recreational facilities.

11.2.4. Ensure that developments contribute positively to the community's health and well-being through access to green spaces, clean air, and safe public spaces.

11.3. Economic Sustainability:

11.3.1. Support a diverse, resilient local economy by fostering opportunities for small businesses, innovation, and sustainable industries.

11.3.2. Promote local employment by integrating mixed-use developments that provide opportunities for retail, office, and community spaces.

- 11.3.3. Encourage the use of locally sourced materials and labour in the construction and operation of new developments.

12. Development Criteria:

All proposals for new development (residential, commercial, or mixed-use) must demonstrate that they:

12.1. Minimise Carbon Emissions:

- 12.1.1. Incorporate measures to reduce energy consumption, such as passive solar design, high-performance insulation, and low-carbon technologies.
- 12.1.2. Achieve energy efficiency ratings that meet or better local and national Building Regulations.

12.2. Promote Sustainable Transport:

- 12.2.1. Provide adequate and safe cycling and pedestrian facilities within the development and connecting the development to the local services and facilities as well as any new development
- 12.2.2. Prioritize sustainable modes of transport by integrating public transport, car-sharing schemes, and electric vehicle charging points.
- 12.2.3. Encourage car-free housing in areas with public transport accessibility.

12.3. Enhance Green Spaces:

- 12.3.1. Protect existing green spaces and create new parks, community gardens, and biodiversity zones.
- 12.3.2. Incorporate green infrastructure such as green roofs, rain gardens, and permeable surfaces to manage stormwater and enhance ecological value.

12.4. Water Efficiency and Management:

- 12.4.1. Incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage water runoff and mitigate flood risks.
- 12.4.2. Promote the use of water-efficient appliances, rainwater harvesting systems, and greywater recycling in new developments.

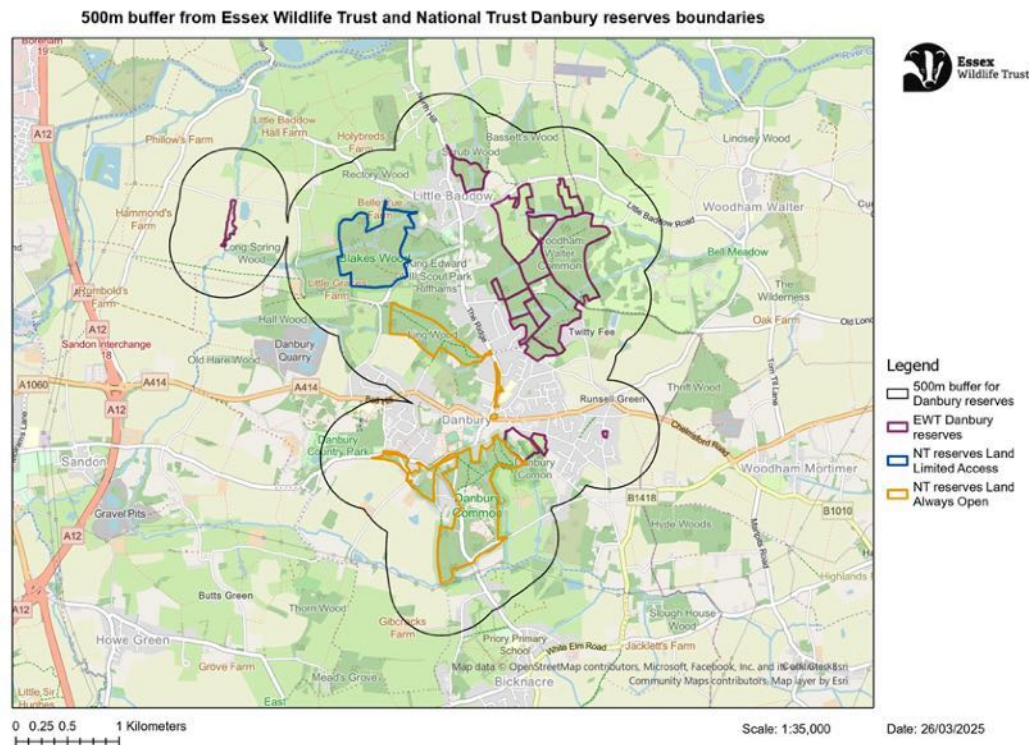
12.5. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure:

- 12.5.1. Woodham Walter Common forms part of the Danbury Ridge Nature Reserves (101 ha total), a mosaic of SSSIs managed by Essex Wildlife Trust, linking acid grassland, heathland and ancient woodland habitats in the area.
- 12.5.2. Danbury & Little Baddow Ridge is a distinctive and ecologically rich landscape, characterised by a mixture of ancient woodlands, heathlands, and grasslands. Sites in NT and EWT ownership are shown on the overview plan appended, these include nationally designated Blake's Wood and Lingwood Common (SSSI), Danbury Common (SSSI), Woodham Walter

Common (SSSI), and Waterhall Meadows Local Wildlife Site (LoWS)/Essex Wildlife Trust nature reserve, Long Spring Wood LoWS, Hall Wood LoWS and Old Hare Wood LoWS. There is also third-party land and ancient woodland forming part of the wider mosaic. These sites are underpinned by glacial sands and gravels from the Anglian Glaciation, which support rare woodland types and uncommon flora including Early Purple Orchid, Common Twayblade, and Greater Butterfly-Orchid.²³

- 12.5.3. Woodham Walter Common is designated a SSSI. It consists of 80 ha of biologically rich woodland, heath and valley stream habitats of high ecological importance and is accessible from several points within the DA.
- 12.5.4. Oak, hornbeam and sessile oak woodland set on glacial sand & gravel over London Clay with former heathland with two botanically diverse stream valleys. There are acid grassland and marsh zones, notably in the Poores' Piece and Pheasanthouse Farm and Wood sections. Scrubs Wood has an ancient hornbeam/chestnut coppice, wood anemone carpets and wild service tree.
- 12.5.5. Rare ground flora includes pill sedge, broad-leaved helleborine, lady-fern and tormentil. Also, can be found early purple orchid, common twayblade, and greater butterfly-orchid.
- 12.5.6. Significant fauna includes dormice, hawfinches, nuthatches, nightingales blackbird, blackcap, blue tit, carrion crow, chaffinch, chiff chaff, coal tit, goldcrest, great spotted woodpecker, great tit, green woodpecker, jackdaw jay, lesser spotted woodpecker, long tailed tit, magpie, mistle thrush, pheasant, robin, song thrush, sparrow hawk, stock dove, tree creeper, wood pigeon, wren, and butterflies such as brimstone, speckled wood, small copper and ringlet,.
- 12.5.7. Notable fungi include fly agaric.
- 12.5.8. There are important colonies of bats, notably the incredibly rare Barbastelle species. They are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and are also listed as Near Threatened globally on the IUCN Red List.
- 12.5.9. The Common has two rare spring fed peat bogs, one stream fed bog and three areas of bell heather heath of varying sizes which might be extended as heathland habitat is rare in the area.
- 12.5.10. The EWT are hoping to create a buffer zone to protect against inappropriate development that may detract from the importance of this site. Map17. The details have been jointly set out in correspondence by the National Trust and the Essex Wildlife Trust to the Chelmsford City Council of the 16th June 2025 referencing the Recreational Impact of Strategic Growth on the Danbury & Little Baddow Ridge Landscape that encompasses Woodham Walter Common.

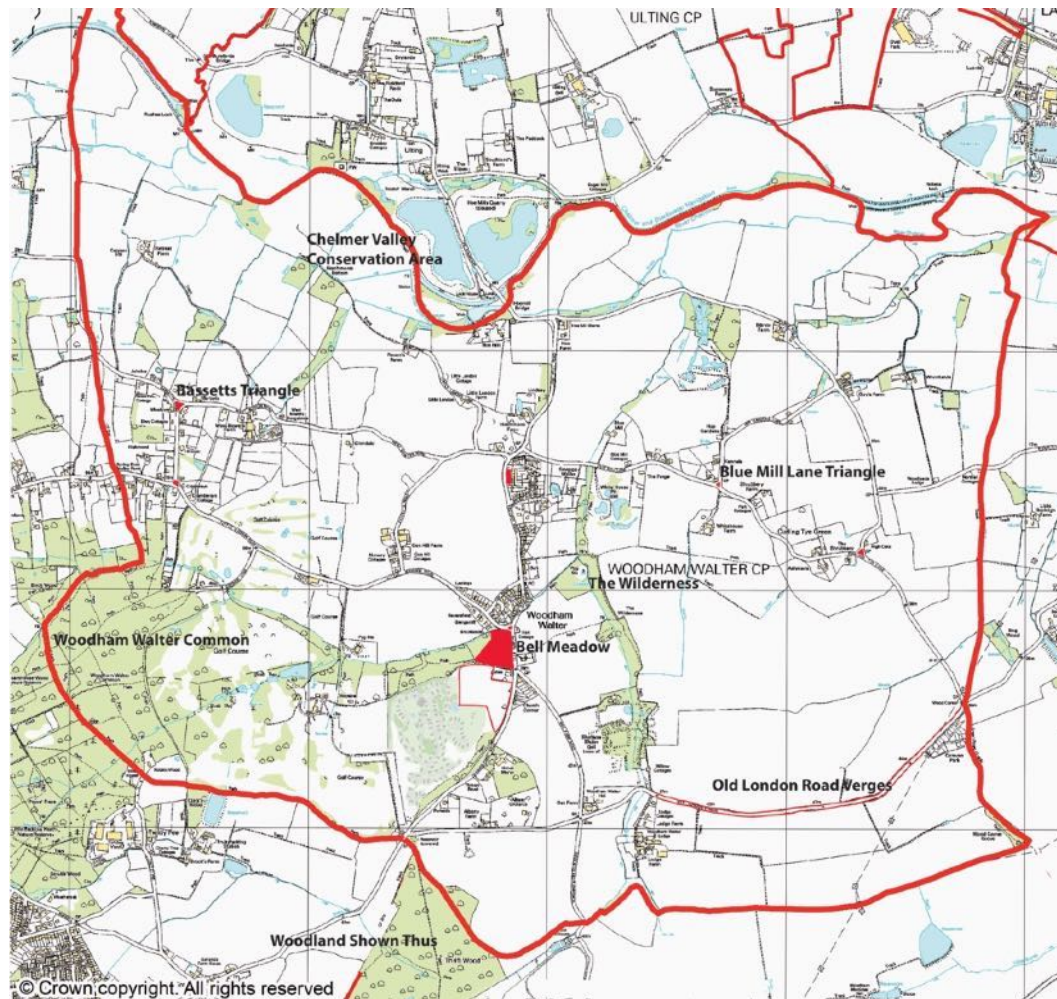
²³ Source: Essex Wildlife Trust and National Trust Correspondence



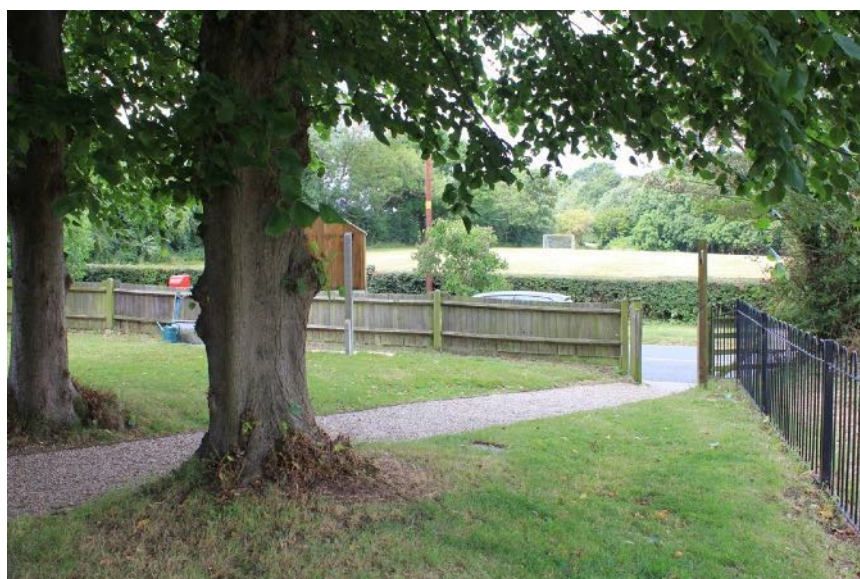
Map 17. Woodham Walter Common and Danbury Ridge Proposed Buffer Zone²⁴

- 12.5.11. The Village has a pattern of newly created hedgerows replacing those lost as a result of the Agriculture Act 1947 when farmers were incentivised to improve productivity by removing hedgerows, filling in ponds, draining wetlands, and clearing "unproductive" land. This major change in policy occurred in recognition of hedgerows' biodiversity, landscape, and historical value. The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 were introduced under the Environment Act 1995 to protect "important hedgerows" from removal.
- 12.5.12. The hedgerows and grass verges of the Village's lanes provide excellent wildlife corridors enabling the wildlife to transit between areas. Of particular interest are the verges to the Old London Road as outlined in the ECC Minerals Survey.
- 12.5.13. Any new development should demonstrate protection of local wildlife by ensuring that they do not adversely affect local wildlife habitats, particularly in areas like Woodham Walter Common SSSI and ensure the continuity of wildlife corridors.
- 12.5.14. Green Spaces are necessary for community wellbeing and to maintain the character of the Areas of Defined Settlement. It is expected that the provision of green spaces, community gardens, and tree planting to enhance biodiversity and provide recreational areas will be included in any proposals.
- 12.5.15. Landscaping proposals should, in all instances, utilise native plant species to promote local biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

²⁴ Source: EWT



Map 18. Green and Forest Spaces

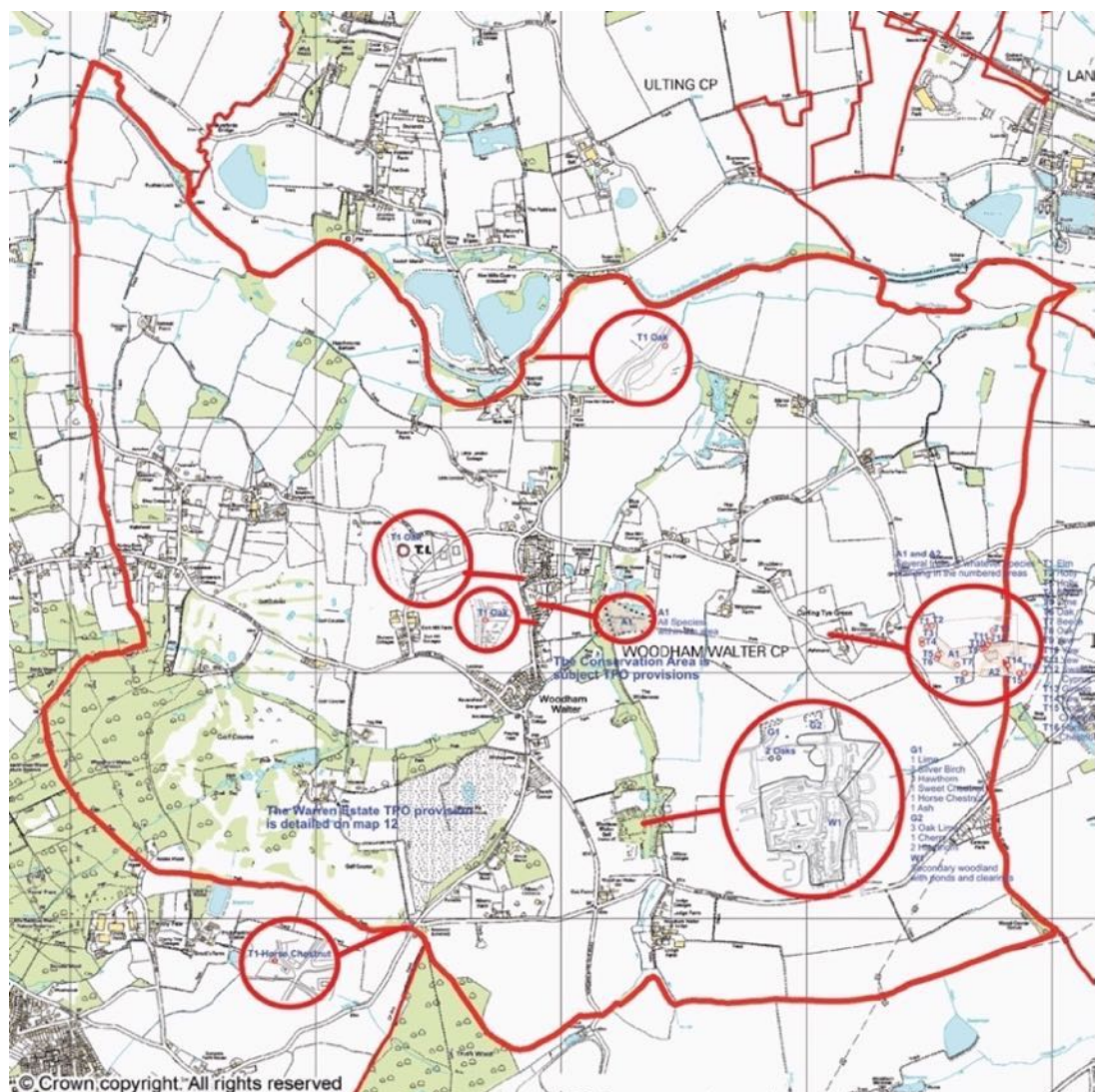


Bell Meadow from Footpath FP14

12.6. Tree Preservation Orders.

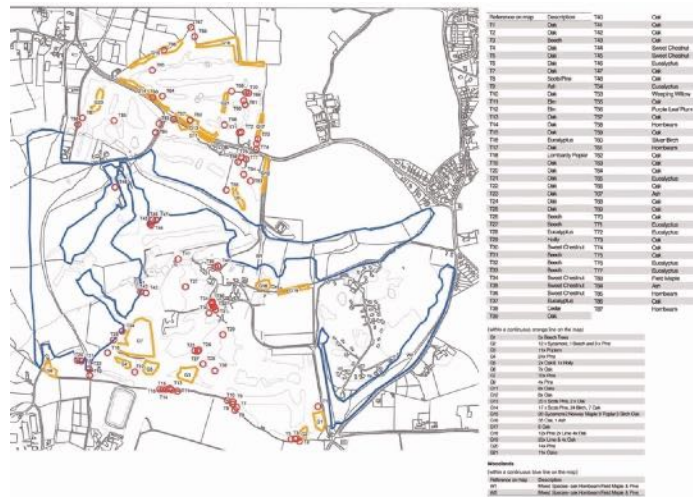
12.6.1. A number of Tree Preservation Orders are extant over the Parish and these are shown on Map 13. There is a blanket Order over the Warren Estate and the Village core is similarly treated. These are illustrated on maps 18, 19 and 20.

12.6.2. Trees within the Conservation Area are subject to special provisions. Six weeks' notice must be given to the local authority before works are carried out to any tree in the area. This does not include trees whose trunks have a diameter of less than 75mm above ground level. The notice should include an indicative location plan, details of the species of the tree, and a description of the proposed work in metres (e.g. 'height reduction by 2 metres').

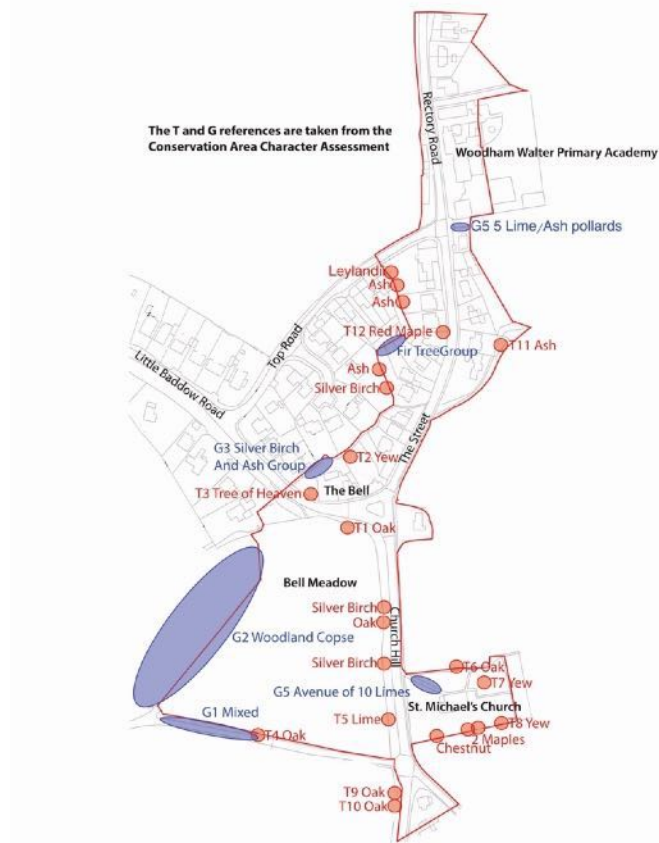


Map 19 Parish TPO's²⁵

²⁵ Source MDC



Map 20. Warren Estate TPO's²⁶



Map 21.
Central Conservation Area and Significant Trees

²⁶ Source: MDC

13. Community and Wellbeing

- 13.1. The strength of a rural village lies in its people. A connected, healthy, and inclusive community is at the heart of long-term wellbeing and quality of life by fostering a thriving, caring community where residents feel safe, valued, and able to participate fully in village life.
- 13.2. Affordable housing is a key issue and by Including a mix of housing types and tenures to meet local needs will ensure affordability for all residents.
- 13.3. Maintain and support spaces for community activities, such as halls or green spaces, to foster social interaction.
- 13.4. Suitably designed homes to promote physical and mental well-being, with access to nature and recreational spaces.
- 13.5. The HNS feedback reflects a community that is both thoughtful and divided on the issue of new housing development in Woodham Walter. While some residents express openness to carefully planned growth, particularly to support younger families and maintain the village's vitality, others are concerned about preserving the rural character, avoiding overdevelopment, and ensuring that any changes align with local needs and infrastructure capacity. This balance suggests that further open and transparent engagement will be essential to explore concerns and opportunities together.²⁷
- 13.6. The following themes emerged consistently from community feedback, highlighting both support and concern around future development:

13.6.1. Infrastructure Limitations: Several residents raised concerns about the village's capacity to support additional housing. While not always explicitly detailed, there were references to the need for careful planning around access routes, particularly for agricultural machinery, and the importance of maintaining essential services. The limited availability of public transport, the absence of local shops and healthcare facilities, and the already congested A414 were all cited as constraints. Some respondents questioned whether the village's infrastructure could realistically support new residents, especially those without private vehicles. These comments suggest that any future development should be accompanied by infrastructure assessments to ensure sustainability and minimal disruption.

13.6.2. Protecting the Rural and Environmental Character: Woodham Walter's rural charm and surrounding countryside are clearly valued by the community. Many respondents expressed a desire to avoid development that would impact views, encroach on productive farmland, or alter the village's natural setting. There is a strong preference for preserving the environmental integrity of the area, with suggestions to avoid large fields and instead focus on small, less productive plots including brownfield sites. Several residents emphasised that the village should remain a distinct, Arcadian settlement so as to not risk becoming a suburb of Maldon or Chelmsford. Concerns were also raised about the impact of development on

²⁷ Source: RCCE

local wildlife, the historic landscape, and the peaceful character that draws people to live in the village.



Bassetts Lane Green Triangle

13.6.3. There is a noticeable concern about the scale and impact of potential development. Some residents feel that the village already has sufficient social housing, while others worry that any new development could lead to overcrowding or fundamentally change the character of the village. A number of comments reflected scepticism about whether new housing is genuinely needed, or whether it is being driven by speculative interests. There were also concerns that development could lead to urban sprawl, joining Woodham Walter to nearby Maldon and Danbury and eroding its identity. Several respondents stressed that any new homes should be modest in scale and located within the existing village footprint to avoid unnecessary expansion.

14. Heritage and Conservation

14.1. Woodham Walter has 22 areas of defined settlement (see Map 5) the character of each is defined in the VDS at Appendix 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The distinct areas each have their own unique, individual character and 'sense of place'. These are areas where properties share a similar appearance and relate to each other. In addition, there are two Conservation Areas, namely the central village area and the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation.

14.2. **The Village Conservation Area** was designated and approved on 2nd March 2017 and encompasses the historic core of the Village. A full character assessment can be found on the MDC website at:

https://www.maldon.gov.uk/downloads/file/19630/woodham_walter_ca_character_statement

14.2.1. Being a Conservation area, specific permission is required for works to all trees unless measuring less than 7.5cm in diameter, measured at 1.5m from

ground level or in the case of trees that have more than one stem, if any stem meets the above criteria.

14.2.2. Planning permission is required for the demolition of any unlisted building with a volume of more than 115 cubic metres (4062 sq.ft.).

14.2.3. Planning permission is required to demolish a gate, fence, wall or railing over 1 metre high next to a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway) or public open space; or over 2 metres high elsewhere

14.2.4. Planning permission is required for alterations to the roof of a dwelling house resulting in a material alteration to its shape, notably dormer windows

14.2.5. Planning permission is needed for the installation of a satellite dish on a chimney, wall or roof slope which faces onto and is visible from a public highway

14.2.6. Planning permission is needed to clad any part of the exterior of a dwelling house with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles.

14.3. **An Article 4 Direction** was applied on the 28th March 2017 relating to the following properties:

Church Cottage
Lynton House
Ash Cottage
1&2 The Maples
1&2 Almshouses
Severn House
Redbrick Cottage
Wendover Cottage
Ferndale
Fort Cottage

14.4. **The Article 4 Direction applies to:**

14.4.1. The alteration of front doors or windows, including the formation of new windows and doors.

14.4.2. The alteration of the front roof slope, including the replacement of the existing roof coverings with a different material or the installation of a micro-generation unit.

14.4.3. Alterations to or the removal of a chimney on a house or buildings associated with the house.

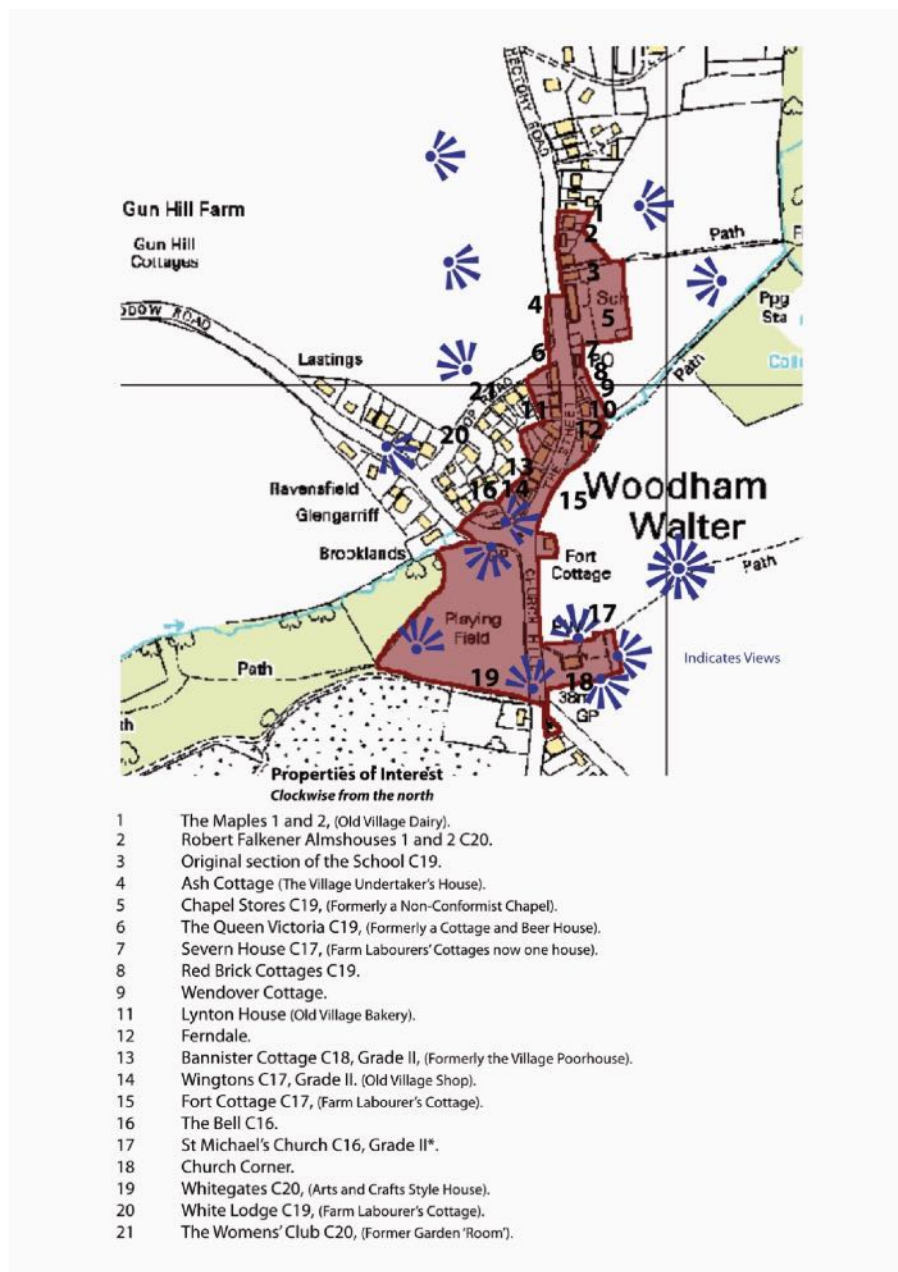
14.4.4. The painting over of unpainted brickwork.



The Iconic Bell Public House

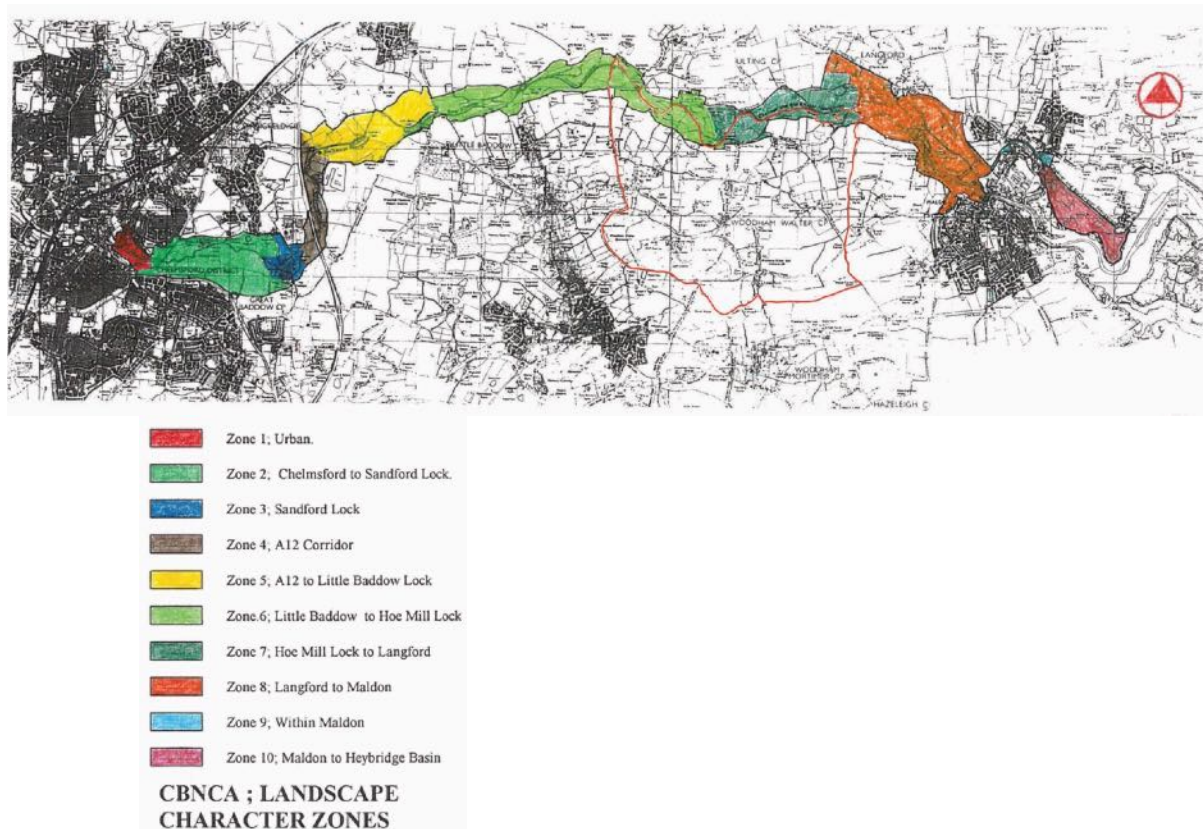


Willow Hall Cottages



Map 22. Central Conservation Area With Vistas

- 14.5. **The Second Conservation Area** is that of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation valley. This runs from Chelmsford to Maldon and follows the line of the waterway. It is divided into zones and Zones 6 and 7 fall into the DA (Map 17).
- 14.5.1. The Zone 6 area (Little Baddow to Hoe Mill Lock) is quiet, rural and without development. The Conservation Area Character Assessment states that it has the most valuable landscape of the CA with views from the waterway up onto the slopes of the Wooded Danbury Ridge area
- 14.5.2. The Zone 7 area (Hoe Mill to Langford Pumping Station) is described as having a flat open landscape with wider open spaces as pasture and large arable fields providing a good wildlife habitat.



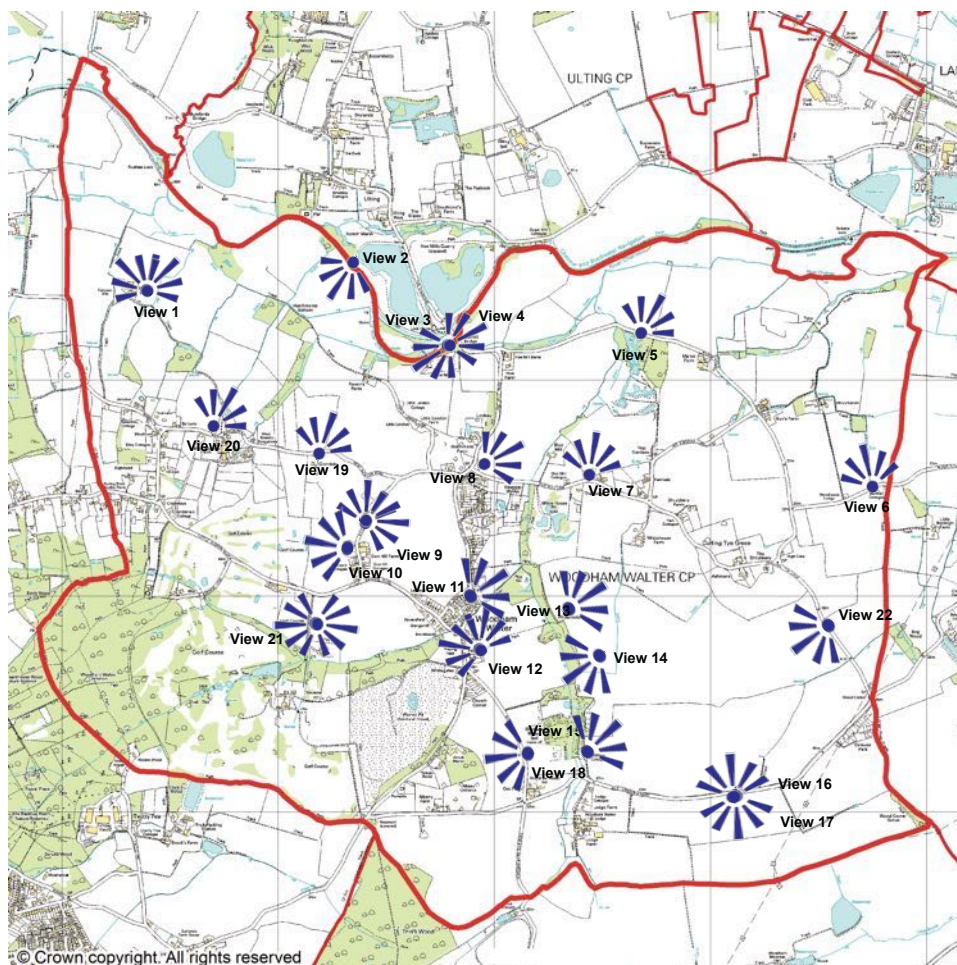
Map 23. Chelmer and Blackwater Conservation Area²⁸

- 14.6. For each of the twenty-two areas of defined settlement identified, there is description in the WW VDS together with a map for of the area. Alongside this the positive characteristics of the area have been categorised as follows:-
- 14.6.1. Landscape and views.
 - 14.6.2. Buildings.
 - 14.6.3. Valued Green Spaces.
 - 14.6.4. Streets and Paths.
 - 14.6.5. Ambience.
 - 14.6.6. Heritage Assets.
- 14.7. These characteristics should be considered in any proposed plans for the future development of the character areas by ensuring that new developments respect the architectural style and materials of existing buildings, particularly in conservation areas.
- 14.8. Sensitive Retrofitting: When upgrading historic buildings, use methods that improve energy efficiency without compromising their significance.
- 14.9. These guidelines aim to ensure that housing developments in Woodham Walter are energy-efficient, sustainable, and in harmony with the local environment and community. For more detailed information, refer to the Woodham Walter Village Design Statement annexed to this document.

²⁸ Source: ECC Planning

15. Locally Valued Key Views

- 15.1. The Plan provides the opportunity to identify and protect specific, important and locally valued views.
- 15.2. To be identified as locally important and 'valued' they should satisfy at least one of the following criteria:
 - 15.2.1. Be visible from a publicly accessible location (including public rights of way or public highways).
 - 15.2.2. Be selected for a specific reason i.e. overreaching far view, view to an historical or public interest building.
 - 15.2.3. The quality and distinctiveness of the visual amenity.
 - 15.2.4. Have an historic link to an important event or person.



Map 24. Important Scenic Views of the Parish

- 15.3. Map 16 shows the key views identified by residents, overlaid on the Ordnance Survey map.

View 1 Northwards from Retreat Farm overlooking the Chelmer Valley.



View 2 South-westwards from the Chelmer overlooking woodland.



View 3 South-westwards from the Chelmer overlooking undulating fields.



View 4 Eastwards along Chelmer Valley.



View 5 From Manor Road over Chelmer water meadows.



View 6 From Cut-a-Thwart Lane towards Woodlands.



View 7 From The Cats across the Chelmer Valley.



View 8 From Hoe Mill Road across undulating fields.



View 9 From Stivvy's Road across to the Village Centre and across the Chelmer Valley.



View 10 From Gunhill Westwards.



View 11 From The Queen Victoria PH towards the Wilderness and towards Gun Hill.



View 12 From the Church across the Village in three directions.



View 13 From the Wilderness across Whitehouse Farm fields.



View 14 From the Whitehouse Farm fields across the Wilderness.



View 15 From the Willow Cottages across Whitehouse Farm fields.



View 16 From Old London Road across Whitehouse Farm fields.



View 16 From Old London Road Eastwards



View 17 From Old London Road towards Lodge Farm Southwards.



View 17 From Old London Road towards Lodge Farm Westwards.



View 17 From Old London Road Across Lodge Farm to Thrift wood.



View 18 From Oak Farm Road Towards Herbage Park Road.



View 19 From West Bowers Road to Little London and the Chelmer Valley.



View 20 From West Bowers across the Chelmer Valley.



View 21 From the pumping station track 360 across The Warren Estate and Woods and across to the Village and Church.



View 22 From Curling Tye Lane across the across Whitehouse Farm fields.



16. Commercial & Local Economy.

- 16.1. A strong and sustainable local economy is vital to the future of the Village. The NDP is intended to encourage local business and services and encourage appropriate new enterprise to ensure that the village can sustain itself economically whilst protecting its unique and distinct rural character.
- 16.2. Support will be given for small-scale, sustainable commercial development, especially in keeping with the village character.
- 16.3. In the 2023 Maldon District Rural Facilities Survey²⁹ Woodham Walter, in terms of the extent of facilities available to each local community, was classified as a Medium Sized Village although having a low point score for the grade. Subsequent to this grading there has been a removal of the Shopper Bus Service making residents rely on personal transport or home deliveries making villager life less sustainable.
- 16.4. In the broadest sense Woodham Walter's facilities form an important component of a rural community and economy and include not only those for meeting and maintaining a social lifestyle but also those for education, sport and leisure.

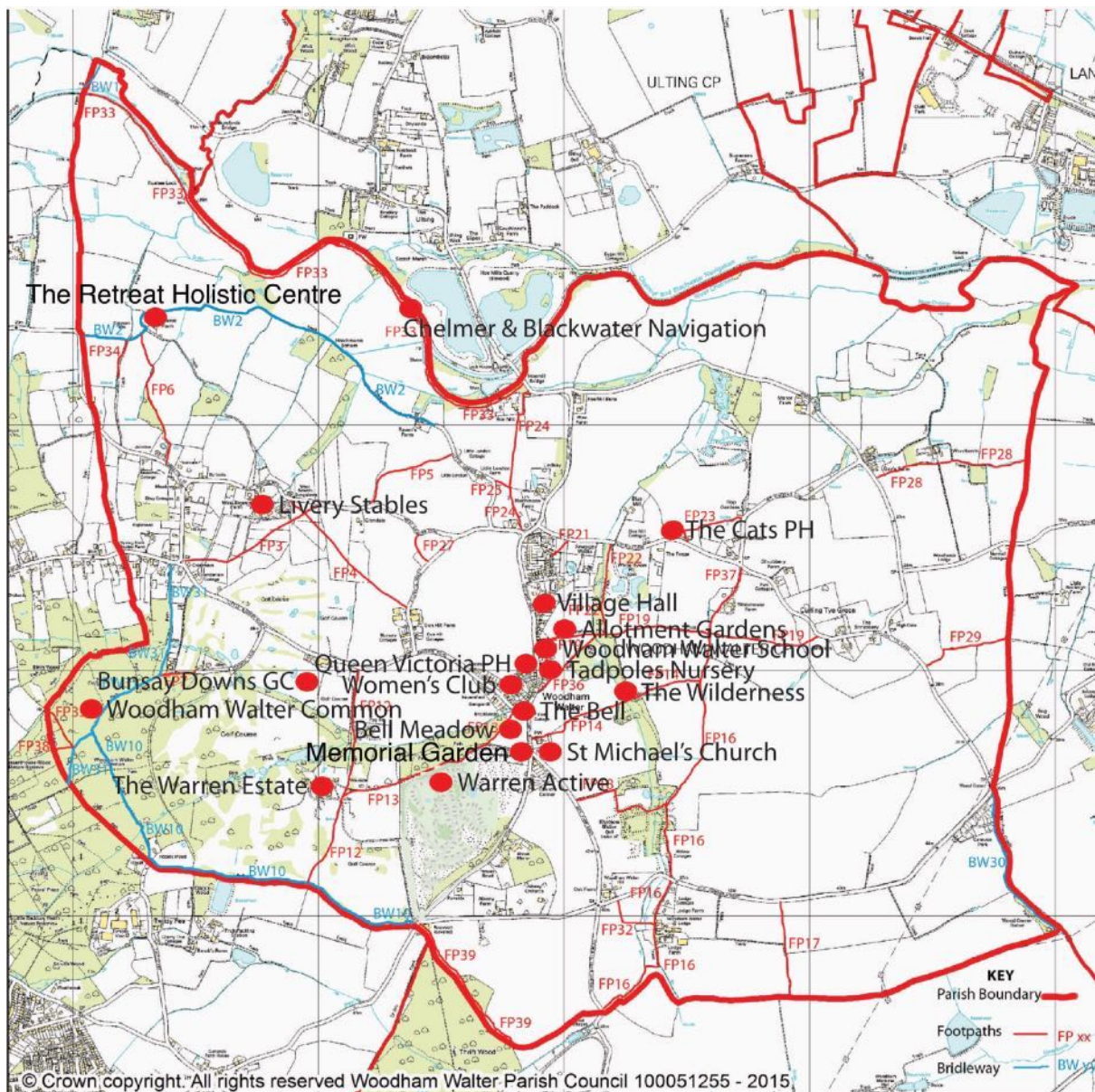
17. Existing Amenities in Woodham Walter are:-

St. Michael's Church	Tadpoles Nursery (<i>formerly Chapel Stores</i>)
Village Hall	Bell Public house
Bell Meadow and Children's Playground	Footpaths and Bridleways
Woodham Walter Women's Club	Warren Golf and Country Club
The Cats Public house	Warren Active Leisure
Allotment Gardens	Bunsay Downs Golf Club
Woodham Walter Primary Academy	Woodham Walter Common (SSSI)
The Wilderness	Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation Canal
The Retreat Holistic Centre	Memorial Garden
Queen Victoria Public House in refurbishment	Livery Stables

Chart 8. Existing Amenities Schedule

²⁹ Source Maldon District Council

- 17.1. The Maldon District Local Development Plan (LDP) 2014 -2029³⁰ expresses concerns that, throughout the district, elements of these key facilities may face a future risk from alternative uses, such as residential development.
- 17.2. To minimise loss of local community facilities Clause 4.30 of the LDP states: "Applicants seeking to change the use of a community facility, resulting in the loss of a community service, will need to demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that the viability of continuing the use of the community facility has been fully and appropriately investigated".
- 17.3. Suitable proposals for new or improved community facilities in Woodham Walter, particularly those focusing on open spaces for sport and other leisure activities would be welcomed by the Parish Council.



Map 25. Map of Village Amenities

³⁰ Source: Maldon District Council



Common Lane



Bunsay Downs Golf Courses

18. Infrastructure and Transport

18.1. Transport and Accessibility

- 18.1.1. Woodham Walter Parish, a rural community of 252 widely dispersed households with a central core, is served by a narrow road network offering radial connection to A-Roads or adjoining villages and towns.
- 18.1.2. Formal pavements are evident along the village centre; Mead Pastures, Rectory Road, Top Road, The Street, and continue towards St. Michaels Church up Church Hill. The parish elsewhere has narrow country lanes with simple grass verges and passing places at pinch points.



Village Street Views

- 18.1.3. Just over half the residents who responded to the Place Survey confirmed that the road network gives good access to surrounding areas. At sporadic times the rural road system can be shared by a variety of vehicles, pedestrians and horse riders.

18.2. Car movements

- 18.2.1. The isolated position of Woodham Walter dictates that a significant proportion of private journeys will be made by car and that households, of necessity, are likely to have a high level of car ownership.
- 18.2.2. The Place Survey results indicate that many consider the village to be a commuter settlement. The paucity of public transport dictates that journeys, whether for employment or for secondary schooling will be made overwhelmingly by car. With the gradual uptake of hybrid or home charged electric vehicles these journeys will become more sustainable.
- 18.2.3. The 2021 Census for Maldon District recorded 1.81 cars per households³¹, higher than the average UK figure of 1.20. Maldon District Council agreed that these figures reflected the rural nature of the area, the larger distances involved, the limited provision of public transport and, therefore, the accepted greater reliance on private cars for travel.
- 18.2.4. In order to address the influx of vehicles and particularly the absence of sufficient parking the council published 2019 Maldon District Vehicle Parking Standards which increased both individual parking bay sizes and allocations according to the size of house or commercial premises. Although not a panacea, adoption of the new parking standards is intended to resolve the proliferation of on street parking and allow sufficient space for all new developments.
- 18.2.5. Many properties within Woodham Walter are able comfortably to meet these new parking standards, but lack of suitable parking space is still a concern particularly at the extremity of the Village centre. It is to be noted that although nearly 70% of respondents to the Place Survey showed general displeasure with pavement and grass verge parking, there are locations, particularly in the village centre where, as families have outgrown a poorly planned parking provision, roadside parking has become the necessary overflow option.
- 18.2.6. On-street parking is also notably evident at drop-off and collection times of children at Woodham Walter Church of England Primary Academy in The Street, on-site parking being unavailable. Greater care and speed awareness needs to be taken by drivers to ease traffic flow and safety issues at this temporary bottleneck.
- 18.2.7. At off-peak times the village experiences only light vehicle traffic flows except at school drop off and collect times. However, when road closures are in place or there has been a road traffic accident on the A414 or the A12, the village roads are used as a 'rat-run' to avoid delays.
- 18.2.8. This results in excess traffic, excess litter thrown from cars and it is more noticeable that not all drivers observe the mandatory 30 m.p.h. within the village core. Beyond the village core it has become extremely dangerous using the roads during the morning and evening 'rush hours' particularly on roads having the national speed limit where there is a disregard for narrow, rural lanes.

³¹ Source :MDC

- 18.2.9. At the bottom of Church Hill, a part-time flashing speed calming sign has been installed as an encouragement to drivers to slow down. The Maldon District Council Community Engagement Team, engaged by the Parish Council, regularly capture speeds in excess of 40mph rising to over 50mph. Over 60% of Place Survey respondents believed additional traffic calming measures were needed.
- 18.2.10. Chart 9, being the annual report of the Maldon District Council Community Engagement Team (CET), illustrates the level of reported speeding vehicles through the Village and does not include those where the speeding capture was made by the Police. The highest speeds recorded by the CET are in excess of 50mph.
- 18.2.11. The CET capture of speeding offences (in excess of 30 mph) during July 2025 was 53 and the highest speed recorded was 48 mph over four patrols totalling just three hours. The incidence of speeding shows an increase corresponding to increased use of the Village as a 'rat-run' in accessing the A12 north via Hatfield Peverel directly related to new developments around Maldon and the increased incidents of road closures due to development and infrastructure repairs. Speeding is a direct concern of a significant number of residents as illustrated in the WW Space Survey.



Parish•	Site Code•	Truvelo Site•	Month•	CO•	Course•	Prosecute •	Total•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Apr-24•	1•	12•		13•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	May-24•	2•	3•		5•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Jun-24•		1•		1•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Jul-24•	3•	18•		21•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT042•	Aug-24•	2•	5•		7•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Sep-24•	1•	5•		6•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Oct-24•		2•		2•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M036•	LCT365•	Oct-24•		1•		1•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Nov-24•		5•		5•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M036•	LCT365•	Nov-24•		2•		2•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Jan-25•		2•		2•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Feb-25•		1•		1•
WOODHAM WALTER•	M038•	LCT367•	Mar-25•		1•		1•
							67•

CO• Conditional Officer•
 Course• Speed Awareness Course•
 Prosecute• Court•

Chart 9. Speeding Offences 2024³²

³² Source: MDC CET

18.3. Commercial Vehicles

- 18.3.1. The absence of a local manufacturing industry and the narrowness of most approach roads reduce the necessity for HGVs to regularly pass directly through the village. The 3-tonne maximum weight limit and currently a 2-metre width restriction on Hoe Mill Bridge have curtailed HGVs entering Woodham Walter from the Hatfield Peverel direction. The restrictions also eliminate the attractiveness of a short-cut from the A414 to the A12 north.
- 18.3.2. On-line shopping produces a regular flow of light commercial vehicles making door to door deliveries. The mix of both electric and petrol vehicles is however beneficial in reducing longer non-sustainable individual car journeys.
- 18.3.3. Threats exist in the form of potential quarrying and renewable energy sources within the borders of Woodham Walter. The road infrastructure is unsuitable for the projected 120 plus HGV movements a day to be generated by the developments. Should such schemes be sanctioned, an environmental 7.5 T weight limit restrictions will need to be imposed to mitigate HGV traffic using the rural lane network through Woodham Walter.

18.4. Public Transport

- 18.4.1. Residents, young or old, who may not have access to a car, or now feel unable to drive, can be dependent upon public transport for shopping, healthcare or education. Public transport may also be seen as a lifeline to those who may wish to stay within the community.
- 18.4.2. The 99-bus service stops in Woodham Walter en-route from Maldon to Broomfield Hospital via Danbury and Chelmsford. A majority of respondents to the Place Survey confirmed use of the service to visit Chelmsford or Maldon towns.
- 18.4.3. The scheduled Monday to Friday service, running four times a day, is partially supported financially by Essex County Council as a community bus service and sustainable travel choice. This is now under review and may be withdrawn in whole or in part which will have an isolating effect on those in the village without private transport facilities.
- 18.4.4. Maldon District Council approved LDP similarly pledges in Policy T1, Sustainable Transport, to maintain, improve and prioritise sustainable community public transport schemes over the use of private vehicles.

18.5. Cycling

- 18.5.1. In 2018 Essex Highways in conjunction with Maldon District Council published the Maldon District Cycling Plan.
- 18.5.2. The plan focus is to fully integrate cycle routes within the Maldon Town Centre area and to encourage greater cycle use, particularly for short journeys where the use of the car has become the norm.
- 18.5.3. Part of a national movement, the plan has attracted government finance to enable the creation of new safe urban cycle routes, avoiding transport highways, and upgrading to a safer standard those existing routes. Over time,

and with sufficient uptake of the scheme, there are aspirations to extend these safe cycle routes to outlying villages beyond the urban area.

- 18.5.4. A majority of respondents to the Place Survey believed that the existing bridleways and footpaths should be extended/improved by encouraging landowners to widen footpaths to become an integrated network of bridleways.
- 18.5.5. Woodham Walter is not considered within the overall district funding plan although National Cycle Scheme, Route Number 1, which uses the tarmac road system, already passes through the parish on its way to Maldon. Essex Highways has recorded that the route is used by a significant number of cyclists particularly for local journeys and leisure rides.
- 18.5.6. Essex County Council actively promotes the benefits of cycling by working with schools to provide safe training opportunities for schoolchildren. Continued cycle use is supported as a sustainable means of transport.
- 18.5.7. Residents have complained that excessive speed of cycle races and inconsiderate groups of cyclists are proving a danger to pedestrians and other road users alike particularly but not exclusively at weekends.

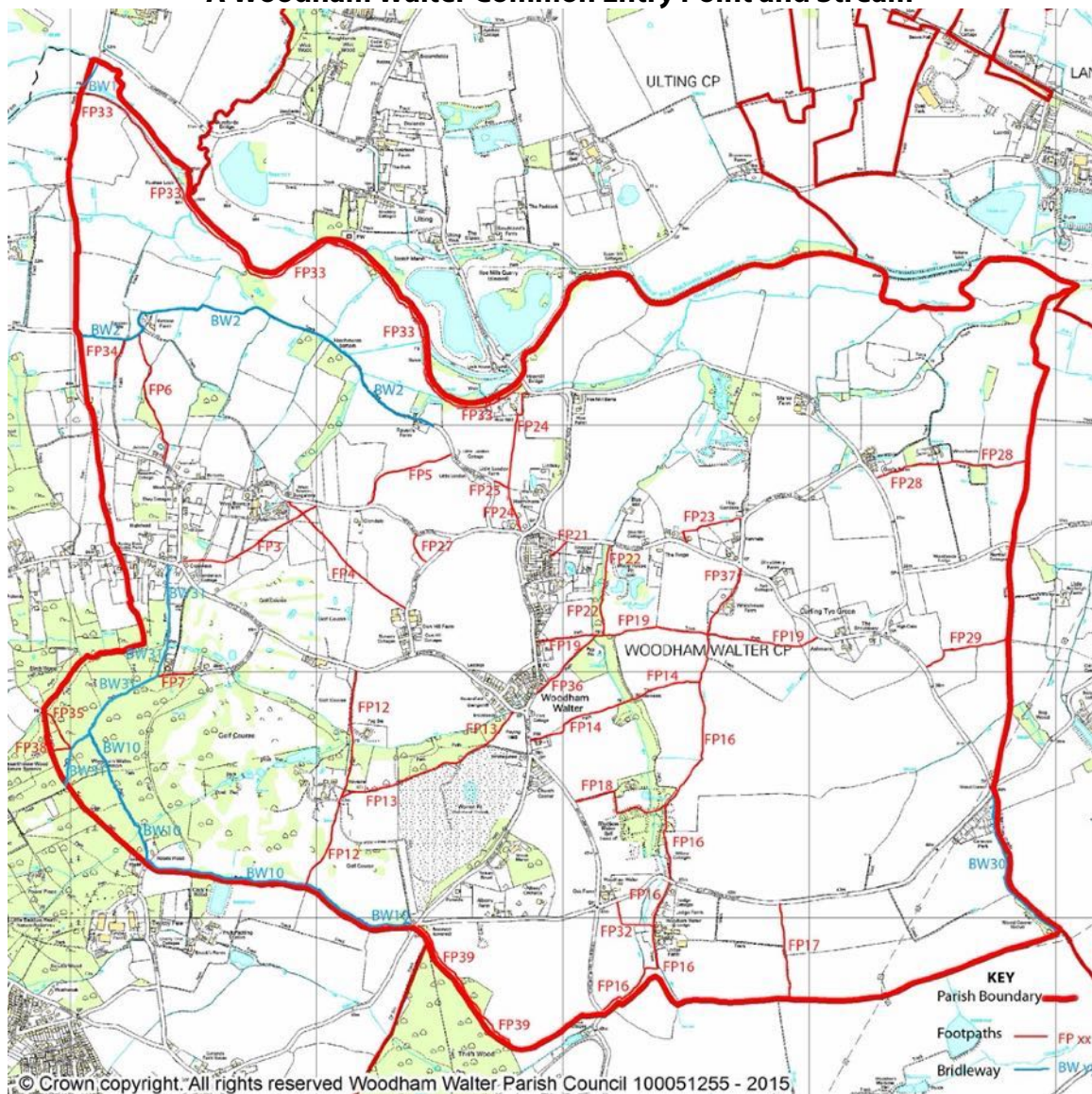
18.6. Walking

- 18.6.1. An extensive network of unmade designated Public Rights of Way extends across the parish. They provide historic evidence of connectivity from the centre of the village both to neighbouring parishes and to Maldon Town.
- 18.6.2. In all there are 31 Footpaths and 5 Bridleways, all of which are maintained by the Essex County Council and/or landowners aided by local rambler associations and the Parish Footpath Officer to ensure a continuing safe travelling environment. They are primarily used for leisure whether by dog walkers, walking groups or for hacking.
- 18.6.3. Woodham Walter Common's 32.3 hectares of SSSI popularity makes it vulnerable to pressures from increasing visitor numbers. This vulnerability will be impacted by proposed new developments east of the A12 and to the north and south of Maldon. Across the landscape recreational impact including trampling and soil compaction, disturbance to wildlife by humans and dogs, nutrient enrichment from dog waste, littering and pollution, and path erosion and habitat fragmentation is being experienced. The cumulative impact of nearby development, particularly without strategic mitigation, poses a significant risk to the long-term health of this sensitive and irreplaceable landscape³³.
- 18.6.4. The ECC Essex Transport Plan (2011) continues to safeguard Public Rights of Way, ensuring that these unmade established pathways, which allow ready access to the surrounding countryside and nearby settlements, can continue to be enjoyed for both leisure and recreation.

³³ Source: EWT



A Woodham Walter Common Entry Point and Stream



Map 26.
Map of Public Footpaths and Bridleways

18.7. Gazetteer of Footpaths

BW1	Bridleway. From Hatfield Peverel BR 46 in a southerly direction to the River Chelmer crossing into Little Baddow parish and continuing as BR 4.
BW2	Bridleway. From the parish boundary with Little Baddow in an easterly direction through Retreat Farm and then south-easterly to Raven's Farm.
FP3	From Crossways in an easterly and north-easterly direction crossing footpath 4 to the road east of West Bowers.
FP4	From West Bowers in a south-easterly direction crossing footpath 3 to the road north of Gunhill Farm.
FP5	From the road north of Glendale in a northerly and easterly direction to the road west of Little London.
FP6	From its junction with BR 2 in a southerly direction to the road leading to "Elwy".
FP7	From the south-western end of the road leading to Woodham Walter Common in a westerly direction to its junction with BR 3.
FP's 8&9	Extinguished.
BW10	From its junction with BR 31 in a south-easterly direction to and along the District/Parish boundary line to the road by Redgates.
FP11	Extinguished.
FP12	From the road east of Hawkins Farm in a southerly direction past Warren Farm and footpath 13 to its junction with BR 10 at the parish boundary with Woodham Mortimer, where it continues as footpath 22.
FP13	From its junction with footpath 12 in a northeasterly direction south of Bell Grove to the road west of Bell Inn.
FP14	From St Michael's Church in an easterly direction through The Wilderness past footpath 15 to junction with footpath 16.
FP15	Extinguished,
FP16	From footpath 19, passing east of The Wilderness, then south-east past footpath 18 and south past footpath 32 and Lodge Farm to the west and south-west of the parish boundary.
FP17	From the Woodham Walter and Maldon road east of Lodge Farm in a southerly direction to the parish boundary with Woodham Mortimer where it continues as footpath 14.
FP18	From junction with footpath 16 in a south-westerly, westerly, northerly and westerly direction to the road north of Oak Farm. Minimum width of path is 4 feet.
FP19	From Woodham Walter School in an easterly direction crossing footpaths 22, 36, 20, 15 and 16 to the road south of Curling Tye Green.
FP20	Extinguished.
FP21	From the estate path connecting to the northern end of Mead Pastures in a north-easterly direction to Blue Mill Lane.
FP22	From its junction with footpath 19 in a north-easterly direction to Blue Mill Cottages.
FP23	From the Cats Public House in a northerly and easterly direction to the road north-west of Whitehouse Cottages.
FP24	From the Lodge south of Hoe Mill Bridge in a southerly direction crossing footpaths 25 and 26 to the road south-west of Hatchments.
FP25	From Little London in an easterly direction to Footpath 24.

- FP26 Extinguished.
- FP27 From West Bowers Road south-east of Glendale in a southerly direction to the road north of Gunhill Farm.
- FP28 From the road south of Guys Farm in an easterly direction south of Woodlands to the parish boundary with Maldon where it continues as footpath 47.
- FP29 From Curling Tye Green Road in an easterly direction to the parish boundary with Maldon where it continues as footpath 19.
- BW30 Bridleway. From Wood Corner in a southerly direction along the parish boundary to Maldon where it continues as BR 5.
- BW31 Bridleway. From the road east of Spring Elms in a southerly direction to junction with footpath 7, then south-westerly through Woodham Walter Common past BR 10 to the parish boundary with Little Baddow where it continues as BR 34.
- FP32 From the road south of Oak Farm in a south-easterly and easterly direction to Lodge Farm and footpath 16
- FP33 Continuation of Little Baddow FP 3 in a southerly and south easterly direction along the towpath to Hoe Mill Bridge.
- FP34 From its junction with BR 2 south-west of Retreat Farm in a southerly direction for a distance of approximately 90 yards to the public highway.
- FP35 Continuation of Little Baddow footpath No. 55 at Woodham Walter Common in a southerly direction to join BW 31.
- FP36 From FP 19 south west to the road north of the Smithy.
- FP37 From Whitehouse Cottages, south to FP 19.
- FP38 Continuation of FP 87 Little Baddow eastwards to join BR 31.
- FP39 From the public road at Redgates south-easterly along northern and eastern boundaries of Thrift Wood to continue as FP 7 in Woodham Mortimer. Minimum width of path along the eastern boundary of Thrift Wood is 4 feet.



19. Policies

19.1. Overview

- The planning policies included in the Plan will assist in determining planning applications within Woodham Walter Parish. Policies are supported by appropriate evidence and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the Plan Area.
- Policies relate to the development and use of land in the designated Woodham Walter Parish Neighbourhood Area. They focus on specific planning matters that are of greatest interest to the local community.

19.2. Habitat Protection

Objectives

- Protect the flora and fauna native to Woodham Walter.
- Safeguard rare, endangered, or vulnerable species and their habitats.
- Promote ecological corridors and connectivity for wildlife to migrate safely
- Safeguard key habitats such as woodlands, heathlands, wetlands, grasslands, and riverbanks from degradation.
- Enforce buffer zones around designated habitats (e.g., Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest).

Scope

- Woodham Walter Parish including agricultural land, woodlands, grasslands, rivers, and wetlands.
- Buffer zones around key habitats, especially if any of the surrounding areas are designated as areas of national or international conservation importance (e.g., Site of Special Scientific Interest or Special Protection Areas).
- Includes all plant and animal species, with a focus on endangered or vulnerable species.
- Special attention to areas like woodlands, wet meadows, heathlands, and watercourses.
- Agricultural, residential, industrial, and recreational land uses, with emphasis on minimizing impact on local habitats.
- Invasive Species: Management and control of non-native species that may threaten local biodiversity (e.g., Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed).

Policy WW-HP1: Habitat Protection and Enhancement

Development proposals must include provision for the protection, enhancement and maintenance of habitats and biodiversity in Woodham Walter by:

- 1. Securing a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as calculated to reflect the latest local or national policy and advice through planning conditions or planning obligations.*
- 2. Clearly demonstrating how the mitigation hierarchy has been sequentially applied in accordance with the principles of:*
 - i. avoidance*
 - ii. reduce, moderate, minimise*
 - iii. rescue*
 - iv. repair, restore.*
 - v. compensation is a last resort.*
- 3. Incorporating habitat features of value to wildlife within the development site and building design, such as Green Infrastructure networks, bat boxes, hedgehog highways and specialist bird boxes or bricks.*
- 4. Development that protects and enhances the following designations will be supported:*
 - i. European Designated Sites*
 - ii. National Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*
- 5. Where relevant, new development must demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and subsequent amendments and alterations.*

19.3. Housing

Objectives

- To guide and manage development within the Parish of Woodham Walter that is located within the boundaries or adjacent to defined areas of settlement, ensuring growth is sustainable, supports the local rural character, and aligns with infrastructure capabilities and community goals.
- Support appropriate rural development within defined settlement boundaries.
- Preserve the rural character and environmental quality of the area.
- Ensure development is compatible with existing land uses, infrastructure, and services.
- Promote a mix of housing, small-scale employment, and community uses where appropriate.
- Minimize sprawl and safeguard agricultural and natural heritage lands.

Scope

This policy applies to all development proposals within defined rural settlement areas as delineated in Map 2.

Policy WW-H1: Development Pre-application Engagement

- 1. Planning applicants are encouraged to follow the procedure set out in the Woodham Walter Parish Pre-application Engagement Protocol, the aim of which is to enable early, proportionate and effective engagement with the community, particularly with regard to design issues.*
- 2. Pre-application community engagement is also encouraged for Reserved Matters Applications as well as Outline or Full.*

WW-H2: Housing Development

- 1. Settlement area boundaries are indicated on Map 5. Proposals for development will be supported inside or adjacent to these boundaries where they:
 - i. Accord with other development management policies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.*
 - ii. Are of scale appropriate to the location.*
 - iii. Conserve and where possible, enhance the positive characteristics and special qualities of the character area in which they are located in the Plan.**
- 2. In locations not inside or adjacent to the settlement boundaries development will be supported where:
 - i. Development is provided for in the Neighbourhood Development Plan, through either site allocations to meet housing requirements, or a rural exception site where its primary purpose is to provide affordable homes to meet local needs.*
 - ii. Development of isolated homes in countryside may be appropriate where circumstances set out in the NPPF are demonstrated to apply.**
- 3. Proposals must comply with the Habitats Regulations through adherence to Policy WW-HP1 Habitat Protection.*

WW-H3: Land Use Compatibility

- 1. New development must be compatible with the scale, design, and character of the existing rural settlement as set out in the VDS.*
- 2. Land uses will be supported where they do not negatively affect nearby agricultural operations or sensitive environmental areas. Land uses will be supported where they do not negatively affect the settings of nearby historic assets and/or locally valued non-designated heritage assets.*
- 3. Development proposals reflecting the traditional rural vernacular in building materials, layout, and landscaping will be supported.*

4. *Visual impact assessments will be required for new development proposals to maintain scenic views, rural and village character.*
5. *Development shall enhance and protect significant natural features and hazard lands including Bell Meadow, Woodham Walter Common and Ancient Monuments.*
6. *Natural vegetation buffers should be maintained, provided or enhanced where possible.*

WW-H4: Housing and Density

1. *New housing development should provide housing types, size and tenure to accommodate a range of different households as evidenced through the RCCE Housing Needs Survey and the MDC Local Housing Needs Assessment.*
2. *Modest, low-density, small-scale, infill or conversion residential development appropriate to rural infrastructure will be supported within or adjacent to defined settlement areas.*
3. *Housing types including detached, semi-detached, and small-scale clustered housing with affordable housing as defined by the NPPF including those with affordable rent, social rent, shared ownership, shared equity, starter homes and entry-level housing. homes, shared ownership homes and open market bungalows to sustain local downsizing will be supported. Proposals for the development of two-bedroom or three-bedroom homes, suitable for starter homes or those who wish to downsize will be supported.*
4. *Residential development on greenfield or agricultural land that is either outside or not adjacent to the defined settlement areas will be supported where it meets the criteria for a rural exception site, helping to address identified local needs.*

WW-H5: Housing and Site

1. *Development will be subject to the following requirements:*
 - i. *Developments must be adequately serviced by existing or planned infrastructure, including roads, water, waste systems and Broadband.*
 - ii. *Integration into the adjacent housing areas particularly for walking or cycling routes to connect into the Village Core and wider Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network (see map 25).*
 - iii. *Proposals will be informed by an ecological assessment detailing suitable mitigation measures to ensure the safeguarding of protected species and habitats of importance for biodiversity.*
 - iv. *Retention and enhancement of trees and hedgerows on the site boundaries as part of wider landscaping and green infrastructure requirements. Development will be expected to take particular care to ensure that a suitable boundary with open countryside is provided that protects or enhances landscape quality and the setting of the edge of the settlement.*

2. *Enable new housing development which provide the mix of house sizes and types to meet the local demographic needs as identified in the Housing Needs Survey and:*
 - i. *Are appropriately located and are of locally distinctive design*
 - ii. *Maintain the rural nature of the Parish.*
 - iii. *Preserve and enhance the heritage, distinctive character and natural environment.*
3. *Demonstrate a drainage strategy to inform the design and layout of the site to facilitate disposal of surface water to prevent exacerbation of flooding off-site.*
4. *Sensitive design and layout, to integrate into any adjacent site and to integrate with the character of the defined area.*
5. *Provision of adequate and proportionate parking on-site to meet the actual needs of occupants and to not rely on on-street parking.*
6. *Proposals for development will be informed by, and take account of, all policy requirements and opportunities in design and layout sensitive to the landscape, heritage and distinct local characteristics to demonstrate beautiful and locally responsive design.*
7. *Proposals must comply with the Habitats Regulations through adherence to Policy WW-H1 Habitat Protection.*

19.4. Design Quality and Character of Place

Objectives:

The Design and Character policy endeavours to reflect a comprehensive approach to sustainable development, to create a resilient, vibrant, and equitable community. The emphasis on environmental stewardship, social inclusivity, and economic opportunity is to ensure that development serves the long-term needs of the community while addressing contemporary challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and social inequality.

Scope:

To support development that promotes environmental sustainability, social well-being, and economic vitality, ensuring the long-term health and resilience of the local community and its surroundings.

WW-D1: Design Quality and Character of Place

1. *All new developments in WW must demonstrate high quality and sustainable design to accord with the WW VDS, The Essex Design Guide, the Maldon District Design Guide and the National Design Guide, or any subsequent design documents/guides that supersede these.*
2. *Development should demonstrate high-quality design that positively responds to and reinforces the distinctive local character and special qualities of its surroundings in accordance with, The WW Character Assessment, and associated landscape character appraisals. Proposals that adopt such opportunities will be supported.*

- 3. Where a Design and Access Statement is required as part of a planning application, there must be a clear demonstration of how the proposal has responded to relevant design guidance and how the special qualities as identified by the community in the Place, Housing Needs and Business surveys, and through early, proactive and positive engagement, are reflected in development proposals.*

19.5. Heritage

Objectives:

- Identify, protect, and enhance all designated heritage assets in Woodham Walter.
- Raise awareness about the historical significance of the village's architecture and landscapes.
- Ensure new development or renovations preserve the aesthetic and historical character of Woodham Walter.
- Ensure that any new building designs or conversions respect the village's traditional materials, scale, and style.
- Encourage Sensitive Regeneration.
- Encourage the revitalization of heritage assets that may be at risk of deterioration without damaging their historic value.
- Preserve and Maintain Historic Landscapes.
- Safeguard the rural setting and traditional open spaces around Woodham Walter.
- Prevent inappropriate developments that could negatively affect the landscape's historic and aesthetic value.

Scope:

- Listed buildings (Grade I, II*, and II), Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and archaeological sites and structures of local interest that contribute to the area's character but are not listed.
- Historic landscapes, such as fields, woodlands, hedgerows, and village greens.
- Archaeological remains within the village and its surroundings.
- The protection of important landscape features that contribute to the setting of heritage assets including the historical road network and ancient woodland.
- The scale, form, materials, and impact of new development or extensions on the local heritage.

WW-D2: Design Quality and Heritage Character

- 1. Development that causes harm to the setting, character, appearance of heritage assets and special interest of the WW Conservation Area should be avoided or minimised where possible, and that any harm would require convincing justification*

2. *Development proposals affecting the Parish's designated built heritage must demonstrate that:*
 - i. *Features such as key views, building materials and detailing, and boundary features etc which contribute positively to the character areas and the overall special character and heritage of the Conservation Areas, have been retained.*
 - ii. *New development will not cause harm to the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Areas and, wherever possible, positively enhance it ensuring development is beneficial to the future of Woodham Walter.*
3. *Archaeological sites are important heritage assets and will be fully considered when determining planning applications according to national policy. This includes the potential impact on the two Scheduled Monuments, as shown on map 15.*
4. *Development proposals which affect archaeological remains will be expected to demonstrate, by a thorough understanding of the significance of the asset, how any change proposed would preserve and, where appropriate, enhance their significance. Any perceived harm must be fully justified and weighed against any public benefits of the overall development scheme within the final planning balance.*

19.6. Woodham Walter's Landscape and Valued Views

Objectives:

- To maintain the rural charm of Woodham Walter whilst accommodating any future development that fits harmoniously with the local environment.
- Ensure that key views within the village and its surroundings are preserved and enhanced for residents and visitors.
- Safeguard the rural character and distinctiveness of the landscape, ensuring that any new developments do not negatively impact its aesthetic or natural quality.
- Identify and protect existing green spaces and recreational areas that contribute to the local environment.
- Encourage new development that respects the natural environment and landscape, using materials and techniques that blend with the existing landscape.
- To protect and enhance habitats for wildlife and ensure the continued ecological balance of the Parish.
- Minimize the impact of urbanization on the environment, including light and air pollution, to protect the area's tranquillity.

Scope:

- To identify significant views within the Parish including views to and from landmarks, historical buildings, and vistas over the surrounding countryside.

- Establish policies for new housing, infrastructure, and public spaces to ensure that they do not obstruct or degrade valued views.
- Providing guidance on the types of planting, materials, and designs that should be incorporated into any new developments, ensuring they are sympathetic to the landscape.
- Protect historic or culturally significant features in the landscape such as ancient trees and hedgerows from being compromised by development.

WW-V1: Space Quality and Visual Character

- 1. Development proposals should conserve or enhance the landscape of the Parish and take account of the Strategy and Objectives of the Landscape Character Assessments. Development, including change of use, that would have a positive impact on the character of the landscape will be supported.*
- 2. The Plan identifies locally valued key views, as shown on Map 24 and further detailed in the VDS annexed to the Plan. Any development proposals which are likely to affect a locally valued key view should assess the effect of the proposals on the view(s) and demonstrate how any adverse effects have been addressed. Proposals which would have an unacceptable detrimental impact on any of the locally valued views will not be supported.*

19.7. Climate Change Resilience and Sustainability

Objectives:

- Enhance Climate Resilience
- Increase the Village's ability to withstand and recover from extreme weather events such as floods, heatwaves, and storms.
- Encourage the use of green infrastructure.
- Promote Sustainable Development.
- Support developments that minimise environmental impact and prioritize low-carbon materials, energy efficiency, and water conservation.
- Encourage the reuse of land and buildings.
- Support the transition to renewable energy sources including solar and geothermal.
- Encourage sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling, and electric vehicles.
- Protect and Enhance Natural Resources and local biodiversity.
- Promote tree planting and landscape management practices that sequester carbon and improve air quality.

Scope:

- Identify areas suitable for development with climate risks in mind.
- Require sustainable design and construction practices in planning applications.
- Create and maintain green corridors, wetlands, and SuDS.
- Promote installation of solar panels, community energy schemes, and building retrofit programs.
- Improve infrastructure for walking and cycling.
- Support the development of electric vehicle charging stations and public transport networks.
- Managing construction waste, household recycling, and composting.

WW-C: Climate Change Resilience and Sustainability

1. *A proposed development that reflects the traditional rural vernacular in building materials, layout, and landscaping and in accordance with the VDS guidance will be supported.*
2. *All development proposals, including retrofitting, will be supported where they can demonstrate proportionately, how the development addresses Climate Change mitigation and adaptation through the on-site use of zero and/or low carbon technologies, sustainable design and construction, and low carbon materials.*
3. *Development will be supported where they are designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their operation through energy design. Development will be supported where it seeks to reduce energy demand through passive measures including but not limited to:*
 - i. *Orientation and fenestration arrangements for passive solar gain; high levels of insulation and moderation in lighting.*
 - ii. *Low-carbon, electrified solutions for space and water heating are encouraged which are highly efficient such as heat-pumps.*
 - iii. *renewable technologies such as roof mounted solar PV is supported to help meet regulated and unregulated energy demand.*
4. *The retrofit of heritage properties and assets will be supported if the historic characteristics and significance are maintained. It is expected that engagement with and permissions of relevant organisations including Historic England be sought.*
5. *All new development will be required to include EV charging points.*
6. *Support will be given to rainwater harvesting from all new development, alterations or extensions to accord with the NPPF.*
7. *New planning applications for buildings and spaces will be supported where design is demonstrated to cope with extreme weather, overheating, and water stress.*

WW-C2: Design to reduce Flood Risk

1. *All new developments will be supported where opportunities to maximise rainwater capture and reuse onsite are included. Development proposals will be expected to incorporate a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS), in line with industry best practice to take account of water quality, quantity, amenity and biodiversity.*
2. *Developments will be supported where designed and constructed to reduce the overall level of flood risk both to the site and elsewhere. This especially includes mitigation of run-off and surface water flood risk.*
3. *Where planning permission is required, permeable surface paving of house drives, hard standings and parking areas will be supported where it is in keeping with the local character, and where boundary features such as walls and hedges can be retained or enhanced. Proposals for surface treatments in residential, commercial and public parking areas should demonstrate how surface water and associated run-off can be drawn into the ground in a sustainable way.*

19.8. Economic Development

Objectives:

- Support for local businesses and entrepreneurs, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, crafts, hospitality, and tourism.
- Support youth employment initiatives to retain young talent within the area.
- Develop and promote Woodham Walter's natural and cultural heritage to attract responsible tourism.
- Explore opportunities in rural industries, including local agriculture, forestry, and sustainable food production, to create value-added products.
- Encourage farm diversification (e.g., farm shops, agritourism, craft industries) to enhance local employment and create economic value.
- Advocate for better transport links to Maldon and Chelmsford improving access to economic hubs while maintaining the rural charm.
- Improve broadband and mobile connectivity to enable remote working and enhance the attractiveness of Woodham Walter for digital businesses.

Scope:

- Advocate for improved public transport links.
- Advocate for improved broadband and mobile coverage in the area, allowing businesses and residents to access modern technologies.
- Support small-scale, affordable housing projects that align with the rural character of Woodham Walter.
- Ensure that new developments respect the village's heritage, landscape, and the needs of existing residents while integrating opportunities for local job creation.
- Promote Woodham Walter's history, landscapes, and green spaces as part of a sustainable tourism package that supports local businesses and provides a steady income for the community.

WW-E1: Economic Development

1. *Small-scale, rurally appropriate, commercial and home-based businesses will be supported where there is no conflict with adjacent land uses.*
2. *Industrial uses are discouraged unless they are of low impact, support the rural economy and do not conflict with adjacent land uses.*
3. *Change of use of existing business premises away from employment activity will only be supported where evidence can be produced to demonstrate that the existing use is no longer economically viable by illustrating that the site has been appropriately marketed at a reasonable price for at least one year for that or any other suitable employment or service trade use.*
4. *Proposals for new or expansion of existing commercial, business and service use will be supported in principle, subject to being suited to their rural location (either within the Village or in the wider parish) and to an assessment of the impact of the proposals on residential amenity, the transport network and parking provision and biodiversity and the environment.*

5. *Parish Council will support the creation of multifunctional open spaces*
6. *The retention and enhancement of community assets will be supported for social and wellbeing activities*

19.9. Local Green Spaces

Objectives:

- Protect and Conserve Existing Green Spaces
- Safeguard existing green spaces from development pressures by identifying and designating areas of special local significance for environmental, recreational, or cultural value.
- Protect the character of existing green spaces and adjacent areas.
- Enhance Accessibility and Connectivity
- Improve access to green spaces for all community members.
- Promote Biodiversity and Conservation
- Encourage the planting of native species and the development of wildlife-friendly habitats.
- Ensure that green spaces are designed to accommodate a variety of recreational needs.
- Promote Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Support Local Wellbeing and Mental Health

Scope:

- Green Space Protection
- Prevent inappropriate development in or near key green spaces, ensuring these areas remain accessible to the public.
- Connectivity and Access Routes
- Biodiversity and Habitat Enhancement
- Recreational Infrastructure and Amenities
- Climate Adaptation and Resilience
- Flood Mitigation
- Carbon Sequestration.

WW-G1: Observance of local Green Spaces

1. *The Plan designates the following locations, shown on Map 18 as Local Green Spaces:*
 - i. *Bell Meadow*
 - ii. *Memorial Garden*
 - iii. *Allotments*
 - iv. *Bell Triangle*
 - v. *Bassets Lane Triangles*
 - vi. *Curling Tye*
 - vii. *Old London Road Verge*
 - viii. *Woodham Walter Common*
 - ix. *Wilderness*
2. *Development proposals within or adjacent to the Local Green Spaces will be supported where they are consistent the character of the area and adjacent structures.*

19.10. Infrastructure, Transport and Highway Safety

Objectives:

- Ensure safe, efficient, and accessible transport networks for all pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and public transport users.
- Enhance links to key services such as healthcare, education, shopping, and employment.
- Provide infrastructure to support electric vehicles (EV), such as charging stations and green travel options.
- Prioritize road safety improvements, focusing on areas with a history of speeding.
- Promote design measures such as traffic calming and signage to enhance safety.
- Design roads that are safe for all users, including children, elderly, and those with disabilities.
- Ensure that the impact of new development on transport infrastructure is factored into planning decisions.
- Ensure a balance between growth in the number of vehicles and the capacity of the infrastructure.

Scope:

- Identify areas for improvement in the walking, cycling, and public transport network.
- Identify routes where transport links can be enhanced.
- Consider the needs of vulnerable users, including pedestrians, people with disabilities, and children.

- Identify safety measures for traffic calming.
- Ensure that new developments incorporate safety features, such as safe pedestrian routes and appropriate parking facilities.
- Ensure adequate parking in residential areas while encouraging sustainable transport.
- Set guidelines for parking provision in new developments, with an emphasis on reducing car dependence.
- Support improvements in the currently inadequate local public transport services to reduce car usage and improve connectivity.
- Ensure the integration of green infrastructure (trees, permeable pavements) into transport planning to manage water runoff and reduce urban heat.
- Encourage eco-friendly transport options such as electric vehicles.

WW- I1: Infrastructure and Transport

1. *New development will be supported where it is demonstrated how it will:*
 - i. *Provide or contribute to safe, continuous and direct walking and cycling connections to local services, public transport where available, and green spaces.*
 - ii. *Integrate with the existing network of footways, bridleways, cycle paths, and rights of way.*
 - iii. *Incorporate secure, covered cycle parking for all users.*
2. *Where possible, support the creation or enhancement of segregated cycleways or shared-use paths.*

WW-I2: Highway Safety and Traffic Calming

- Proposals should be supported by evidence demonstrating how they will:*
- i. *Avoid creating or exacerbating highway safety issues, especially near the schools and residential streets.*
 - ii. *Include traffic calming or mitigation measures where developments are likely to increase vehicle traffic.*
 - iii. *Ensure safe road crossings for pedestrians, especially vulnerable users including children, the elderly and the mobility impaired.*

WW-I3: Infrastructure Capacity

1. *Where developments place additional pressure on local infrastructure including drainage, utilities, broadband and transport, applicants must:*
 - i. *Demonstrate that adequate infrastructure capacity exists.*
 - ii. *Where infrastructure capacity is considered to be inadequate. mitigation measures shall be submitted for the consideration of the LPA.*
2. *Any development shall:*
 - i. *Protect and enhance existing lanes and footpaths used for walking, cycling, and horse riding.*
 - ii. *Maintain the quiet rural character of lanes by discouraging high-speed traffic or inappropriate vehicular access.*
 - iii. *Support community-led initiatives such as quiet lanes and speed limits.*

- iv. Demonstrate that proposals include safe pedestrian access and support traffic calming measures where appropriate.*
- v. Demonstrate the support and use of public transport.*

WW-14: Parking Provision and Management

- 1. All new development shall provide appropriate car parking provision including visitor parking, that accords with, or exceeds, the MDC/ECC standard, reflects local needs, supports sustainable travel, and minimises negative impacts on the street scene, landscape, and neighbouring amenity unless exceptional design or site constraints justify a lower provision.*
- 2. Where lower provision is proposed, developers must demonstrate robust measures to reduce car ownership and ensure no negative impact on existing on-street parking or neighbouring amenity.*
- 3. Parking courts and rear parking areas will only be supported where they are well overlooked, secure, and do not reduce active frontage.*
- 4. Parking should be designed to be visually unobtrusive and integrated with the development layout.*
- 5. Hardstanding areas should use permeable materials and include soft landscaping where possible to reduce visual impact and surface water run-off.*
- 6. Large areas of front-of-plot parking are discouraged unless softened with landscaping or design features.*
- 7. Developments must include secure, covered cycle parking in line with national guidance to encourage sustainable modes of transport.*
- 8. For non-residential and mixed-use development:*
 - i. Parking for commercial, community, or mixed-use developments must be sufficient to meet operational needs without generating overspill onto residential streets.*
 - ii. Shared parking and flexible use of spaces will be supported when accompanied by an effective management plan.*
 - iii. Accessible parking bays for disabled users must be provided in accordance with Building Regulations and best practice.*
- 9. Managing Impact on Streetscape and Heritage:*
 - I. Parking provision must respect the character of the local area, particularly in Conservation Areas or near heritage assets.*
 - II. Proposals involving the loss of existing public or on-street parking must demonstrate no adverse effect on local businesses, residents, or public services.*

19.11. Community Facilities

Objectives:

- To safeguard existing community facilities and support the development of new or improved facilities that meet the needs of local residents and contribute to community cohesion and wellbeing.

- Ensure that community facilities are accessible to all members of the community, including those with disabilities, older people, and young families.

Scope:

- New developments should provide, or contribute to the support for the improvement, renovation, or expansion of existing facilities, like the village hall or the children's playground.

WW-CF1: Protection and Enhancement of Community Facilities

1. *Applications seeking to change the use of a community facility, resulting in the loss of a community service must demonstrate that the viability of continuing the use of the community facility has been fully and appropriately investigated and that effective marketing has been undertaken where appropriate to demonstrate that there is no viable appropriate community use for the site.*
2. *Proposals to enhance or expand existing community facilities or to provide new facilities will be supported, particularly where they:*
 - i. *Improve accessibility for all users, including those with disabilities.*
 - ii. *Are with other services to maximise convenience and sustainability.*
 - iii. *Support multi-use, adaptable spaces that serve a range of community needs.*

19.12. Waste Management and Recycling

Objectives:

- To provide a holistic approach that emphasizes reducing, reusing, and recycling, while also making the process easy and accessible as possible for the community.
- Minimise waste, improve recycling rates, and encourage responsible consumption.
- Implement waste-to-energy options such as anaerobic digestion where appropriate.
- Promote community composting programs and encourage residents to compost organic waste (food scraps, garden waste).
- Support local food waste reduction initiatives and divert organic waste from landfills to composting or anaerobic digestion.

Scope:

- Provide convenient, easily accessible recycling facilities for all waste streams (e.g., paper, plastic, glass, metals, e-waste, batteries, etc.) across the neighbourhood.

- Require new developments to include appropriate waste management systems, ensuring that recycling infrastructure is built into housing and commercial spaces.
- Require new developments to promote ease of waste collection and minimise contamination.

WW-W1: Waste Disposal and Recycling Infrastructure

1. *All new development proposals, including residential, commercial, and community facilities, must demonstrate the provision of adequate waste storage, recycling facilities, and access for collection, in a manner that:*
 - i. *Integrates with the character of the area.*
 - ii. *Minimises visual impact.*

WW-W2: Rural Facilities & Fly-tipping Prevention

1. *All major development proposals must include a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) outlining how construction and demolition waste will be managed sustainably, including plans for reuse and recycling on site.*



Curling Tye Lane



The Street



Hoe Mill Bridge Approach

Implementation

Woodham Walter Pre-application Engagement Protocol

Part of the Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Framework

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This protocol provides a structured process for developers, landowners, and applicants to engage with the community and Parish Council at an early stage before submitting a planning application. The aim is to ensure high-quality development that reflects local character, needs, and aspirations.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. Encourage early dialogue between applicants, the Parish Council, and the community.
- 2.2. Improve the design quality and local responsiveness of proposals.
- 2.3. Reduce conflict and delays in the formal planning process.
- 2.4. Ensure alignment with the Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan policies and vision.

3. When Pre-application Engagement is Expected

- 3.1. Applicants are strongly encouraged to engage where proposals:
 - i. Involve new housing (including infill and conversions).
 - ii. Affect the village character, Conservation Area, or heritage assets.
 - iii. Involve significant changes to land use, community facilities, or infrastructure.
 - iv. Are likely to raise public interest or concern.

4. Pre-application Engagement Steps

- 4.1. Step 1: Initial Contact
 - i. Developers should contact Woodham Walter Parish Council (WWPC) at the earliest stage.
 - ii. Submit a brief description of the proposal and a request for informal discussion.
- 4.2. Step 2: Parish Council Meeting
 - i. Attend a confidential pre-application meeting with WWPC (not minuted publicly).
 - ii. Provide draft plans or concepts, site details, and relevant constraints.
 - iii. WWPC may highlight:
 - 4.2.iii.1. Key Neighbourhood Plan policies
 - 4.2.iii.2. Design guidance
 - 4.2.iii.3. Known local sensitivities or opportunities
- 4.3. Step 3: Community Engagement

Applicants should consult the local community before submitting a formal application. This can include:

 - 4.3.i.1. A public exhibition or drop-in event
 - 4.3.i.2. Leaflets or letters to neighbouring properties
 - 4.3.i.3. An online consultation platform

4.3.i.4. Engagement should be proportionate to the scale and sensitivity of the development.

4.4. Step 4: Feedback and Response

- i. A summary of community feedback should be compiled.
- ii. Applicants should show how comments have influenced the proposal.
- iii. Submit this as a Community Engagement Statement with the planning application.

5. Role of the Parish Council

- 5.1. WWPC will offer non-binding feedback on early proposals.
- 5.2. May provide written comments highlighting conformity or conflict with local policies.
- 5.3. Will encourage constructive engagement with residents.
- 5.4. WWPC's position on an application will only be formalised after submission to the Local Planning Authority (Maldon District Council).

6. Confidentiality

- 6.1. Pre-application discussions are confidential unless otherwise agreed.
- 6.2. Applicants may request confidentiality regarding commercially sensitive information.

7. Benefits of Compliance

- 7.1. Improved likelihood of positive community reception.
- 7.2. Enhanced planning outcomes and reduced objections.
- 7.3. Demonstrates commitment to good practice and collaboration.

8. Contact Detail

All pre-application enquiries should be directed to:

Clerk to Woodham Walter Parish Council, Mrs J Bannerman

parishclerk@woodhamwalter-pc.gov.uk

Telephone 01245 373686

[Website: www.woodhamwalter-pc.gov.uk]

Glossary

Abbreviations used in this Neighbourhood Development Plan

ALC	Agricultural Land Classification	LPA	Local Planning Authority
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain	LoWS	Local Wildlife Site
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method	LVNDHA	Locally Valued Non-designated Heritage Asset
CACS	Conservation Area Character Statement	MDC	Maldon District Council
DA	Designated Area	NAD	Neighbourhood Area Designation
EMLP	Essex Minerals Local Plan	NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
ESWLP	Essex, Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan	NP	Neighbourhood Planning
EU	European Union	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
EWT	Essex Wildlife Trust	NPs	Neighbourhood Plans
ha	Hectare (2.471 acres)	NPy	National Policy
HELAA	The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment	PRoW	Public Right of Way
HNS	Housing Needs Survey	RCCE	Rural Community Council for Essex
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment	SA	Sustainability Appraisal
LA	Local Authority	SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment	SPDs	supplementary planning documents
LDO	Local Development Orders	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
LDP	Local Development Plan	SUDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage System
LGS	Local Green Spaces	TCPA	Town and Country Planning Act
		VDS	Village Design Statement
		WW	Woodham Walter
		WWPC	Parish Council

Definitions of Acronyms used in this Neighbourhood Development Plan

Affordable Housing: for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market. This includes affordable rent, social rent, shared ownership, discounted market sale, and First Homes, as defined by the NPPF.

Affordable Rent: A type of housing let by local authorities or housing associations at up to 80% of local market rents. It is more secure than private renting and is intended for those who cannot afford market housing.

Arcadian: A settlement that is dispersed and does not cluster around a street or green; there is no sense of enclosure or an urban configuration.

Article 4 Direction: A legal planning tool that allows local authorities to remove permitted development rights in a specific area or for a particular type of development.

Choice-Based Lettings: A system used by local authorities and housing associations to allocate social housing. Applicants express interest in available properties and are prioritised based on eligibility and housing need.

Custom or Self-Build Homes built or commissioned by individuals or groups for their own use. These may be privately funded or supported through affordable housing schemes.

Discounted Market Sale Homes sold at a minimum 20% discount below local market value. The discount remains in perpetuity. Buyers must not already own a home and must meet income eligibility criteria. A mortgage is required.

Equity: The value of a homeowner's interest in their property, calculated as the property's market value minus any outstanding mortgage or secured debt.

First Homes: A government-backed affordable home ownership scheme offering a minimum 30% discount on market value (up to 50% at local discretion). The discount is retained in perpetuity. Buyers must be first-time buyers with a household income under £80,000 (outside London) and must secure a mortgage for at least 50% of the purchase price.

Registered Providers: A not-for-profit organisation that provides and manages affordable housing, often in partnership with local authorities.

Housing Register: A list maintained by the local authority of individuals and families eligible for affordable housing. Registration is typically required to access council or housing association homes.

Local Connection: A criterion used to prioritise applicants for affordable housing. This may include current or past residence, employment in the area, or close family ties.

Open Market Housing: Homes sold or rented at full market value, with no restrictions on price or buyer eligibility.

Place: Place is the area in which you live and/or work.

Plan': A Neighbourhood Development Plan is produced by the Community for the Community.

Rented: – Housing Association / Council Housing rented through a Housing Association or local authority at below-market rates. This includes affordable and social rent, offering greater security than private renting.

Rural Housing Enabler: A specialist advisor who works with rural communities to identify housing needs and support the development of affordable housing schemes.

Section 106 Agreement: A legal agreement between a developer and a local authority, often used to secure affordable housing or community benefits as part of a planning permission.

Shared Ownership: A part-rent, part-buy scheme for first-time buyers or non-homeowners who cannot afford full ownership. Buyers purchase a share (typically 25–75%) and pay rent on the remainder. On Rural Exception Sites, ownership is capped at 80% to retain affordability for local people.

Stakeholder: Stakeholders are those with an interest within the parish such as a householder, business interests, educational interests, religious interests.

Tenure: The legal terms under which a property is occupied, such as owned outright, owned with a mortgage, rented privately, or rented from a housing association.

Research Documents:

Green Infrastructure Study (MDC EB041a)
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Emerging Local Development Plan (MDC)
Maldon District Characterisation Assessment (EB053)
Essex Design Guide 2006
PPG3 Housing (ODPP)
PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPP)
Scheduled Ancient Monuments (MDC)
Rural-Urban Classification for Output Areas in England (DEFRA)
Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (Chris Blandford Associates) [EB46]
National Character Area profile: 111 Northern Thames Basin
Malson District Council Local Development Plan 2014-2029
RCCE Housing Needs Report
WW Place Survey
WW Business Survey

Other Documents

"A Village History, Woodham Walter" by Patricia M Ryan
"London, An Illustrated History" by Cathy Ross and John Clark

Web Based Research

Planning Portal (UK Government)
Historic England (Building Listings)
Natural England - DEFRA
Superfast Essex Broadband - <http://www.superfastessex.org>
Essex Minerals Local Plan
Essex, Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan
Various Neighbourhood Plans

Acknowledgements

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Logo: John Tompkins.

Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group:

Cllr John Tompkins (Chair), James Rushton, Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk & RFO), Bob Jones, David Beattie, Paul and Viv Clark, Chris Wheadon, Angel Beighton and Kathy Tompkins.

Woodham Walter Village Design Statement (Adopted by MDC 2017)

Village Design Statement 2016		Woodham Walter Parish Council
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Foreword

Following the introduction of neighbourhood planning by Central Government, in the spring of 2013, the Woodham Walter Parish Council set up a residents Working Party to prepare this Village Design Statement (VDS) as part of the community led planning initiative. The VDS is wholly informed by, and fully embodies, villagers' views gained from a comprehensive questionnaire circulated to every household in the Parish in May 2014.

The Parish Council would firstly like to thank the Village for producing such a positive response rate (in excess of 75%) and for the great interest shown in the numerous follow-up public consultations and secondly, the VDS Working Party for their extensive work in preparing this document.

The document provides guidance to householders, designers and developers on design acceptable to the community. It will help to protect important or historic buildings, open spaces and local character and assist the Parish Council and District Council in determining planning applications in line with community views.

In situations where planning permission may not be required (such as where permitted development rights apply or windows are replaced), it is hoped that residents will in any case adopt the design standards set out in this document.

Joanna Symons
Chairman of the Parish Council.

Introduction 1

The Woodham Walter Village Design Statement

The Woodham Walter Village Statement endeavours to offer a detailed description of the existing character and main features of design in the Village, together with guidelines for how these should be respected in any development. The aim is to deter inappropriate development throughout the entire Parish, not just the central core.

This VDS is **not** intended to be prescriptive in any way and should be used as a tool to promote well designed alterations, extensions and new builds that respect local style and character. It provides advice on a comprehensive range of design elements including roof and wall finishes, windows and external doors (and their replacement), boundary treatment and external lighting. The document should be read in conjunction with the Maldon District Council Design Guide. It is intended to be read on-line although can be printed as hard-copy.

Key to Using this VDS Document**Colour Coding.**

To assist understanding, and for ease of reference throughout this document background colour coded boxes at the side of each page have been used to indicate the following:

Objectives	Planning Policy	Preferred Options (Based on Parish Questionnaire Responses)	District Council Planning Policy References e.g. S1
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Sketches

The sketches included in **Section 3, 'The Built Environment'**, are intended to solely illustrate the text and are not expressing a bias for any particular architectural style or building element.

Objectives**Purpose**

- 1.01 Provide a record of local uniqueness by describing the qualities and character of the Village.
- 1.02 To identify the principle aspects of the natural and built environment to be respected and protected from the impact of inappropriate development.
- 1.03 To provide design guidance to householders, designers and developers so that change is managed and development is in harmony with its rural setting.
- 1.04 To achieve a higher standard of design to enhance the local environment.
- 1.05 To increase the involvement and influence of the local community in the planning process.
- 1.06 To work with neighbouring authorities, partners and stakeholders to ensure cross boundary co-ordination and future planning.

2 Evolution - Geology, Topography and Landscape.



Geology, Topography and Boundaries.

The village sits on sand and gravel glacial outwash over London Clay, producing an undulating topography of hills and valleys rising gently southwards, away from the River Chelmer which forms the majority of its northern boundary and gently westwards, as height builds towards the Danbury Ridge. The Little Baddow – Danbury Ridge forms the western Parish boundary and the watershed between the Woodham Walter and Woodham Mortimer brooks the southern. The eastern boundary is not marked by any physical feature but is more than likely the edges of strips of common fields.

Landscape Character.

For reference the landscape map can be found at page 4. The main village settlement is located in the centre of the Parish and sits in the basin of a stream that rises in Woodham Walter Common. The landscape around it is characterised by the ancient woodlands of Woodham Walter Common (79.7ha), a Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI), and The Wilderness and several smaller woods, a leftover from the densely wooded topography that once dominated the area and probably gave rise to the name Woodham Walter or 'Wudeham', a settlement in the wood. There are rolling arable fields enclosed by native species hedgerows dotted with oak and ash, with open skies and long views and to the north the more intimate scenery of the river meadows. Roads and lanes are winding, rising and falling gently with the landscape and are likewise enclosed. A network of footpaths criss-cross the woodlands and arable fields.

Views.

Woodham Walter is a village with many fine views. From various locations there are views northwards across the Chelmer flood plain to Boreham, Ulling, Hatfield Peverel, Langford, Wickham Bishops and Great Totham and from Gunhill in particular, eastwards over village centre rooftops to The Wilderness and beyond. From Old London Road there is a distant view over Witham to Silver End and beyond and from St Michaels there is magnificent view of The Bell and The Street nestling in the basin of the stream which rises in Woodham Walter Common. Trees and tall hedgerows dominate almost every view to the extent that buildings are frequently wholly or partly hidden. The opportunities for a fine view are endless!

Evolution - Settlement Growth 2

Settlement Growth.

Like many other villages the development of Woodham Walter appears to have followed the track layout with settlements appearing at junctions and other principle points. The principle routes were east-west following the river and making their way towards Maldon. Where these tracks were bisected by a north-south route, settlements sprang up. Factor in a good water supply and employment and the settlement soon grows. The settlement growth can be traced by various maps.

The sale of the Woodham Walter estate by 1745 meant that the area became divided into smaller farms giving rise to an urgent need for accommodation. It is during this period that there was an increase in building not only in the Village centre but also in the outlying settlements.

The Chapman and Andre Map of 1777 indicates that a village had become established in the valley of the stream rising in Woodham Walter Common, with a cluster of buildings from The Bell to the stream fronting what is now The Street, the historic route to the River Chelmer. Scattered around the Village core are a number of small settlements (Spring Elms, Little London, West Bowers, Curlingtye Green) and a number of dispersed farmsteads.

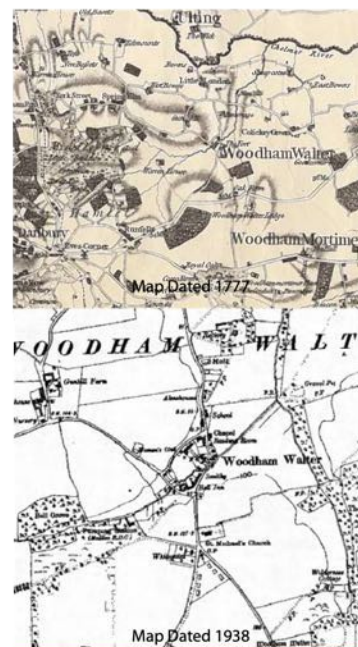
By 1875 a proper Village centre had developed with a Post Office, National School (1873), baker, butcher, beer shop (now the Queen Victoria PH), smithy and wheelwright and a Congregational Chapel (1881).

Growth slowed towards the end of the century, but in the early C20th the Women's Club (1906), almshouses (1908) and Reading Rooms were added. Two Arts and Crafts houses were built – The Warren House and Whitegates. Others in a similar style soon followed – Crossways and two lodge houses at The Warren. In 1926 tenants moved into the first Council houses in the Village (Church Corner).

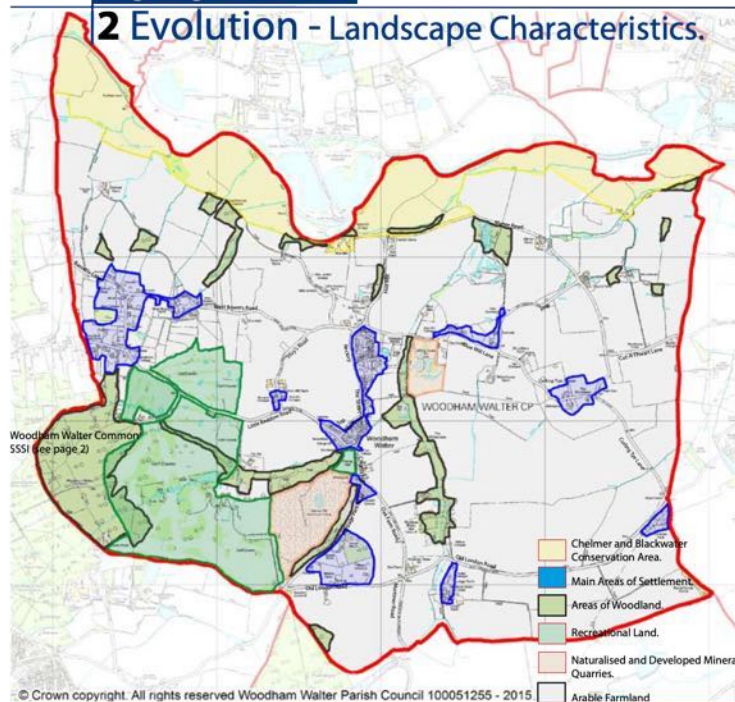
Additional Council Houses were built after WWII in Rectory Road and later some bungalows in Top Road. Mead Pastures was built, followed by Spar Hawks, Brook Close and three large houses in the grounds of Mead House, the former Rectory (1814). Most recently a number of houses away from the Village centre have been extended or completely re-built (Jasmine House, Grove Manor, 1 West Bowers Bungalows now Longwood).

In the 1990's a 20 pitch Traveller Site was constructed and in the early part of C21st work commenced on building holiday lodges and a small leisure centre at The Warren.

At the last census (2011) the Village had a population of 532 people living in 256 dwellings. Of these, 109 dwellings are located in Village centre as defined overleaf and the remainder are dispersed throughout the Parish, either singly or in groups of up to 30 dwellings, each with their special character.



2 Evolution - Landscape Characteristics.



Natural England has divided the country into National Character Areas for each of which there is a profile. These profiles tend to follow natural lines and are areas that share similar landscapes.

Woodham Walter lies within the Northern Thames Basin, which is rich in geo-diversity, archaeology and history stretching north-eastwards to Suffolk, westwards to Hertfordshire and south-wards to the River Thames. It includes the Essex wooded hills and ridges amongst which is the Danbury Ridge, encompassing Woodham Walter Common, and the gentle drop along the length of the River Chelmer that flows through the north of the Parish. There are several main areas of settlement and the remaining land is either historic woodland, recreational use or farmland interspersed with isolated settlement and small groups of dwellings.

The Parish has an agricultural tradition offering a varied land use pattern that includes arable and pasture land. There has been a significant decline in apple and pear orchards together with livestock in recent years leaving arable farming to become predominant. Since WWII the historic fields have become significantly enlarged to accommodate modern farming methods.

The canalised River Chelmer runs west to east along the northern boundary towards Maldon and the North Sea in a flat valley with large slopes rising from the arable grassland to the wooded ridges to the south and the more central settlements of the Village. The River valley is a conservation area throughout its length and there are long views across the valley from the higher ground. The diverse range of landscape provides a natural habitat for a wide range of species including deer, newts, water voles and dormice.

The influence of the growing conurbations of Chelmsford and Maldon has given rise to extreme pressure on land for housing and on the road infrastructure changes to which would in the main result in the loss of important arable land.

Evolution - Defined Areas of Settlement 2

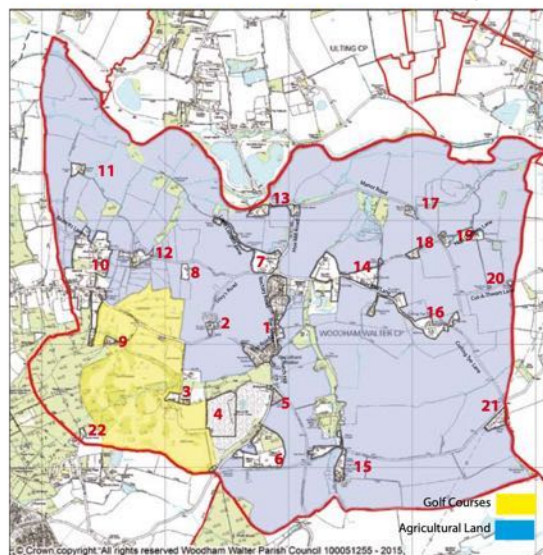
Areas of Defined Settlement

Woodham Walter as a village is referred to in the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Characterisation Assessment document as being an Arcadian settlement. It is a typical English Village with outlying groups of settlement; it is distinguished from a Hamlet by the fact that it has its own church and a centre. Being a dispersed rural settlement with a central core, it is categorised as 'Rural in a sparse setting' in DEFRA's Rural-Urban Classification for Output Areas in England. This is amply illustrated in the adjacent map showing the distribution of defined settlement areas set in amongst extended agricultural land use within the parish boundary. In the main this settlement is based around the junctions of roads or isolated such as Retreat Farm and Robin's Wood.

The Woodham Walter landscape epitomises all that is best in the Eastern Region of England. The scenery varies from open farmland to historic woods and includes a canalised river and two well laid out golf courses. Long views across open farmland interspersed by small wooded areas are characteristic of the area and can be experienced from all parts of the Village. The open farmland is criss-crossed by a significant number of footpaths shown on page 42 and two protected lanes shown on page 20.

The extent of the two golf courses and the old Warren Pit area can be readily determined on the map and both areas were originally farmland with the Warren being laid out as a golf course following the purchase of the house by Henry Thompson in 1904.

Most of the areas of defined settlement contain listed Buildings together with a number of buildings that are of historic or architectural interest although not Listed. In the central area these have been incorporated into the new Conservation Area and are shown on page 23.



Defined Areas of Settlement					
1 Central Village Area	7 Little London	13 Hoe Mill	19 Guys' Farm		
2 Gun Hill	8 Glendale	14 Blue Mill	20 Cut A Thwart Lane		
3 Warren House	9 Common Lane	15 Lodge Farm	21 Wood Corner		
4 Holiday Lodges	10 Spring Elms	16 Curling Tye Lane	22 Robin's Wood		
5 Church Corner	11 Retreat Farm	17 Manor Farm			
6 Grove Manor	12 West Bowers	18 Hop Garden Lane			

2 Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics.



Central Village Area (1)

From St Michael's, Church Hill drops into the basin of a stream nestling in the historic centre of the village. 'Wingtons' and the gable end of Bannister Cottage (both late C18th) sit behind a triangular greensward and Little Baddow Road branches south westwards, past The Bell (early C16th), crosses the stream and rises out of the village between single and 2-storey generally rendered detached houses with concrete tiled roofs set back from the road behind greenswards, grassy banks, indigenous hedges, trees and gardens.

Church Hill becomes The Street at Bannister Cottage, a row of houses initially on one side with an arable field opposite. It crosses the stream at a slight bend, now with housing on both sides as it rises to culminate at the Congregational Chapel (1881), and opposite, The Queen Victoria public house (c1820). Houses are detached C19th and C20th, brick or rendered, some with gable ends fronting the road.

At the pub Top Road branches south westwards, forming a triangle with The Street and Little Baddow Road. Generally C20th single and 2-storey housing and the Women's Club (1906) sit inside the triangle, with a grass bank and rising arable land opposite. There is a fine view of this part of the village from St Michael's, with rooftops and gable ends rising and falling with the change in elevation either side of the stream.

Beyond the pub The Street becomes Rectory Road with the School (1873), Almshouses (c1908), Village Hall (1928) and mostly C20th houses on its east side behind a narrow pavement, hedges, overhanging trees and small front gardens.

There is a mix of materials throughout the Village Centre. Walls are mostly rendered or brickwork, with some weatherboard, roofs mostly pantiles, interlocking concrete or plain tiles with some slate and windows predominantly casements, with some sash windows.



Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics. 2

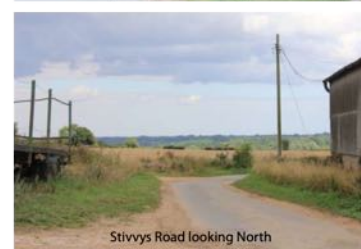


Gunhill (2)

In an elevated arable landscape clustered around the Listed Stivvys Road is a collection of twelve predominantly C19th, 2-storey slate or plain tile roofed red brick or rendered houses with timber sash windows. Set in well-cultivated gardens with native hedges, greenswards and a prominent 2m high brick wall adjacent to a terrace of five houses, originally part of a C19th nursery and hothouse. Mid C20th farm buildings bound the settlement to the north and by Little Baddow Road to the south with open views to the north over the Chelmer Valley, to the east overlooking the village centre and southwards overlooking woodland.

Warren House (3)

At the top of Herbage Road between two early C20th lodge houses is a narrow horse chestnut lined road winding gently downhill through the undulating golf course to the Warren Golf Club. At the bottom, opposite the Grade 2 C18th weatherboard clubhouse, overlooking gardens and fairways are 'The Warren House', a part C17th Arts and Crafts fronted house and an early C20th outbuilding. Nearby, along a tree lined track is 'Wayside', also Arts and Crafts. All three properties are parge plastered with plain tile roofs and timber casement windows and are backed by dense woodland.



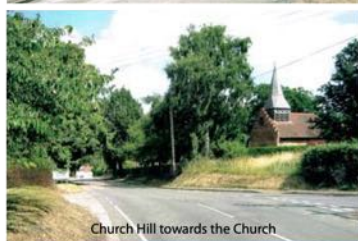
2 Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics.



Warren Pit



Church Corner, Oak Farm Road to the Left



Church Hill towards the Church

Warren Pit Lodges (4)

Returning half way back up the Golf Club access road is a small made up track running steeply downhill to Warren Pit. Enclosed by high hedgerows dotted with trees, this was previously used for gravel extraction, but is now the site for 36 single storey cedar clad lodges and an associated leisure centre and offices.

Church Corner (5)

Formed at the point where Oak Farm Road and Herbage Park Road converge, Church Corner sits on rising ground adjacent to the Grade II* Elizabethan St Michaels Church, occupying a triangular site fronted by the rendered C19th Church Cottage. In Oak Farm Road are three pairs of mid C20th slate roofed, rendered semi-detached houses with casement windows which are mirrored in Herbage Park Road, which also has a rendered bungalow of the same period. Facing the gable end of Church Cottage is the plain tile roofed, parge rendered Arts and Crafts Whitagates (originally two cottages).

Indigenous hedgerows form most boundaries and views west, and east down to The Wilderness, are constrained by the density and height of hedgerows and trees.



Warren Lodges



Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics. 2



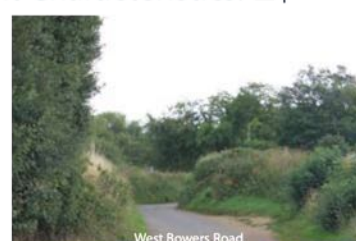
Herbage Park Road; Old London Road (6).

Overhung with large branches, Herbage Park Road climbs steadily away from the village centre and in a small area of woodland are a mock C18th brick manor house set back from the road behind large iron gates and nearby a mid-C20th rendered and tile hung house. Further along is a mid-C20th bungalow and then at its highest point (60m), the junction with Old London Road. This is level at first, past 'Albany Farm' sitting behind a tall hedge opposite arable fields, but then starts to drop, passing a substantial early C20th mock Tudor house brick with a long sweeping lawn down to Oak Farm Road. Plain tiles and casement windows predominate.

Little London (7).

As West Bowers Road rises gently away from the northern tip of the village centre it passes, behind a high hedge, the mid-C20th plain tiled, rendered and casement windowed Orchard House and enters a cutting in which sits the entrance to Little London Lane. This runs north for 100m, with arable land on one side and a tall hedgerow and poplar trees on the other, behind which sits the C19th Hatchmans Farm, slate roofed and rendered, with casement windows.

The Lane swings westwards, with wooded views towards Hoe Mill and open views southwards. It passes a C19th rendered house with a long brick outbuilding and then the early 19th C Little London House and C17th Little London Cottage. All are plastered with plain tile roofs and timber sash windows. The lane and boundaries are enclosed by indigenous hedgerow. Beyond this the Lane becomes an unmade track leading down to the tree lined river, passing the Grade 2 'Ravens', a C 15th/16th plastered hall house with plain tiles and casement windows enclosed by hedges. There are sweeping views down across the arable flood plain.



West Bowers Road



Hoe Mill House from Little London



Little London Cottage from West Bowers Road

2 Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics.



Across the Chelmer Valley from West Bowers



Glendale towards Little Baddow Road



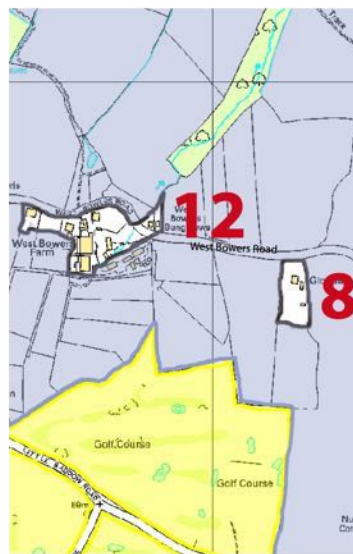
West Bowers Road Entrance to West Bowers Hall

Glendale and West Bowers Road. (8 and 12).

The single track West Bowers Road winds in a generally westerly direction from Rectory Road running parallel to, and some way above the Chelmer flood plain and rises gently to its junction with Bassets Lane.

Behind hedgerows dotted with oak and ash the landscape pattern is generally one of pasture south of the road and enclosed arable fields to the north sweeping down to the river. There are long views across the river valley.

'Glendale', an early C20th red brick slate roofed bungalow with casement windows and a prominent slate mansard roofed outbuilding, sits alone halfway along the road and further along are a cluster of five houses of varying styles. Behind a high dense hedge is a 1920's bungalow with painted brickwork walls next to a new larch clad 2-storey house with plain tile roof and casement windows. Opposite, and set back from the road, behind a long brick wall and just visible through the trees sits the imposing Grade II* West Bowers Hall with its exposed oak frame, white plasterwork, peg tile roofs and leaded casement windows. Next, 'The Barn', a rendered C19th farmhouse only thatched house in the village and then an early C21st red brick, weatherboarded and rendered house with a plain tile roof.



Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics. 2



Little Baddow Road, Spring Elms Lane (Part 10), Common Lane (9) and Robins Wood (22)

Little Baddow Road and Spring Elms Lane to Little Baddow. Includes Areas 9 (Common Lane) and 22 (Robins Wood), also part of Area 10.

At first Little Baddow Road rises steeply westwards away from the village centre and then more gently with hedgerows and arable fields on both sides. It passes through a section lined by tall overhanging trees reaching Bunsay Downs Golf Club, a rolled concrete and plain tiled single and 2-storey mostly rendered building and beyond, a 2-storey plain tiled, weatherboard house with timber sash windows and a mid-C20th brick semi-detached house. The golf course runs along both sides of the road barely visible through tall hedgerows dotted with trees.

Common Lane dissects the golf course, drops into dense woodland, crosses a stream and then rises with two large detached houses at the end, both plain tiled, rendered, with casement windows, one early C20th, the other late C20th.

At the end of the golf course, a pair of iron gates announces a small lane leading to a large unfinished house surrounded by woodland. South of this, and accessed from a small lane in Twitty Fee, is Wood, a large plain tiled mid-C20th rendered house with casement windows on a sloping site immersed in woodland.

At the top end of Little Baddow Road behind hedgerows there are two houses. 'Chamberlain Cottage', late C19th slate roofed, red brick and weatherboard, and the plain tiled, parget plastered Arts and Crafts 'Crossways'. Both have timber casement windows.

On reaching the highest point in the village (76m), with Bassets Lane to the north, the road runs into Spring Elms Lane on which there are eight predominantly 2-storey rendered houses all C20th with casement windows plain or pantiles, often behind high hedgerows.



Common Lane Looking South to Historic Woodland



Spring Elms Lane - the Highest Point in the Village

2 Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics.



Bassetts Lane Triangle



Bassetts Lane Southwards up to Spring Elms



Bassetts Lane towards Bassetts

Bassetts Lane (10).

This area covers fourteen 2-storey detached houses in Bassetts Lane and a plain tiled, rendered bungalow and 2-storey bungalow conversion (under construction) at the top end of West Bowers Road which it meets, forming a triangle of land on which sit thirteen trees, mostly large oaks. West of the triangle Bassetts Lane is flat, but to the south it rises steadily to the highest point in the village where it meets Spring Elms Lane. Thick oak branches overhang much of this section.

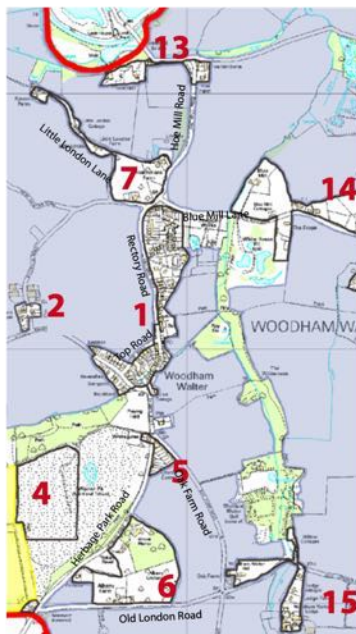
With the exception of the plain tiled, rendered C18th 'Elwy Cottages' (now a single property), and a weatherboard barn conversion, all of the houses in Bassetts Lane are early to mid-C20th, predominantly rendered with slate or plain tile roofs and casement windows. Behind mixed hedgerows, greenswards and ditches there are large mature gardens with large deciduous trees, fruit trees and specimen evergreens. Views are generally constrained by the density of planting, but there are occasional views northwards.

Bassetts and Retreat Farm (11).

The westerly end of Bassetts Lane drops gently towards the Parish boundary and Little Baddow. Hedgerows on both sides of this narrow winding road are dense, but do afford occasional long views northwards across the river valley. A narrow track leads northwards away from the lane and at the end sits the Grade II Retreat Farm, early C15th, with C16th and C19th additions. Further along the lane, 'Bassetts', Grade II C17th, sits behind a high late C20th brick wall, with fine views south and north across the river valley. Both houses are rendered with plain tile roofs and casement windows.



Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics. 2



Hoe Mill. Area 13.

With hedgerows and arable fields on both sides, Hoe Mill Road falls gently towards the northern boundary of the Parish. As it approaches the River Chelmer oak and ash trees dot the sparse hedgerows and there is pasture on the now visible flood plain.

At a sharp bend in the road, marked by an ancient oak is the sash windowed, slate roofed, rendered Hoe Mill Farm (1832), now a private house and next to it recently renovated plain and pantile weatherboard barns. An early C20th rendered, slate roofed bungalow and another large oak sit above the next sharp bend and as the road nears the bridge, there are very tall redwood cedars to one side. Adjacent to the bungalow is a pair of tall iron gates leading to the elegant Grade II mid-C19th Hoe Mill House, (gault brick, slate roofs and sash windows), barely visible through the hedgerow and trees.



Hoe Mill Road



Hoe Mill Farm from Manor Road

2 Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics.



Blue Mill Lane entrance to Blue Mill



Blue Mill Lane from Curling Tye Green

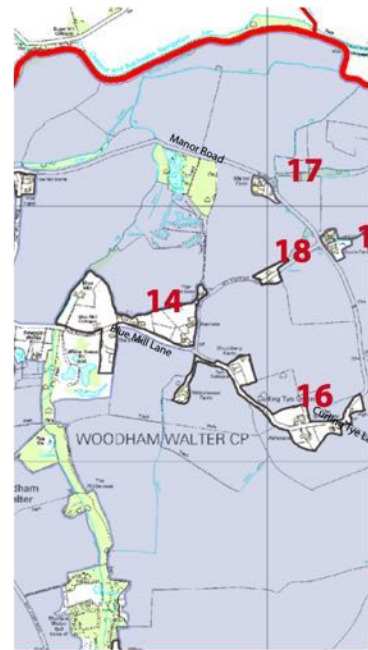
Blue Mill Lane (14) and Curling Tye Lane (16).

Winding eastwards away from the village centre, Blue Mill Lane falls gently before crossing a stream, rising and then levelling out as it runs into Curling Tye Lane. With arable fields and high hedgerows interspersed with oak and ash on both sides of these narrow lanes there are only occasional restricted views north to the river.

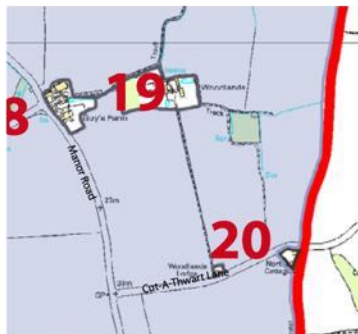
The two lanes accommodate twenty houses and the settlement pattern is one of small clusters with individual houses between.

Opposite an area of woodland up an unmade track next to the stream sits the brick and weatherboard Grade II Blue Mill. Close by on the lane are an early C20th brick semi, a large mid C20th brick house behind a high trimmed hedge, 'The Cats' public house, a late C18th brick and weatherboard 'double cottage' and next to it a C19th rendered cottage and another large rendered house. Plain tiles predominate and apart from Blue Mill that has part sash windows, timber casement windows are in wide use.

Further along, near the junction with Hop Gardens Lane are two pairs of semi-detached houses, both C20th one early, one mid Century; off the lane the Listed and converted Whitehouse Farm and further along Shrublands Farm and another house. Curling Tye Lane now starts to rise gently and in 200m at Curling Tye Green is a final cluster of four houses, three of which are Grade II, together with a number of Listed weatherboard barns with pantile roofs. Plain tiles, render and both sash and casement windows predominate. All sit behind high hedgerows, trimmed hedges, narrow greenswards and ditches.



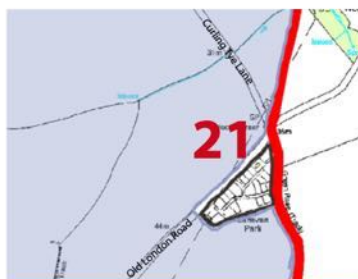
Evolution - Area Settlement Characteristics. 2



Cut-a-Thwart Lane (19 and 20).

The secluded Cut-a-Thwart Lane runs eastwards from Manor Road, with patchy hedgerows on both sides, affording occasional views down to the tree lined river and beyond. There are two houses in this very narrow lane. 'Woodlands Lodge', a 2-storey slate roofed rendered house notable for the two Doric columns on its front facade, which sits at the top of the track to the main house, and on the Parish boundary 'Northall Cottages', a C19th two storey red brick house with a plain tiled roof and dormers and casement windows.

The open track to the main house runs northwards for 400m, before reaching 'Woodlands', a substantial 2-storey rendered Grade II C18th house with plain tile roofs and large shuttered sash windows, surrounded by gardens, woodland and enclosed fields.

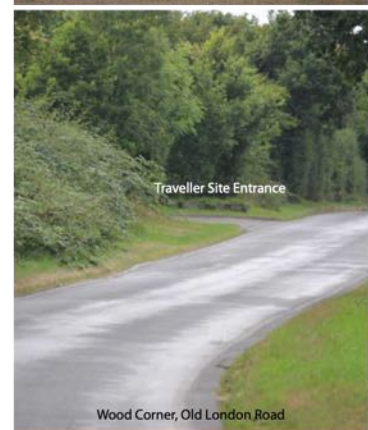


Wood Corner (21).

This 1990's constructed 20 pitch Traveller Site, enclosed by tall hedgerows and surrounded by arable fields is located on Old London Road at its junction with Curling Tye Lane on the eastern boundary of the Parish. The entrance to the site is very well kept with mown greenswathes.



Towards Woodlands Lodge from Guy's Farm Road



Wood Corner, Old London Road

2 Evolution - Building Styles



Plaster/ Render.

From the C16th–C21st there has been a proliferation of plastered /rendered buildings generally painted white or pastel. Early examples are in lime plaster (Retreat Farm c1580, Wingtons c1690, Elwy Cottages c1770), whilst later buildings such as The Spindle, Jasmine House, Ambleside and Ashputtle (all late C20th /early C21st) are in cement based render. Early exposed timber framed buildings (Ravens c1580, The Bell c1600, West Bowers Hall C16th) have lime plaster infill panels. Recently render has been used as a first floor band above facing brickwork (Hawkins Farm Cottages c1960, Watenlath 1985, Somerset early C21st), occasionally for over/under window panels (Dobbins c1970)) and as a gable end spandrel (Dabblers c1960's). Early C20th Arts and Crafts houses (The Warren House, Crossways) have parget plaster. A few houses have pebbledash (The Maples 1906, Church Corner c1950's).

Brickwork.

St Michaels (1564) has Tudor red facing brickwork, but for domestic buildings Lodge Farm (1757) appears to be the earliest example, although it was not in general use (chimney stacks and plinths apart) until C19th. Early examples are generally red facings (Gunhill Farmhouse 1815, Nursery Cottages 1874), but gaults have been used at Mead House (c1814) and Hoe Mill House (c1845). Contrasting brick arches, bands and quoins were used occasionally from mid C19th (Nursery Cottages, Lynton House c1905). From mid C20th brick colours in addition to red have been in common use: light orange multis and dapple lights in Mead Pastures, orange multis in Brook Close and yellow multis at Poldhu and Robins Hill (all c1970). All houses have one or more chimney stacks. Generally of brick, with round, often roll topped chimney pots, they form a strong visual element: Northall Cottages, The Warren House.

Timber Weatherboard.

Used from the late C18th, mostly horizontal and generally painted white/cream: Blue Mill c1729, Apple Cottage, Congregational Chapel 1881, Womens Club 1906, Stockwells mid C20th. High Oaks Cottage mid C20th has recently been re-clad in cream boarding. Numerous agricultural buildings (Curling Tye) and a few houses have black boarding: (Black Cottage C17th) and Beightons (c1970) where it is vertical. Horizontal natural larch is used at the Longwood (2015).

Other wall finishes.

Since mid C20th tile hanging (Parsonage Pightle c1960, Brookside c1970) and shiplap (1, Sparhawks c1960) have been used mostly in small areas such as dormers or part elevations. Berberis (2016) has an elevation in Cedar cladding.

Evolution - Building Styles 2

Windows.

Windows form a strong visual element. In older buildings, where storey heights are low, openings have vertical subdivisions and are small and squarish (Elwy Cottages, Black Cottages), or occasionally horizontal (West Bowers Hall).

Vertical sash windows of various pattern, often with a pronounced vertical emphasis were first used at Retreat Farm (late C18th) and from early C19th (Gunhill Farmhouse 1815) - early C20th (Lynton House 1905, The Maples 1906), they were the predominant window type. Fine examples are provided by Woodlands early C19th, Manor Farm c1830 and Hoe Mill House mid C19th.

Casement windows with vertical subdivisions, often with top opening fanlights have predominated since early C20th, although in the 1960's there was a shift to larger more horizontal openings (Atlantis, Hawkins Farm Cottages). Late C20th and C21st houses generally have casements. Leaded windows (Ravens C15th, The Warren House 1906, Summerfield early C21st) and bay windows (West Bowers Hall C16th, Hatchmans 1873, Wallingford mid C20th) appear on houses of all ages. The Almshouses (1908) have Gothic lancet windows. Plastic replacement windows have been used occasionally.

Decorative elements.

A number of houses have decorative embellishments. Tuscan columns and pilasters (Hoe Mill House), ionic columns (Woodlands Lodge), decorative gable end terracotta tiles (Lynton House), brick dentils and gauged brick arches (Blue Mill), terracotta egg and dart lintels (Nursery Villas), blank 'windows' (Gunhill Farmhouse, Manor Farm), external shutters (Woodlands, The Warren House). There is occasional use of relief decoration to rendering (Tudor Rose c1970). Decorative porticos are a feature of numerous houses of all ages (Blue Mill, 3-18 Mead Pastures).

Roofs.

Most buildings have conventional pitched roofs. Plain clay peg tiles on roofs with a pitch of 40-55deg. were in general use up until C19th (Bassetts c1665, Elwy Cottages c1770). Welsh slate on pitches down to 25 deg. appeared in the C19th at Mead House c1814, Manor Farm c1830 and Hoe Mill Farm c1840, Nursery Villas 1899, Glendale c1925 and a number of other buildings.

Numerous buildings have hipped roofs (Blue Mill c1729, Manor Farm) and Guys Farm (C17th/ C18th) and Ravensfield (mid C20th) have gambrels. There is a catslide roof at Gunhill Farmhouse (1815). Most early outbuildings have clay pantile roofs (various at Curling Tye, North Hall Cottages, Nursery Cottages). The Barn (C18th) has the only thatched roof in the Village.



2 Evolution - Building Styles



Roofs continued.

In the late C19th machine made red/brown plain clay tiles were available and used at The Warren House (c1906), the Almshouses (1908), the Village Hall (1928), 1-6, Church Corner (c1950's), Yeomans (c 1990), Somerset and Jasmine (both early C21st), Berberis (2016).

Machine made interlocking tiles, either cambered, (The Maples 1906, Church Corner c1950's, Gunhill Cottages c1960) or flat (Cartref, Valley, c1970's), have been used on numerous houses. Roman profile/pantiles are common: 1-20 Rectory Road (c1950), Brook Close (c1970), Summerfield (early C21st). Flat roofs have appeared infrequently, generally on dormers or domestic garages.

Dormers.

Dormers have been used since the C16th and are pitched or hipped in tiles or slate to match main roofs or flat in lead. At Retreat Farm they are pitched in plain tiles, at Blackberry Cottage plain tiled catslide, at Ashmans, plain tiled hipped, at Hoe Mill House slate, at The Warren House flat in lead and in a number of houses late C20th flat in roofing felt.

Porches.

A feature on some houses either fully enclosed, (Milestone Barn late C20th) or open sided, (Ambleside) and generally with a pitched or lean-to plain tiled roof. The Almshouses (closed) and Hoe Mill House (open with flat roof) provide fine examples.

Boundary Treatments.

With the exception of farmsteads and one or two large houses, buildings are orientated towards the road or lane with hedges, trees, greenswards and sometimes ditches, running along front boundaries. White painted picket fences (Lynton House), low iron railings (Nursery Cottages), and tall brick walls and high metal gates (Grove Manor) are in occasional use. Most houses have vehicular access on the front boundary and there are a few examples of open plan front gardens (Mead Pastures, Brook Close).

Evolution - Heritage Assets 2

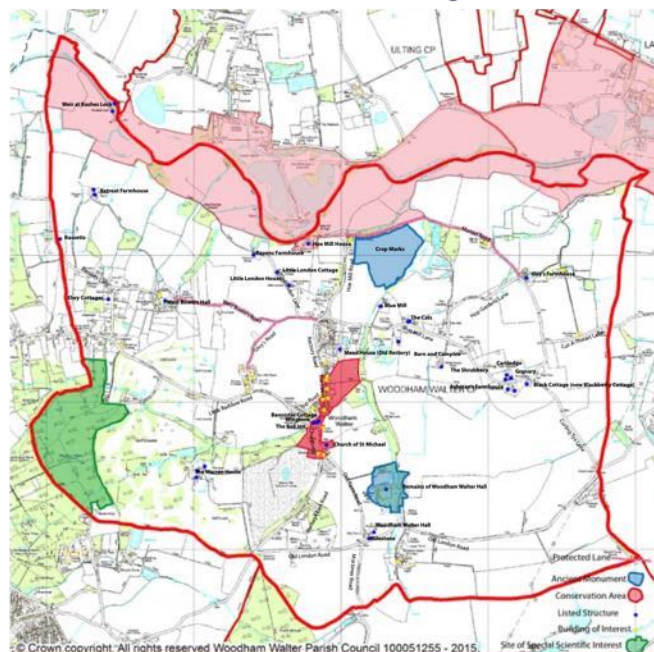
Listed Buildings D3

Illustrated on adjacent map

Ashman's Farmhouse and Barn Grade II; Curling Tye Lane
Bannister Cottage Grade II; 2 The Street.
Barn and complex Grade II; Whitehouse Farm Curling Tye Lane.
Bassetts Grade II; Tofts Chase.
Black Cottage (now Blackberry Cottage) Grade II; Curling Tye Lane.
Blue Mill and Mill House Grade II; Blue Mill Lane
Cartlodge Grade II; Curling Tye Lane.
Church of St Michael Grade II*; Church Hill
Elwy Cottages Grade II; Bassetts Lane.
Granary Grade II; Curling Tye Lane.
Guy's Farmhouse Grade II; Manor Road.
Hoe Mill House Grade II; The Causeway.
Little London Cottage Grade II; Little London Lane.
Little London House Grade II; Little London Lane.
Mead House (Old Rectory) Grade II; Woodham Walter.
Milestone Grade II; Old London Road
Pump Grade II; Blue Mill Lane.
Ravens Farmhouse Grade II; Little London Lane.
Retreat Farmhouse Grade II; Woodham Walter.
Ruins of Old Woodham Walter Hall Grade II; Old London Road.
Rushes Lock and Lock Gates Grade II; Bumfords Lane.
The Bell Inn Grade II; Little Baddow Road.
The Cats Grade II Blue Mill Lane
The Shrubbery Grade II; Curling Tye Lane.
The Warren House Grade II; The Warren
Weir at Rushes Lock Grade II; Bumfords Lane, Ulting.
West Bowers Hall Grade II*; W Bowers Road.
Wingtons Grade II; 2 The Street.
Woodham Walter Hall Grade II; Old London Road.

Ancient Monuments D3

Remains of Woodham Walter Hall
 Crop Marks East of Hoe Mill



2 Evolution - Heritage Assets

Guidance

Heritage Assets

2.01 *Wherever possible, heritage assets should be saved rather than demolished and replaced, retaining as much historic fabric as possible.*

2.02 *Encompassing a building's significance, preserve or enhance the special character, setting and townscape in a manner appropriate to a heritage asset.*

2.03 *New buildings and building extensions should respect the scale, form, and design of heritage asset buildings in the vicinity.*

2.04 *Development within the Conservation Area should contribute by having a character and appearance serving to enhance and preserve the area.*

Conservation and Heritage Assets **D1 D3**

The Parish has the great fortune to have some twenty-nine Listed Buildings and two Ancient Monuments. Of the Listed Buildings, two are listed as Grade II*, West Bowers Hall and the Church of St Michael the Archangel. The two Ancient Monuments are the remains of Woodham Walter Hall and the crop marks east of Hoe Mill. The full list of buildings together with their locations can be found on page 20. In addition to these there are a number of other buildings that are of architectural or historic interest to the Village that are to be put forward for inclusion on the District Council's Local List.

Building Listing helps in acknowledging and understanding shared history. Listing marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and its setting. There are several categories of Listing that are broadly: Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest, sometimes considered to be internationally important; only 2.5% of listed buildings are Grade I. Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest; just 5.5% of listed buildings are Grade II*. Grade II buildings are nationally important and of special interest; 92% of all listed buildings are in this class. In England there are over 374,000 listed building entries on the register.

Part of the Village core has been designated a Conservation Area the details of which can be found on pages 23 and 24. A Conservation Area is one that is of special architectural interest that has a character or appearance which has merit in being preserved and enhanced.

It is not just the buildings that are significant but also their settings and the 'added value' that they bring to the character of the area. Therefore the landscape has as much importance as the townscape.



St Michael the Archangel,
Listed Grade II*



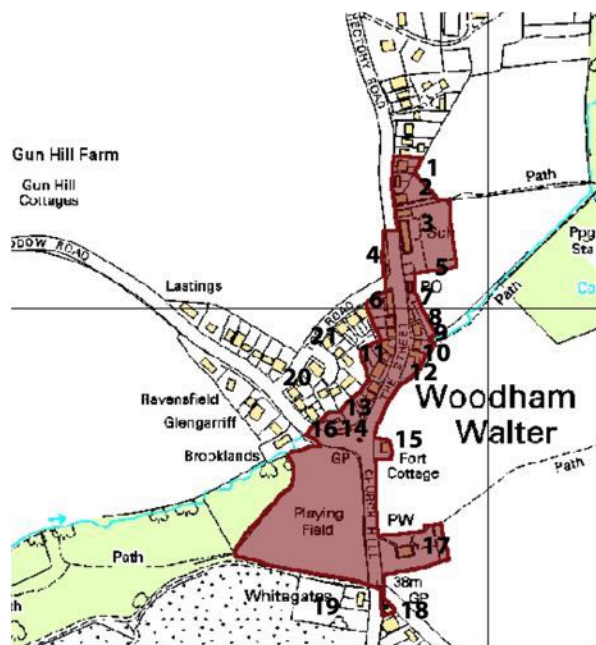
West Bowers Hall,
Listed Grade II*

Evolution - Conservation Area 2

Properties of Interest

Clockwise from the north

- 1 The Maples 1 and 2, (Old Village Dairy).
- 2 Robert Falkener Almshouses 1 and 2 C20.
- 3 Original section of the School C19.
- 4 Ash Cottage (The Village Undertaker's House).
- 5 Chapel Stores C19, (Formerly a Non-Conformist Chapel).
- 6 The Queen Victoria C19, (Formerly a Cottage and Beer House).
- 7 Severn House C17, (Farm Labourers' Cottages now one house).
- 8 Red Brick Cottages C19.
- 9 Wendover Cottage.
- 11 Lynton House (Old Village Bakery).
- 12 Ferndale.
- 13 Bannister Cottage C18, Grade II, (Formerly the Village Poorhouse).
- 14 Wingtons C17, Grade II, (Old Village Shop).
- 15 Fort Cottage C17, (Farm Labourer's Cottage).
- 16 The Bell C16.
- 17 St Michael's Church C16, Grade II*.
- 18 Church Corner.
- 19 Whitegates C20, (Arts and Crafts Style House).
- 20 White Lodge C19, (Farm Labourer's Cottage).
- 21 The Womens' Club C20, (Former Garden 'Room').



2 Evolution - Conservation Area Article 4 Direction



The designation of the centre of Woodham Walter as a Conservation Area is an important decision made by the Maldon District Council and is supported by the Parish Council.

This designation is a major step towards retaining, through design, the character of the Village for future generations by giving the District Council extra power to manage certain types of development and demolition. It gives the Council the ability to carry out urgent repairs on vacant, unlisted buildings that have fallen into disrepair, recovering the costs from the owner. It also affords protection to all trees within the area boundary and gives greater control over advertisements and shop signs although the latter is academic. The Conservation Area Order also includes Article 4 Directions that impose additional restrictions.

Elsewhere in this document reference has been made to Permitted Development with respect to certain works that would normally require the grant of planning permission. Such works, that are of a scale or type not likely to have an unacceptable impact, can fall under the terms of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) which sets out the classes of development for which a grant of planning permission is automatically given. The District Council under Article 4(1) of the GPDO have applied Article 4 Directions that limit the scope of these permitted development rights and are used to control works that could potentially threaten the character of an area such as the Conservation Area. They also help to increase the public protection of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings. In consequence where Article 4 Directions apply, a grant of planning permission is required to carry out works.

In Woodham Walter the Article 4 Directions include:

- Alteration of the front elevation of a dwellinghouse affecting doors or windows including the formation of new openings.
- The alteration of front roof slopes including the replacement of the existing roof coverings with a different material, insertion of dormer or other windows or the installation of a micro-generation unit.
- Painting over unpainted brickwork of any part of a dwellinghouse fronting the highway.
- Alterations to or the removal of a chimney on a house or building associated with the house.

For such works a planning application must be made.

The Built Environment - Background 3

Presumption **S1 S7 D3**

The Village Design Statement (VDS) is a tool to ensure that any new development in Woodham Walter respects and reflects the distinctive visual character of the village and its environs and fulfills the criteria and policies of the Local Authority included in the Local Development Plan. The VDS does not detail what type of development should take place in the Parish nor the state of local services, but strives to promote good design in accord with the character assessment of each area of defined settlements.

The VDS is primarily concerned with the visual character of a village and how it might be protected or enhanced. It is an important evidence based document that has been wholly driven by the response from the community to the VDS Questionnaire. Results of the Questionnaire can be found on the Parish Council website.

'Sustainable Development' is a phrase that is often used in conjunction with the built environment and one that is frequently heard, but what is sustainable development? Within the planning environment the definition of 'sustainable' is considered by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as having three dimensions:

- **an economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- **a social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being;
- **an environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Objectives

Presumption

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 3.01 | Guide owners and occupiers on caring for their village. |
| 3.02 | Guide developers on design aspects that are regarded as acceptable to the community, including the setting of buildings and the use of materials. |
| 3.03 | Guide people undertaking building work. |
| 3.04
S1
D3 | Assist in the protection of local heritage buildings and artefacts particularly in the conservation area. |
| 5.05
S1 | Protect and visually improve open spaces and the street scene. |
| 3.06
S1
S7 | Ensure conservation and protection of those qualities and characteristics of the village and its environs which are most valued by its inhabitants. |
| 3.07 | Assist Council Officers in the determination of Village planning applications. |

3 The Built Environment - Background



Background

Essential to the concept of sustainable development is an approach to building that endeavours to balance different, and often competing, needs against an awareness of the environmental, social and economic limitations. It is within the fabric and spirit of this that this VDS has been compiled.

Planning is governed by the Town and Country Planning Act and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act). For Woodham Walter these acts are administered by the Maldon District Council with Historic England and the Conservation Officer acting as consultees. Under the Ecclesiastical Exemption Order, the Diocesan Advisory Committee deal with internal Church alterations.

The Village of Woodham Walter is based on an historical road layout that contains a local distributor road linking the A414 at Runsell Green to Ulting and Hatfield Peverel together with lanes linking other parts of the Parish and to Little Baddow. These lanes are in the main narrow without pedestrian ways and are at times overburdened with traffic and have influenced the development of the Village. Evidence based responses to the Questionnaire expressed strong opinions that any further development would intensify the current road inadequacies.

The areas outside of the existing defined settlement area have agricultural or recreational uses and in the past have included gravel extraction. Agricultural use is a major factor affecting future development and a significant majority of questionnaire respondents did not wish to see development extended beyond the defined settlement area or to the detriment of agricultural land.

For economic sustainability services infrastructure is an important consideration. The Village is served with electricity that is mainly distributed by overhead power cables and these impact on the open views. In new development they should be laid underground; there is no natural gas distribution network so consideration should be given to LPG (liquid petroleum gas) storage in new development. Water supply within the Village core is via underground pipework but in other areas is drawn from wells and springs thereby influencing siting. Superfast Broadband is programmed to be rolled out to the central Village area and will influence the design and use of home offices. Mobile telephone reception is improving in some areas of the Village according to topography. The absence of good public transport requires use of the motorcar which then becomes a major influence on design.

Sketches

The sketches included in this Section, 'The Built Environment', are intended to solely illustrate the text and are not expressing a bias for any particular architectural style or building element.

The Built Environment - Design Relationships 3

Settlement Pattern S8 D1

Of those who expressed an opinion in the questionnaire, a firm majority considered that the boundaries of the Defined Village Settlement were acceptable. A small majority considered that infill housing, i.e. using the land between existing houses, should be encouraged provided it did not detract from the surrounding buildings and is sympathetic in design, scale, height and materials. As an 'Arcadian' style of village, the maintenance of open views between dwellings where possible is important. An overwhelming majority of respondents wished to preserve these aspects by the avoidance of 'back garden' developments and with a wish to maintain the housing density level.

What is a ... ?



Possible Development Site as Existing



Housing Infilled Between Existing Buildings



Backland Development Increasing Density



Defined Village Envelope Contained within Red Boundary

Guidance

Settlement Pattern

3.08 Sustainable Development within the Village core Defined Settlement Boundary will be supported (see map).

3.09 Wherever possible, character, landscape and local context should be maintained and enhanced.

3.10 The use of infill sites should be encouraged, but with any development recognising the integrity of the adjacent buildings in size, scale, height and materials.

Preferred Options

3.11 Where possible open rural views should not be obstructed by backland development whether inside the Defined Settlement or not.

3.12 Outside of the Defined Settlement Area only existing sites with unsustainable buildings should be considered for development and sustainability should be considered as to its appropriateness.

3 The Built Environment - Design Relationships

Guidance

Design Relationships

- 3.13** *Retain a mix of designs with a rural character commensurate with that of the Village.*
D1
- 3.14** *Ensure that buildings reflect the relationship with the site and adjoining structures.*
D1
- 3.15** *Housing types should be mixed and appropriate in size and design to augment the particular site and immediate location.*
H1
H2

Preferred Options

- 3.16** *Siting of any new development should be such so as not to obscure any of the open vistas across the rural landscape.*
- 3.17** *Avoid 'mock period' design. Utilise contemporary design within the rural context. Buildings should be in proportion and in scale with surrounding structures.*

Design Relationships **D1 H1 H2**

Woodham Walter has an eclectic mixture of buildings encompassing listed buildings to C20th dwellings. They include religious, recreational, educational, community and residential and range between one and two storeys, with some having rooms in roofs. Their relative relationships with adjoining buildings, choice of materials and scale add to the Village character.

Importantly, the siting of buildings allows many views through to open country emphasising the rural nature of the community and adds to the street scene. Overwhelmingly, questionnaire respondents considered it critical to maintain this building mixture to retain the established Village character and, because of the open views, the building density. Some concern was voiced at the possibility that the Village would become a ribbon development that would destroy its heart and ambience. Replacement or new build dwellings should be in keeping with the massing and scale of adjoining buildings and compliment the street scene.

The majority of respondents were opposed to 'mock period' rather than contemporary design providing that it fitted the Village character and the street scene. Considerable concern was expressed in the narrative responses that the current mix of housing was becoming biased towards the larger family unit rather than what the Village needed to retain younger residents, mixed housing affordable

What is?



Disproportionate Scale and Massing Affecting the Street Scene.

The Built Environment - Design Relationships 3

Design Relationships - continued **S8 D2 E4 H4**

Questionnaire respondents were concerned at the proliferation of replacement dwellings designed in an unrelated style and size and bearing little relationship to the site, adjacent buildings or the impact on the Village. A number of respondents expressed concern at the 'creeping urbanism' that was manifest in high walled, gated housing completely out of character with the Village, the street scene and the rural setting and are generally inappropriate according to area characteristics.

A large majority of respondents considered that any development of new build or alteration outside of the Defined Settlement Area ought to be designed to satisfy the guidelines that apply to the core of the Village.

A majority of respondents considered that alternative uses could be found for proven redundant agricultural buildings in sustainable locations to avoid decay and demolition as they 'punctuate' the rural landscape. Uses for such buildings would include proposals supporting employment generation or on rare occasions, residential. The demolition of such buildings detracts from the rural nature of the Village. At the same time they did not wish to see any loss of agricultural land to development unless it was associated with agricultural or other land-based uses.

An overwhelming majority of respondents considered that recycling facilities and green waste bins should preferably be incorporated into any new design together with bicycle storage. Such structures need to be large enough for the containers, conveniently located for collection and constructed with compatible materials.

When considering the design and planning of new developments, a majority of respondents judged that non-arable grazing land, green swards and grassed verges were an essential part of the visual amenity of the Village and should be incorporated and maintained as such.

Typical examples of ...



Recycle Bin Store



Keep verges and swards



Change of Use for Redundant Agricultural Buildings in sustainable locations

Guidance

Design Relationships

- 3.18** *Avoid urbanisation of rural area by ensuring new designs are compatible with the surrounding area.*
S8
- 3.19** *Alterations, extensions, rebuilds and new builds outside of the Defined Settlement Area should comply with the guidance set out in this document.*
H4
- 3.20** *Redundant agricultural buildings should be retained wherever possible. Where retention is not possible, alternative uses should be found for providing there is no detrimental loss of agricultural land.*
E4
- 3.21** *Design provision should be made in all new projects for the covered storing of re-cycling bins and bicycles.*
D2

Preferred Options

- 3.22** *Where possible any new developments should make provision for the inclusion of grass verges and swards which should be permanently maintained.*

3 The Built Environment - Design Relationships

Guidance

Design Relationships

3.23 Consider 'Secured by Design' for any new building project (Subject to the Government's Housing Standards Review).

3.24 Solar panels where possible should be discreetly located and not detract from the street scene or long views. They should be fixed in accordance with the regulations.

3.25 The Village does not support the installation of commercial wind turbines or wind farms unless it can be demonstrated not to have an adverse visual, noise or wildlife impact either individually or cumulatively.

Preferred Options

3.26 Satellite dishes should be of minimum size and where possible discreetly located on the side or rear of dwellings.

3.27 Mobile 'phone or wifi masts should be incorporated and concealed within an existing structure or camouflaged.

Design Relationships - continued **D1 D4**

A majority of respondents considered that the location of satellite dishes should be discreet. Dishes ought therefore be of the minimum appropriate size and preferably fixed to the side or rear of the property where reception allows. They, like some (but not all) solar panel installations, are categorised as Permitted Development outside of the conservation area but it is hoped that Residents will take heed of the guidance offered. A small majority (3.26%) of respondents considered that the installation of solar panels ought to be encouraged providing they are discreetly located and do not adversely affect the street scene or can be viewed from other Village vistas.

A substantial majority of residents considered that large commercial wind turbines have an adverse impact on landscape character, wildlife, heritage assets, footpath safety and visual impact. Installations should not be encouraged but considered on a case by case basis. Similarly, a substantial majority considered that the erection of mobile 'phone or wifi masts should be discouraged. However, the need for proper mobile 'phone and wifi services is supported by the Villagers and as such, masts should be discreetly located and where possible camouflaged or concealed within an existing structure.

An overwhelming majority considered that overhead cables should be placed underground. The concealing of overhead cables and supporting system would be in line with maintaining the rural visual impact of the Village. This would include new sub-stations if they are required.

Crime is not a major issue within the Village but it nevertheless exists together with its victim impact. A significant majority of respondents agreed that any new development including alterations and extensions should be designed with security in mind. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) have created 'Secured by Design' which should be adopted for all new developments. It covers many aspects included within this document such as parking, lighting, window and door security, boundary treatments etc and may be found at www.securedbydesign.com.

What is/are ... ? Secured by Design



The Built Environment - Materials 3

Materials **D1 D2 D3 H4**

Materials for extensions and alterations are preferred to, wherever possible, match or complement the existing building and its setting on the site relative to the settlement characterisation. Similarly, materials for new build should complement the site and respect adjacent buildings whilst at the same time reflecting the rural nature of the Village. Use of materials from sustainable sources where possible should be maximised. Facing brickwork in red and brown hues, pargetting, render and feather edged boarding are all acceptable materials painted in Woodham Walter colours. Cementitious self-coloured cladding is no substitute for traditional timber feather edged boarding. Painted shiplap boarding is more suited to American colonial style buildings and not a rural Essex environment.

Preferred roofing materials include clay peg tiles, plain tiles, pantiles or slates depending upon the existing property and should add to the rural character of the location.

What is ... ?



Shiplap Boarding



Feather Edge Timber Boarding



Facing Brickwork



The Colours of Woodham Walter



Clay Peg Tiles



Concrete Plain Tiles



Slate



Concrete Pantiles

Guidance

Alterations and Extensions

3.28 Replacement windows should be consistent with the age and style of building or complement or match the existing.

3.29 Materials for extensions should be compatible with the existing building and be of a local Woodham Walter vernacular. The use of materials from sustainable sources should be maximised.

3.30 Suitable materials include brick, render, pargetting, slate, tile, feather-edged boarding, glass.

Preferred Options

3.31 Suitable materials include brick, render, pargetting, slate, tile, feather-edged boarding, glass.

3.32 Render or pargetting should be decorated in traditional Woodham Walter Colours.

3 The Built Environment - Alterations and Extensions

Guidance

Alterations and Extensions

- 3.33** *Extensions to buildings should be proportional to the main dwelling size and site plot. They should be subservient to the main building by setting back from the building line by 500mm and not overlook adjoining plots.*
- 3.34** *Extensions in all cases should make a positive contribution to the character of the main building, its site and its neighbours.*
- 3.35** *Extension roofs should be designed so as not to impact on the main dwelling and preferably should be pitched and not flat.*

Preferred Options

- 3.36** *Extension roofs should be designed so as not to impact on the main dwelling and preferably should be pitched and not flat.*
- 3.37** *Extensions into roof spaces should not project beyond the roof plane.*
- 3.38** *Single storey extensions should have a roof of a form and design which matches the host building.*

Alterations and Extensions **D1 H4**

Despite a majority response indicating that unrestricted alterations to buildings should not be permitted, it is the District Council that is the planning authority and makes the final decision on planning merit. There are Permitted Development rights that take an alteration or extension out of the planning process. It is hoped that those contemplating such a development will approach the project by considering the design guidance offered here. It is hoped that extensions to existing properties be design led, sympathetic in scale, height and materials to their sites, existing buildings and surrounding environment and make a positive contribution to the character of the main building and street scene by not being visually intrusive. Every property should be treated on its own merits.

The relationship of large extensions, conservatories and orangeries is an important reflection of the size of the building, the site and its association with adjoining properties. A majority considered that the size of extensions should be proportional with the main dwelling size and not overlook adjoining property. Extensions should generally be subservient to the main building and be designed to break up the visual mass of the extension with the design complementing the varied rural and 'Archadian' character of the village.

It was the opinion of a very significant number of respondents that extensions into an existing roof space would be better not protruding beyond the roof plane.

What is a ... ?



Typical Single Storey Side Extension
Reduced Ridge Height



Typical Upward Extension Contained
Within Existing Roof Profile



Typical Overlooking Flat Roof Side
Extension



Typical Two Storey Side Extension
Set Back From the Building



Typical Single Storey Side Extension
with Existing Roof Pitch



Typical Oversize, Disproportionate and Out of
Character Extensions to be Avoided

The Built Environment - Alterations and Extensions 3

Alterations and Extensions - continued

There was a majority support for the inclusion of special character design features such as porches, chimneys and similar features within any new building, extension or alteration in keeping with the existing building, the surrounding structures and the general rural character of the Village. Design parameters are described and illustrated elsewhere in this Village Design Statement.

The relationship of porches in particular to the main building style is important to reflect the rural character of the village rather than being of an urban 'portico' format. Chimneys add to the character of dwellings and be of rural vernacular style rather than period style.

It is important that replacement windows be similar to those that exist within the structure unless to do so would adversely alter the character of the building.

Whilst Permitted Development relative to porches is acknowledged, it is hoped that Residents will recognise the importance of a design led initiative and endeavour to comply with this guidance.

What is a ... ?



Typical Rural Open Porch



Typical Porch designed with
Extension



Typical Lean To Porch and
Chimney



Typical Urban Style Portico



Urban and Rural Style Porch
Comparison

Resident's Guidance

Alterations and Extensions

- 3.39** *The addition of porches, lobbies and chimneys are encouraged.*
- 3.40** *Porches should be in keeping with and of a style that relates to the host building.*
- 3.41** *Where a porch is required to a late C20th building, where possible this should be designed as part of an extension or original structure.*
- 3.42** *Roofs should be pitched either as a dual pitch or mono-pitch and either built off a framework or bracketed off the host building wall.*
- 3.43** *Materials for porches should reflect the host building.*
- 3.44** *Chimneys of traditional construction are encouraged. Stainless steel flues should not be used unless no practical alternative is viable.*

3 The Built Environment - Roofs

Guidance

Roofs

- 3.45** *All roofs should be of an appropriate scale and design to make a positive contribution to the character of the building and its surrounding area.*

Preferred Options

- 3.46** *Where possible all roofs should be pitched either dual or mono-pitched.*
- 3.47** *Roof ends should have a gable, hip end or hipped gable.*
- 3.48** *Flat roofs should be avoided for main and dormer roofs.*
- 3.49** *Clay tiles or natural slates are preferred to concrete tiles and felt roofs should be avoided.*
- 3.50** *Crown roofs should not be used.*
- 3.51** *Composite roof forms should not be used as they can be seen from angles other than a straight front elevation.*

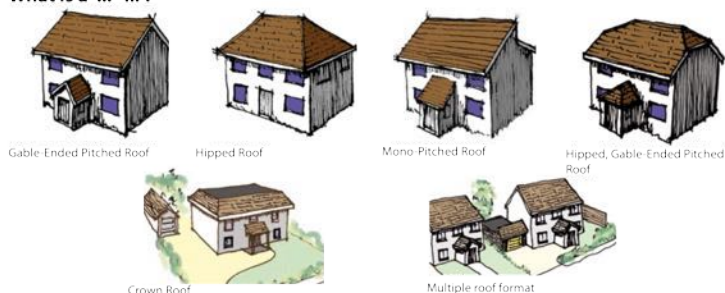
Building Roofs **D1 H4**

It is important that roof styles be design-led and appropriate to the individual building. There was overwhelming support for the view that roofs of new buildings and extensions be pitched rather than flat to reflect the rural nature and established character of the Village and that the materials selected are also be in keeping with its character. Throughout the Village the majority of roofs are pitched with tile or slate coverings and there is one thatched roof at West Bowers Farm. Flat roofs are restricted to dormer windows and garages and although these are existing forms, it is not the type of design that the document promotes.

Pitched roofs would include mono-pitches, pitched roofs with gable ends, hip ends or hipped gable ends. These design styles, illustrated below and opposite, together with a 'cat-slide' roof may also be applied to dormers. Composite roof styles where exposed to the rear or side are not considered to be a satisfactory design solution.

The selection of materials was therefore deemed to be very important. It was considered that roofing materials, as with other building materials, should reflect the rural character of the Village and relate to surrounding buildings by using clay tiles, natural slate or concrete tiles.

What is a ... ?



The Built Environment - Roofs 3

Building Roofs - continued

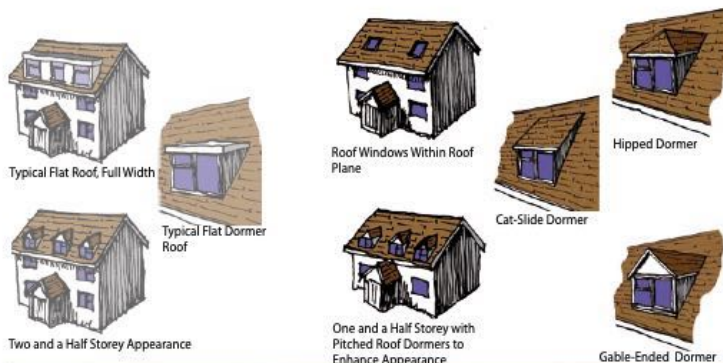
There was support that any upward extensions to buildings into roof spaces be retained within the roof line of the existing premises. This precludes the addition of dormers giving the appearance of a two and a half or three-storey dwelling although roof windows or, in the case of older properties, 'heritage roof lights' would obviate the need for dormers and form a viable substitute. These would maintain the line of the roof plane.

Where the roof line of a two storey building requires to be reduced in height to relate to adjacent properties, dormer windows could be a suitable and practical alternative.

Whilst Permitted Development relative to roofs is acknowledged, it is hoped that Residents will recognise the importance of a design-led initiative and endeavour to accommodate this guidance. Although some flat roof dormers exist, they are not preferred in new build or alterations.

What is a ... ?

Preferred Roof Designs



Preferred Options

Roofs - continued

- 3.52** *Upward, full width extensions into roof spaces should be maintained within the roof profile wherever possible.*
- 3.53** *Flat roofs, including crown roofs, should be avoided for main and dormer roofs.*
- 3.54** *Dormer roofs to be either pitched with gable or hip end or cat-slide.*
- 3.55** *Roof windows or heritage style rooflights to be used in preference to dormer windows.*

3 The Built Environment - Boundaries

Guidance

Boundary Treatment

3.56 Front gardens should take a soft landscaped rather than a townscape format to enhance the local character and context to protect and enhance the street scene and rural village character.

3.57 Boundary hedges should include indigenous species and existing hedges should not be removed but constrained in height to assist with bio-diversity.

3.58 Fencing should be of a rural character and height to blend in with its surroundings rather than high (2m) brick walls. Materials and designs should be sympathetic to the surrounding area and the property concerned.

Preferred Options

3.59 Boundary walls and gates should be in context with the streetscape and Woodham Walter vernacular.

3.60 Large areas of uniform hard standing in front of houses should be avoided. Materials and design should be influenced by the surrounding area.

Boundary Treatment **D1 N1 N2**

There was an overwhelming response indicating that dwelling front gardens follow a soft landscape rather than townscape format. Paved front gardens are visually unattractive and planning permission is required if the treated area exceeds 5m² and is impermeable. Similarly there was overwhelming response that street front boundaries should be maintained in keeping with the existing environmental characteristic of Woodham Walter. Careful design of boundaries adjacent to or looking on to heritage assets is necessary to enhance the prospect.

There was agreement that the height and style of boundary materials was important within the village environment and there was very strong agreement that the planting of native hedgerows be encouraged to integrate with other types of land uses and to support bio-diversity.

A majority of Questionnaire respondents considered that 2m high brick walls and large 2m metal gates were inappropriate boundary treatments for most dwellings within the rural community of Woodham Walter but may be considered where appropriate to the area character or the property concerned.

What is a ... ?



Soft Landscaped Front Garden



Rural Boundary Treatments
Picket Fence and Indigenous
Hedging



Typical High Wall and Metal Gate
Boundary



Soft Rural Boundary Treatment



Typical Urban Boundary
Treatment High Brick Wall
According to Area Character
and Property Concerned



Typical Hard Landscaped Front Garden

The Built Environment - Garages 3

Garages **D1 H4 S1 T1 T2**

A high level of questionnaire response considered speeding traffic and indiscriminate vehicle parking in the Village to be dangerous and a major concern. Particular reference was made to The Street and the narrow village lanes. The inclusion of off-street parking to the very minimum of the local authority standard where possible in all new development, including alterations and extensions, will reduce the danger from parked vehicles.

Woodham Walter is a rural area with a noted lack of public transport, cars are therefore essential but they need not deter from the countryside environment. Domination of a site by the provision of off-street garaging is undesirable as are exposed composite garage roofs all of which diminish the street scene.

Large expanses of hard driveway in front of dwellings can be visually intrusive (see Boundary Treatment on the previous page) and exacerbate surface water run-off in rainy weather. Garage provision and off-street parking are ideally located to the side or rear of the main building or form part of the main structure but not in front of it detracting from the dwelling. Garage size should be fit for purpose and follow local authority and national guidelines as a minimum and be a design-led solution.

Although not a planning matter, parking on grass verges visually destroys the Village ambience and character and results in deep, muddy ruts that are both unattractive and potentially dangerous. Comment was also made in response returns about vehicles parking on the whole or part of the pavement restricting passage for prams, wheelchairs and elderly with walking sticks or frames.

What is a ... ?



Garage at the Side or Rear



Typical Garage in Front of Dwelling



Parking on Front Paved Area



Typical Multiple roof garage



Obstructing Pavements



Damage to
Verges

Guidance

Parking

3.61 Garage and off-street parking should be to the local authority standard.

**D1
H4
T1
T2**

3.62 Garages should not dominate the site but be set to one side rather than in front of the dwelling.

3.63 Garages sited in front of the main dwelling should be avoided.

3.64 Sufficient off-street parking outside of garages should be provided on driveways.

Preferred Options

3.65 Integral garages could be considered on restricted sites.

3.66 Driveways and vehicle hard standing treatments should reflect the Woodham Walter character.

3.67 Parking on grass verges and on pavements should be discouraged.

3.68 Garages should have pitched roofs, not flat or combinations of pitch and flat.

3 The Built Environment - Roads

Preferred Options

Roads

- 3.69 *Avoid the introduction of new roads, widening road carriageways and junctions.*
- 3.70 *Access points should be designed to reduce vehicle speeds.*
- 3.71 *Private drives should be designed for any new multiple unit developments.*
- 3.72 *Straight roads with formal hammerheads should be avoided in favour of serpentine routes with formally shaped turning heads.*
- 3.73 *Where pavements are required, incorporate grassed verges.*
- 3.74 *Use 'soft' varying materials using a local palette to designate pedestrian areas from vehicular transit zones.*
- 3.75 *Vary surface treatments in accordance with Highway requirements.*
- 3.76 *Avoid the proliferation of road traffic signs. Highway safety is paramount.*

Roads

Roads are intrinsically a matter for the Highway Authority and it is essential to work with them to secure a safe and design conscious solution.

A majority of respondents commented that speeding vehicles in The Street and Rectory Road was the second most important issue (after the lack of a village shop) causing the greatest disgruntlement. A significant majority considered that adding new roads, widening existing carriageways and road junctions would add to the existing traffic volume and speed issues. A very large percentage of respondents were advocating that the Village should have HGV and load restriction limitations applied although a significant majority considered that physical methods of speed control by way of speed bumps and similar measures were inappropriate for a rural community as were a proliferation of traffic signs. These issues fall outside of the Village Design Statement but were important to the residents so that it is necessary to work closely with Highways to ensure that the roads are up to standard and safe.

Housing layouts tend to be dominated by the car. In any new development where roads are necessary, a large percentage of respondents considered that such roads should be of a rural character but not to the extent of marginalising pedestrians. Small developments could have a 'private drive' approach for which a precedent is set off Rectory Road. Where pavements are required, these may be softened by the use of additional grass verges. Straight roads with formal hammerheads are discouraged in favour of serpentine routes within formally shaped turning areas. Variety in surface materials, not solely tarmac, and footpath denotation will also create more attractive areas, define spaces and reduce traffic speed. Sizes and types of turning area are determined by the highway authority as are materials.

What is a ... ?



Private Drive Style Development



Straight Access Road with Turning

The Built Environment - Lighting 3

Lighting D1 D2

A majority of respondents (3.8%) considered that street lighting should be increased beyond its current level although a significant majority (19%) expressed an opinion that a 'dark sky policy' of no street lighting would contribute to the tranquillity of the Village. Street lights add to road safety and household security although currently they are turned off by the Council between midnight and 05:00 each night.

Community (street) lighting is a matter for the Highways Authority but Residents considered that lamp posts should be positioned so as not to cause interference to householders such as shining directly into bedroom windows. In 'private drive' style developments design-led discreet location of community lighting to effect the necessary coverage for safety and security would be appropriate.

Domestic building, garden and security lighting was considered by a majority of questionnaire respondents to be intrusive. Carefully located security lighting taking advantage of movement detectors for intermittent use rather than full on during the hours of darkness is preferred. Discouraging the positioning of floodlights at high level together with eaves lighting is appropriate so as not to be an inconvenience to neighbours or be intrusive in the street scene.

Glaring lights can be both a safety and a security risk so expert design of lighting schemes and careful selection of luminaires is necessary. Criminals need light too! Lights being on does not assure that crime will go away especially if there is no one around to stand guard watching the area concerned. External lighting also has an environmental impact that in turn increases energy demand.

What is a ... ?



Typical Low Key, Local Illumination



Typical Directional Street



Typical Floodlight Illumination

Guidance

Lighting

- 3.77 **D1** *Work with Highways to review the level and type of community lighting.*
- 3.78 **D2** *Use smaller, low key, local and directional lights fitted to movement detectors where possible.*
- 3.79 **D2** *Floodlighting the whole house is undesirable and may be dangerous to occupants and passers by causing glare.*

3 The Built Environment - Street Furniture

Objectives

Roads

3.80 Continue to work with Highways to instigate traffic calming measures and speed restrictions that are sympathetic to the character of the area.

3.81 Continue to work with Highways to improve the road conditions and existing pavements.

Guidance

Street Furniture

3.82 Avoid the proliferation of road traffic signs by combining symbols.

3.83 Position street signs where they can be clearly seen, easily read, limit exposure to graffiti and ensure that they cannot become overgrown.

Preferred Options

3.84 Locate salt bins discreetly and where possible group with other street furniture such as seating and litter bins.

3.85 Retain iconic and vintage street furniture such as telephone kiosk and more modern post boxes.

Street Furniture **53**

A substantial majority of respondents agreed that in a rural community street furniture needs to be at a minimal level but must satisfy road safety provisions. Street furniture which is not in keeping with the scale and character of the village detracts from the overall visual amenity. This point has been made elsewhere in this document. Woodham Walter is very fortunate in retaining a telephone kiosk after the iconic design of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, together with three pedestal mounted letter boxes that add to the street scene. Of importance also are the remaining Maldon Ironworks street finger posts.

The replication of street names of a standard size in any new development is an ideal. Where road traffic signs can be combined, they ideally should be to decrease the number of standing poles and to avoid confusion. Signs should be positioned at a suitable height to avoid vandalism, subjection to graffiti and can be easily read. They should be free from obstructions such as street greenery, simple and straightforward, with clear lettering and colour contrast with the background.

Whilst not a specific questionnaire question, the prospect of a traditional Village Sign has been raised to be positioned in the core village.

A salt bin has been provided in recent years and there are still demands for more away from the core Village. Where these are provided, in conjunction with Highways, they should be as discreet as possible and fit in with the adjacent area.

Street Furniture Examples



Iconic Telephone Kiosk Adds Character



Combined Street Sign Reduces Clutter



Discreetly Locate Salt Bin with other Street Furniture



Maldon Ironworks Finger Post

The Built Environment - Landscape Design **3**

Landscape Design **N1**

Area landscape character is described in detail by the individual area character appraisals but the impact of landscaping on the built environment cannot be over-emphasised. The questionnaire returns support this over several questions.

There is a very large palette of local materials and indigenous species that can be used in the rural environment of Woodham Walter. The use of hard, nonporous materials for drives etc. over 5m² currently require planning permission and as previously discussed are to be avoided. Non-permeable finishes are considered as permitted development. Ballast, pebbles and permeable setts/pavers/gravel mix make a surface that is crunchy when walked upon and are a good security warning to the householder; soft earth allows clear reproduction of footprints and are deterrents to criminals. If a gravel retention system is used then the surface is compacted enough for wheelchair and baby buggy users and prevents overspill of material onto the carriageway which becomes a Highways issue. A combination of these elements are a productive way of landscaping the front of properties whilst providing a pleasant visual appearance to the passerby.

Low height planting to front gardens maintains the open rural feel and character of the Village and to avoid providing cover for unauthorised trespass and entry. Spiky plants and shrubs such as berberis and pyracantha (firethorn), when planted near to the building and windows, provide a further deterrent to the criminal whilst having colour shape and texture. The planting of indigenous trees and hedgerow species such as blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel, dogwood, holly, field maple and beech interspersed with oak, ash, hornbeam, rowan and birch are to be encouraged as are roses, hypericum, hebe, senecio, berberis and many others. These will support the area's character and the overall appearance of the Village by enhancing the natural and historic environment.

What is ... ?



Typical Hedgerow



Pyracantha



Berberis



Holly

Guidance

Soft Landscaping

3.86 Wherever possible apply soft landscaping to front gardens rather than hard paving.

N1 Use combinations of gravels, setts and pavings to provide attractive walking and parking areas.

N1 Use native tree and shrub species wherever possible.

Preferred Options

3.89 Residents are encouraged to maintain front garden landscaping to retain colour, shape and form as part of the street scene.

3 The Built Environment - Leisure

Guidance

Open Space, Sport, Leisure and Tourism

3.90 Development that would result in loss of **N3** or have a negative impact on any sport, **E4** leisure, tourist facility, heritage asset or **E5** public footpath or bridleway will not be supported. Alternative provisions must be provided.

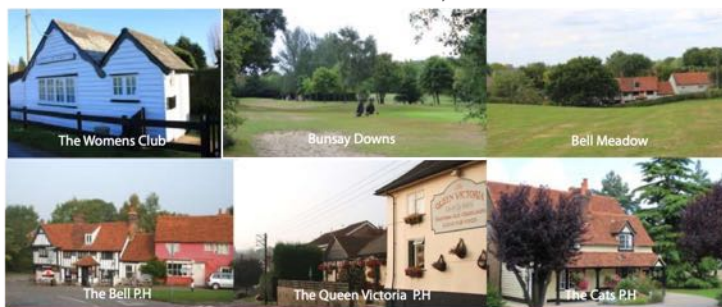
3.91 Encroachments and constrictions to **N3** existing public open space facilities and footpaths will not be supported.

3.92 To maintain the extensive footpath **T1** network and address the safety of the cycle network.

Open Space, Sport, Leisure and Tourism **E4 E5 N1 N2 N3 T1**

People choose to live in Woodham Walter so that they can experience the unique benefits of living in a small rural community – fresh air, peace and tranquillity, space and fine views in addition to the many social and recreational facilities:

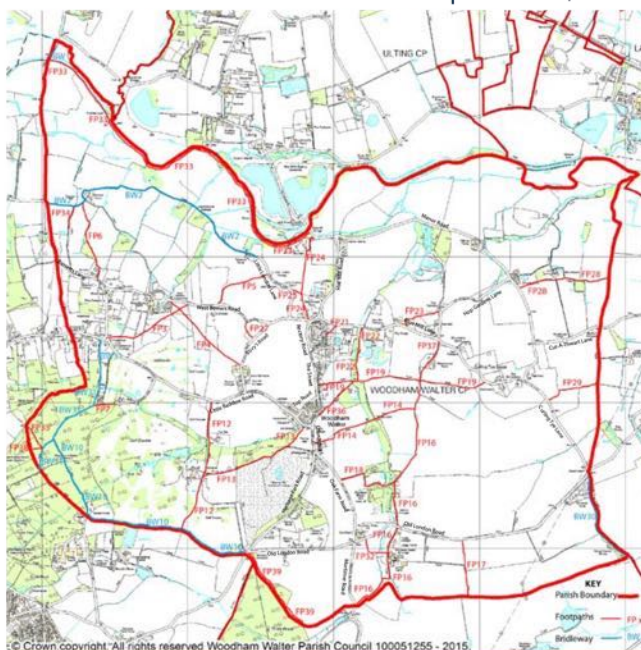
- St Michaels Church
- Village hall
- Woodham Walter Women's Club
- Mobile library
- The Bell PH
- The Queen Victoria PH
- The Cats PH
- The Warren Golf and Country Club
- The Warren Active Health Club
- Bunsay Downs Golf Club
- The Retreat Holistic Centre
- The Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation – boating and angling
- Allotments
- The Bell Meadow
- Woodham Walter Common (SSSI)
- Elwy Lodge NGS Garden
- Public Footpaths
- Other activities (weekly or fortnightly) – Village Supper Club, Village Lunch Club (monthly), whist drives, yoga and zumba classes, mobile library



The Built Environment - Footpaths 3

Footpaths **E5 N1**

- BW1** Bridleway. From Hatfield Peverel towards the River Chelmer.
BW2 Bridleway. From the parish boundary eastwards through Retreat Farm and then south-easterly to Raven's Farm.
FP3 Crossways eastwards crossing FP4 east of Westbowers.
FP4 Westbowers in a south-eastwards crossing FP3 north of Gunhill Farm.
FP5 From the road north of Glendale in a north and eastwards towards Little London.
FP6 From BW2 in a southward to the road leading to "Elwy".
FP7 From Common Lane westwards to its junction with BW31.
BW10 From BW31 along the District/Parish boundary line to Redgates.
FP12 From Hawkins Farm southwards past Warren Farm to BW10 at the boundary with Woodham Mortimer, continuing as FP22.
FP13 From FP12 in a north-eastwards direction to the Bell Inn.
FP14 From St Michael's Church eastwards through The Wilderness to junction with FP16.
FP16 From FP19, passing east of The Wilderness, to Lodge Farm and then to the parish boundary.
FP17 From Maldon road east of Lodge Farm southwards to the parish boundary with Woodham Mortimer where it continues as FP14.
FP18 From FP16 south-westwards, to Oak Farm, 4 ft. min. width.
FP19 From the School eastwards towards Curling Tye Green.
FP21 From the estate path connecting to the northern end of Mead Pastures in a north-easterly direction to Blue Mill Lane.
FP22 From its junction with FP19 in a north-easterly direction to Blue Mill Cottages.
FP23 From the Cats Public House in a northerly and easterly direction to the road north-west of Whitehouse Cottages.
FP24 From the Lodge south of Hoe Mill Bridge southwards towards Hatchmans.
FP25 From Little London in an eastwards direction to FP24.
FP27 From West Bowers Road southwards towards Gunhill Farm.
FP28 From south of Guys Farm eastwards to the parish boundary.
FP29 From Curling Tye Green Road in an easterly direction to the parish boundary with Maldon where it continues as FP19.
BW30 Bridleway. From Wood Corner in a southerly direction along the parish boundary to Maldon where it continues as BW5.
BW31 Bridleway. Spring Elms southwards through Woodham Walter Common parish boundary with Little Baddow.
FP32 From the road south of Oak Farm south-eastwards to Lodge Farm.
FP33 Continuation of Little Baddow FP3 along towpath to Hoemill Bridge.
FP34 From Retreat Farm southwards for 90 yards to the public highway.
FP35 Continuation of Little Baddow FP55 to join BW31.
FP36 From FP19 south west to the road north of the Smithy.
FP37 From Whitehouse Cottages, south to FP19.
FP38 Continuation of FP87 Little Baddow eastwards to join BW31.
FP39 From Redgates southwards along boundaries of Thrift Wood to continue as FP7 in Woodham Mortimer. Path width of is 4 feet in part.



4 Bibliography



The School from Church Hill

Key Evidence Base Documents

Green Infrastructure Study (MDC EB041a)
 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 Emerging Local Development Plan (MDC)
 Maldon District Characterisation Assessment (EB053)
 Essex Design Guide 2006
 PPG3 Housing (ODPP)
 PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPP)
 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (MDC)
 Rural-Urban Classification for Output Areas in England (DEFRA)
 Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (Chris Blandford Associates) [EB46]
 National Character Area profile: 111 Northern Thames Basin
 Maldon District Design Guide

Other Documents

"A Village History, Woodham Walter" by Patricia M Ryan
 "London, An Illustrated History" by Cathy Ross and John Clark

Web Based Research

Planning Portal (UK Government)
 Historic England (Building Listings)
 Superfast Essex Broadband - <http://www.superfastessex.org>

Village Design Statement Committee

Keith Amato
 David Beattie (Chairman)
 James Bunn
 James Nolan
 Ken Rennie
 John Tompkins

* * *

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* * *

The Committee would like to express their thanks to

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* * *

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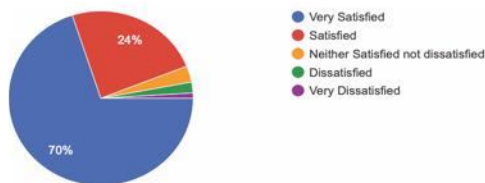
Cover Image, Church Corner
 Back Cover, The Bell PH and a View towards the Village from the river

Appendix 2

Woodham Walter Place Survey

Place Survey Results

How satisfied are you at living in Woodham Walter as an arcadian village?



Woodham Walter Parish Council



Submitted Comments:

Love my village

Volume of speeding traffic **through the** village is not sustainable.

I am satisfied at the moment however there is great concern about the industrialisation of this village area by installation of solar panels. This would completely destroy the countryside and the village itself.

I really like the different clusters of houses, it gives a sense of open space but with people not too far away.

Misuse of term 'Arcadia'. (See Steering Group introductory note for definition).

It is a rural community striking a good balance between residential needs and environment protection.

Lovely 'feel' to the village.

A beautiful location, has character and good facilities.

That is why we moved here.

I have lived in the village for over 50 years. Since then the village bus has been rerouted and is no longer accessible to me.

The village has developed over many years and has an established culture and presence that reflects the way of life that it represents. That should be valued, honoured, and not changed lightly; it is a cultural heritage. It certainly should not be changed because of vague notion that 'others' would also like to live here, but presently are unable to do so.

I've been here 45 years & if you're not a churchgoer you're out! Also although I'm nearly 80 I don't want to mix with 'old' people.

Lovely natural environment.

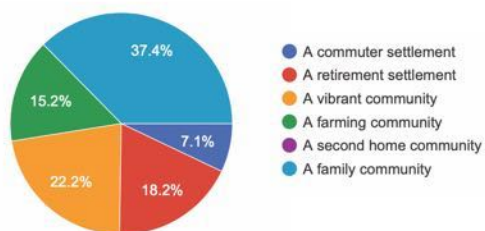
The village requires development to maintain a mixed, active community, the wider need for smaller energy efficient housing should be considered. Starter homes, young families, and retirement dwellings are in short supply.

Private enterprise has reacted to the demand by adding one and two bed temporary lodges, outside the village centre. A proactive approach to sustainable development should be explored with-in the community, with the village identify potential areas for investment. Developing more of a village hub/centre would be welcomed.

Traffic not sustainable or law not enforced (sic).

Place Survey Results

How would you describe the character of your place?



Submitted Comments:

Family and farming community.

Surrounded by farm land.

Apart from school parking in front of my house.

Vibrancy created by same community of people.

Also a farming and family community - nursery and primary school.

WW has strong elements of almost all the above, and it's therefore difficult to choose just one without giving an unfair impression. Not a good question.

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Submitted Comments continued:

The community is vibrant, although, as is often the case, it is the minority who contribute the most. Also, the value of the farmers and families should not be underestimated.

Lack of young families.

Also vibrant and farming community.

Also vibrant, farming and family community.

It's not one character nor should it be.

Also a farming community.

Also retirement farming community.

Also a vibrant community.

All of the above except 2nd home community.

Also a commuter settlement.

Increasingly a commuter settlement over last 45 years since quarry and farming gone.

Also a retirement community and family community.

Older families and retirees.

We've retired here.

A farming and family community with a slower pace of life.

Active parish council, Active hall committee and Bell meadow Community as well as many other associations.

Also retirement, farming and family community.

Farming and family community.

Large family houses are under occupied due to the lack of smaller houses for resident to down size to. Small starter/retirement homes are being extended to larger family houses, leaving a void in smaller starter homes.

Social groups 4 & 5 are very unrepresented.

Place Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Submitted Comments:

As one enters and moves through the village, there are still numerous open vistas and places where one is reminded that one is in a village within open countryside and not just part of an urban sprawl. The feeling is quiet and peaceful, with properties generally well tended and parked cars tucked away, not encroaching on verges or on the roads.

A mix of housing difficult to favour a style.

No housing type, style standard, developer housing post.

Feels rural but not far from 'civilisation'.

Delightful countryside.

Blue sky landscape supporting wildlife.

Your survey does not make it clear what is high (1 or 7) or low as preference scale. I have assumed 7 is most important. I do not authorise you to report my results in any other way.

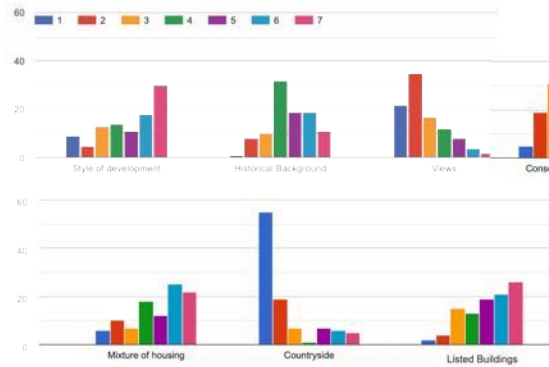
Question is too complicated and restrictive.

Living accommodation must be encouraged to meet current environmental targets, in preference of maintaining historic features.

this question is unsatisfactory by not allowing more than one point per column. more than one point per column.

Social mix.

What is special about your place in order of preference (1-7)?

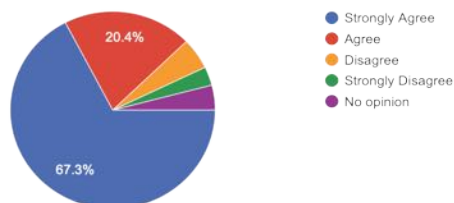


Place Survey Results

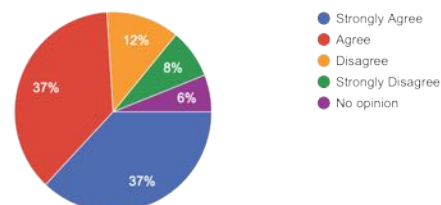
Woodham Walter Parish Council



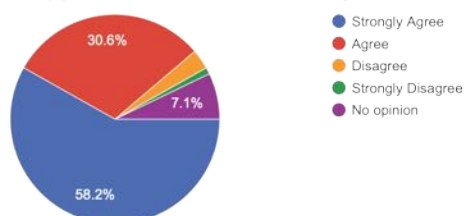
I would like to see the conservation areas and their settings remain free from further development and building



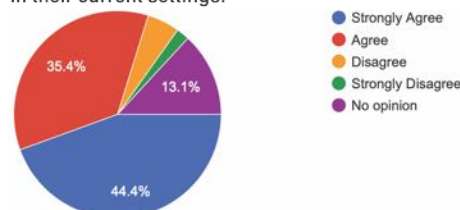
I would like to see the central conservation area and its setting extended to encompass the whole central area.



I would like to see existing listed buildings (ie those which are formally designated as being of historic or architectural interest) preserved in their current settings



I would like to see buildings on the supplemental list as being of historic or architectural interest preserved in their current settings.

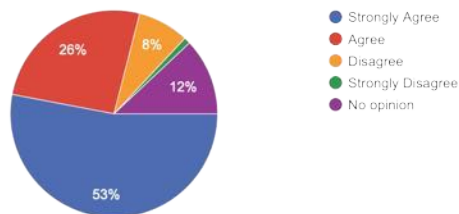


Place Survey Results

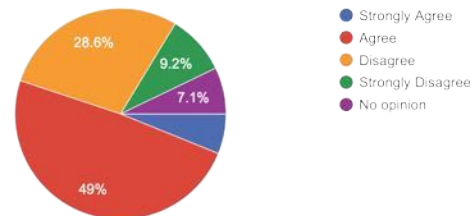
Woodham Walter Parish Council



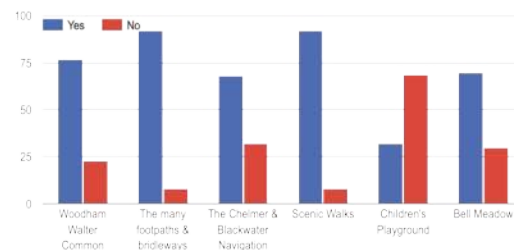
I would like to see the Village as a dark sky area



Woodham Walter is well connected to other areas.



Do you visit and make regular use of the advantages that the rural community offers?

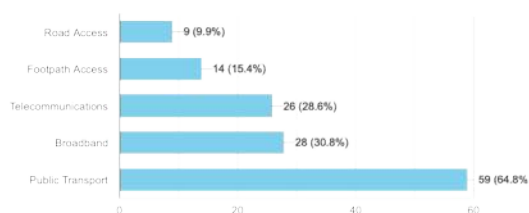


Place Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



What areas of connectivity should be improved?



Submitted Comments:

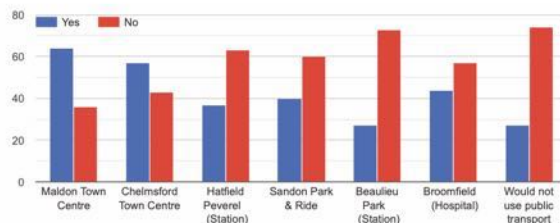
Need a shop.
Great as it is.
Gas utility should also be improved. *(There is no gas utility within the Village).*
The small minibus is not frequent enough between Maldon and Woodham Walter. It would also be good to have it on weekends.
A couple of busses a day to get to Broomfield is not good enough. It should be hourly.
We drive so no issues and don't work from home.
Hoe Mill bridge needs fixing to re-establish connectivity.
Different routes required.

Submitted Comments continued:

Allow footpaths to be used - many blocked by accident.
I'd like more bridleways or footpaths re-designated as bridleways.
Hoe Mill Bridge - improved & maintained.
A bit slow.
Happy with present set-up.
Mobile phone signal.
Difficulty with mobile signals. Limit to remain at Hoe Mill but improve appearance.
Maybe a bus twice a week so people who don't like to drive can get to the shops etc.
Whilst apparently desirable, there is in fact limited additional value in improving the road access community - the need is simply not there. However proper MAINTENANCE of the existing road access should have priority on Health & Safety Grounds.
Mobile Phone connectivity poor.
Mobile phone signal.
Satisfied with existing connectivity.
Recent bus is a help but no medical need transport. Bus too infrequent. Not suitable for non-drivers.

Place Survey Results

If regular public transport were available, would you use it to access:



Woodham Walter Parish Council

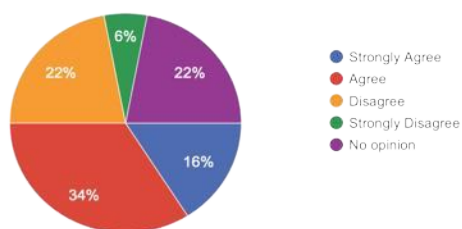


Submitted Comments:

Mobility problems make public transport difficult to use.
 Would use public transport.
 Difficult to answer accurately without knowing Timing & Frequency, so can only express my potential usage. But in any case, in my current circumstances, only very occasionally.
 Non-driving children would use it weekends and school holidays.
 Difficult for medical services. Limited bus service twice a week.
 Will probably use public transport on retirement.
 Use car for business.
 Sandon P&R so useful
 There is no point in using public transport while I have a car. As long as I need a car for things like transporting long lengths of timber, visiting family and friends outside the district and to transport mountain bikes to other areas to cycle, then I cannot see a time when I would use public transport.
 Please note that the above answers ought really to have been in an extra column called 'occasionally'. I shall be 98 in a month and getting frailer, so in practice I am unlikely to use any form of transport to leave my own home.
 Mainly we drive.
 There's little point in having public transport to Hatfield Peverel Station as trains that stop at HP are very rare. The most direct route is restricted by width at the damaged bridge at Hoe Mill Lock.
 Currently have own transport and would find public transport to expensive.
 Public transport is under utilised at present because it is insufficient, and there is limited confidence in it. Address those and it would be much more readily utilised - with benefits to all.
 Not sure of the last question.
 New station gridlocked. (Not yet open for use).
 Yes if it was fairly frequent ie hourly every 60 minutes.

Place Survey Results

Should the walking, wheeling and cycling network be extended/improved?



Woodham Walter Parish Council

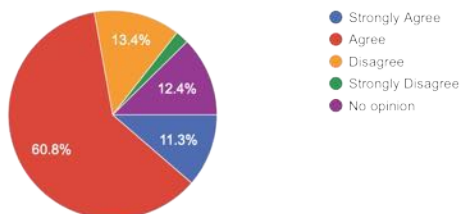


Submitted Comments:

All should be improved.
 Problem with speeding cyclists.
 The speed limit on Old London Rd should be reduced. This road is used by loads of cyclists and the speed of the cars make it extremely dangerous for cyclists.
 Cycle lane along the 414 between Mortimer and Maldon.
 Pubs should encourage walkers & cyclists.
 Walking yes; bikes hazard - inconsiderate cyclists.
 Yes, more bridleways for off-road cycling.
 Already dangerous.
 Cycle route along A414 between Woodham Mortimer and Maldon.
 A walkway/cycle way to Maldon would be welcomed and would give residents a safe, eco-friendly and health enhancing facility to the nearby town.
 Suggest speed limitations to make cycling safer.
 Adequately maintaining the existing road and walking/wheeling/riding/cycling network would be the most important place to start. Extending and improving is unlikely to be particularly valuable.
 Sufficient walks and too many cyclists.
 The existing footpaths are currently misused by cyclists and horse riders.
 No competent officers to undertake a project.

Place Survey Results

The provision of residential car parking spaces is generally sufficient



Woodham Walter Parish Council

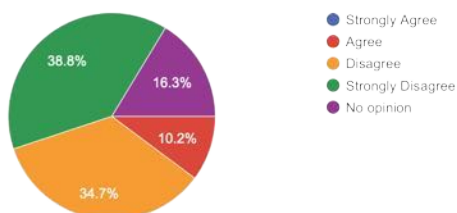


Submitted Comments:

School needs more parking.
 Parking at the Bell and road curves make it dangerous to pass.
 Parking is hard on some roads for visitors of families.
 Not enough clarification with regards to cycle routes. Far too many cyclists using designated public FOOTpaths!
 Just when the school come out.
 Unlike most towns, one of the nice things about being in a rural area is that very few cars are regularly parked on the road.
 Some areas require additional parking.
 Majority use driveway therefore little obstruction of main carriageway. Only issue is school parking at peak times.
 Just the odd house doesn't appear to have sufficient off-road parking which is not ideal as the road is not that wide but can be busy at peak times of day and vehicles have been damaged. They are often half on/half off the road/pavement!
 Not along The Street/Rectory Rd.

Place Survey Results

Do you agree with pavement or grass verge parking?



Woodham Walter Parish Council



Submitted Comments:

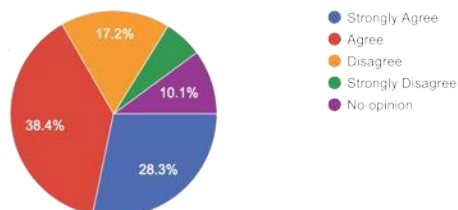
Not suitable.
 Sometimes difficult to avoid doing so.
 No!
 Irresponsible, irritating and totally unnecessary in this village.
 Pavement parking unlawful - verge parking no.
 In most areas that's all there is.
 Loss of parking at Church Hill affects Bell Meadow to (sic)
 This depends on the specific location. Responsible grass verge parking is often necessary. Apart from rare cases, this does not appear to be significant in the village.
 Causes hazard to pedestrians, limits visibility to drivers.
 As long as people don't park on grass attached to someone's home.
 Pavement and grass verge parking makes life difficult for wheelchair users and pedestrians.
 This is clearly a loaded question - responses should therefore not be validly considered. Had you asked "Is there adequate parking without the need to park on pavements or grass verges" you would have had a validated answer. You should also have asked about pavement maintenance, as many are very unsuitable for safe walking (but ironically perfectly adequate for parking).
 Pavements and verges should not be for parking.

Place Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council

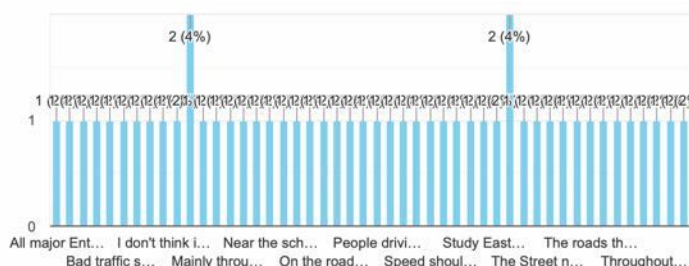


Traffic calming measures should be considered for areas of the Parish



Submitted Comments:

Q16 Comment - if so where?
For analysed comments see next page



Place Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Q16 Analysed Submitted Comments:

All major entry points to the village near the 30mph limit, near the school and of Bell Meadow Hill where speed inadvertently increases.
Approach to Rectory Road Warren to Hoe Mill - Blue Mill Lane.
Around the school. Parents think it's a race.
At village entry points.
Bad traffic speed in Top Road.
Church Corner.
Down the Hill from the church, past the school and the Village Hall. Bikes and cars not slowing down so an accident waiting to happen.
From Church to Village Hall.
I don't think it's a massive problem the money could be better spent on potholes.
At entry points to the Village especially downhill sections ie Bell Meadow from Little Baddow Road and approach from Hoe Mill.
Main Road.
Main Road.
Main village entry points.
Mainly through the centre of the Village.
Measures desperately needed between the Church and the Village Hall.
More speed signs or deterrents on Village boundaries.
Near the Church and the Bell. 20mph limit in centre.
Near the School.
Old London Road. It is only a matter of time before someone gets killed on this road. Cars travel at well over the 60mph speed limit.
Old London Road, far too many fast (and noisy) cars.
Rat runs between Maldon and the A12.
On the roads into the Village as they are all national speed limit and no one slows down.
Outside of the school should definitely be 20mph speed limit at start/end of school day.
Outside the school/play school.

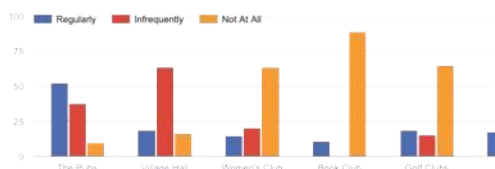
People driving through do not keep to the speed limit.
Roads to and from The Bell.
School.
School/Rectory Road Village approaches.
Speed should be reduced in all residential areas especially in the central village by the school.
Spring Elms Lane down to the The Bell pub.
Street and Rectory Road.
Street, Little Baddow Road, Spring Elms Lane.
Study East Hanningfield, Street to Blue Mills Lane.
30mph speed limit is not always observed.
The Street.
The Street.
The Street and Rectory Road but I am against sleeping policemen as they strike me as urbanising.
The Street near the School.
The Street, Rectory Road, Top Road.
The Street, Rectory Road, Church Hill but NOT speed bumps.
Main road through the Village is already a slalom of parked cars and this acts as a deterrent now that the volume has increased.
Roads through the Village are increasingly being used as 'rat runs'.
The Street is dangerous and should be 30mph limit also Hoe Mill Road as roads are narrow.
Through the main village near the school.
Through the Village.
Throughout the Village.
Village entrance and near school.
Village gate. 20mph limit due to school and blind corners.
Waste of Money.

Place Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



The Village has a number of meeting places, and clubs. Which do you visit or are a member of?



Submitted Comments:

Litter picking and hedge trimming (where they can impede visibility & passing for vehicles).

A shop (well run) would have value.

Social/clubs not during weekdays or daytime for full-time workers.

Family friendly activities are needed. Warren Active is too expensive for families to use the facilities.

Classes in the Village Hall would be of interest. I am nearly 80. I don't want to mix with old people. I am not into anything 'Church'.

Tennis courts.

I never knew the yoga club existed, so this is something I would be interested in.

Entertainment in Village Hall, Magic Nights, quizzes, dances, art exhibitions

A bowls club?

Golf clubs avoid visitors.

Was not aware of all clubs available. Possibly promote these. Club to bring young and old together eg. sharing skills/crafts. Older fitness/ muscle strengthening class.

A walking club would be a good idea. I am training to teach Pilates and will be looking to hire the hall when qualified.

Bell Meadow, footpaths and by-ways, children's playground. Post Box.

I've lived here 45 years and there is no longer anything of interest to me in this village. The 'old' people are too church oriented.

Hope to visit Walter's Cafe in the future .

Coffee shop in the Village Centre.

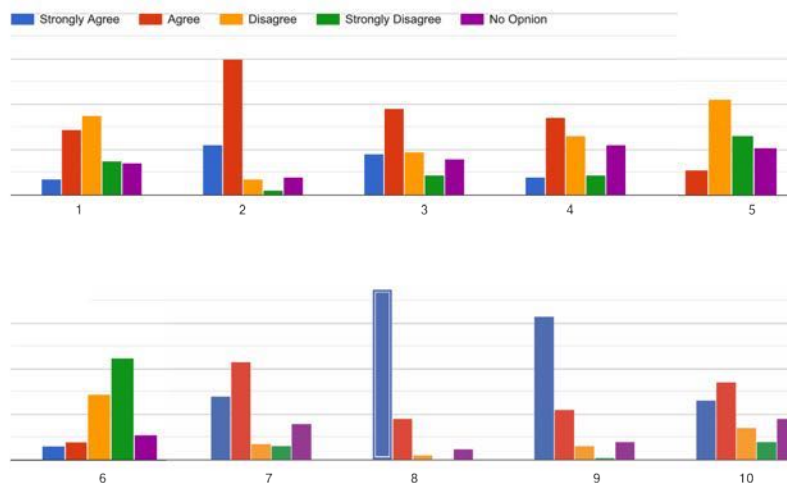
Form village club to coordinate events. Look at Terling.

Place Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Woodham Walter has developed over many hundreds of years. Today, the character of the Parish reflects many different building styles and materials. Please let us know your opinion on the following statements:



1. Plan should encourage uniform design and consistent use of materials in future development.
2. Plan should encourage a continuation of the eclectic mix of existing design and materials.
3. Plan should encourage new housing built in a traditional local style using local stone.
4. Plan should encourage new housing built to reflect local style, but using reconstituted stone or modern brick.
5. Plan should encourage modern housing, reflecting style of housing in other areas.
6. It is important to get new houses built, and the exact style is of secondary importance.
7. The Plan should place a requirement on developers to incorporate renewable heat sources (such as air source or ground source heat pumps and solar panels) into new houses.
8. Plan should place importance on the natural environment, such as protecting views, hedgerows, open spaces, wild flowers and wildlife.
9. Plan should place importance on the historical environment, such as protecting field systems, historical buildings and archaeological sites.
10. Plan should encourage a more compact village with any development focussed within the existing defined settlement areas.

Place Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Please provide any additional comments you wish to make on Housing Design.

Speed cameras needed and more parking for the school.

Not in favour of further development of any kind in Woodham Walter.

Very fond of timber clad houses or even those with synthetic shiplap or weather board cladding perhaps with recycled material. %0 years too late as a small development would have helped to keep the old village families together - better late than never.

A great village & they are trying to push social gatherings. Looking to see ultra-modern new builds, all the recent ones are very boring!! Looking to see more architecturally expressive buildings that are environmentally friendly. Village get together are great - Bell Meadow Day, street parties and NYDay dog walks etc.

Affordable housing is a meaningless statement. We need some housing association housing for young families to give security of tenure.

The village does not need more housing because they would spoil the atmosphere and the road structure will not take it.

Maldon council have recently approved buildings in Woodham Walter that neither fit in with the local landscape or area.

No more new development in the village. WW is a special place and should be preserved as such for future inhabitants. Buffoons in Central Government and County Councils seem intent on wrecking every community with enforced development. Leave WW as it is. Once countryside, green space and vital farmland is gone, it is gone for ever.

These plans are complex and some contradict others.

Certainly serious thought should be given to eco-friendly housing solar panels, heat pumps etc charging points. Certainly mansions are not required - the village has a number of these already

Housing should be 2/3 beds not massive scale housing that has developed. We need younger people to live here not just the wealthy using private schools and not using village facilities. There are too many old people living here and has become 'God's waiting room'. Smaller houses and younger people.

Roads as if designed by a developer who doesn't care about history, environment or view. Demolition of housing and bad extension to historically important houses around golf course allowed and erection of out of scale monstrosity with no relationship to setting allowed.

I do not feel that more housing is required in the village and that this form is biased towards having more housing built within the village envelope.

Cottage style housing would be best suited within the village.

We would not have the diversity of styles that we do, if planning had previously restricted the materials and styles that could be used. Imposing one person's opinion of what style looks right should be avoided. I like traditional style buildings but I don't think that my view should be the only option. Not everyone has an unlimited budget and the use of more modern materials is often necessary to meet modern expectations at an affordable price. My opinion is also that the overuse of the listing of buildings contributes to the decline of too many of those buildings rather than their preservation. For example, making it uneconomic or impossible to fit double glazing and other energy saving solutions or even carry out some repairs.

I would have welcomed a question asking all responders to re-read the village's excellent Village Design Statement before tackling this questionnaire! We are fortunate in having a very good parish council and truly marvellous clerk - who working with the appropriate officers of the district council have produced a first-class village design statement and a conservation area character statement. I believe most inhabitants support both of those documents, and are happy to ask our parish councillors to plan the future of the parish, continuing, as in the past, to welcome the new so long as it fits well into the character of the village.

Why are there no bungalows or dwellings to downsize to. Many older couples live in 4/5 bed houses. We need to consider retired people to downsize and release larger houses to families (sic) to create a vibrant village.

The last question implies there is an assumed need for development. That is unproven, and in my opinion incorrect. The village heritage should be protected, rather than 'development' prioritised.

I strongly agree that no farmland or brown field land should be developed. There is limited room in our village and little land to build on. It's a small village and it cannot get any bigger unless building is carried out outside the village area.

No more houses that do not fit into the street scene eg industrial black/white style. Not all big houses, some smaller starter homes, similar to the new cottages by Boots the Chemist Danbury.

A Community lead development plan should encourage diversity, in style, in age group, and living expectations. New buildings should allow for modern designs and renewed focus on energy efficiency. The focus on preservation should be balanced with the need to embrace modern, energy efficient design and building materials, allowing existing buildings to be improved and maintained to future requirements.

The village is a magnet for cyclists, boaters, coarse fishing, horse-culture, child play, regulation to ensure safety and litter are needed. Consider one way system Top Road, Gunhill, The Street. WC at Hoe Mill, litter bins, 20mph speed limit.

Varied styles and sizes not all large detached but mix of all sizes and types.

Place Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



The Maldon District Council Approved Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area for Woodham Walter

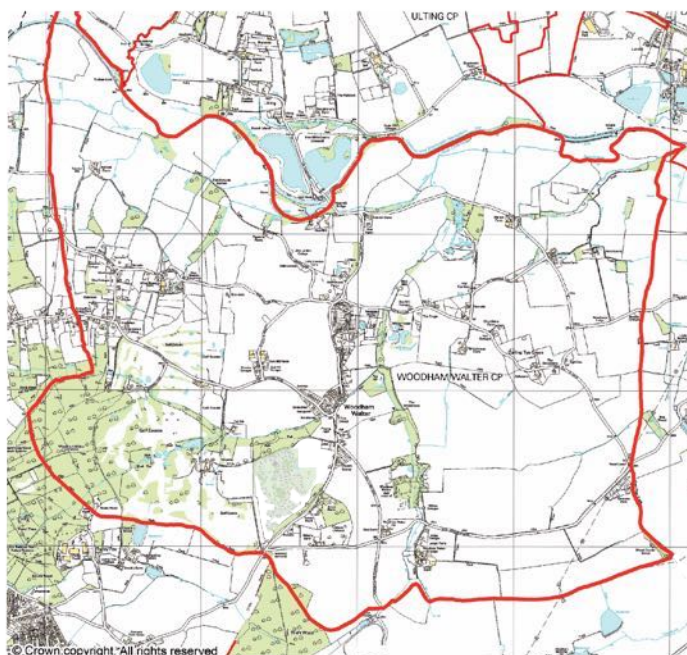
The area within the red boundary line represents the whole of the Woodham Walter Parish and it is to this area that the Neighbourhood Plan will apply.

The formulation of an evidence base, of which the community led Place Survey, Business Survey and the Housing Needs Survey form an essential part, is a very important aspect in the plan making. It is on this evidence that specific planning policies applicable solely to the Parish will be based and compiled. These policies will work in conjunction with the those of the Maldon District Council Local Development Plan (LDP), the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Town and Country Planning Acts (TCPA) in addition to the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the Essex, Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan.

It is therefore important that there is full community involvement in all aspects of the plan making.

Please help by volunteering

It is your Village Plan, Your Say and Your Village's Future



Appendix 3

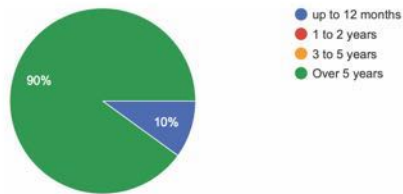
Woodham Walter Business Survey

Business Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



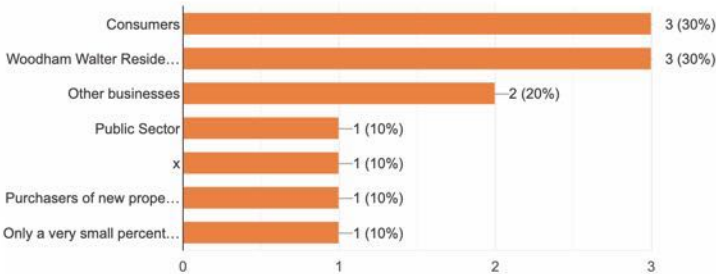
How long has your company been in business?



What type of premises do you operate from?



Are your customers?



Business Survey Results

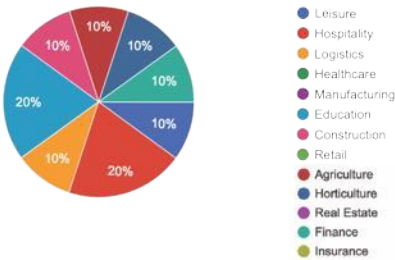
Woodham Walter Parish Council



What is your job title or function in your company?



Which business sector are you in?



Submitted Comments:

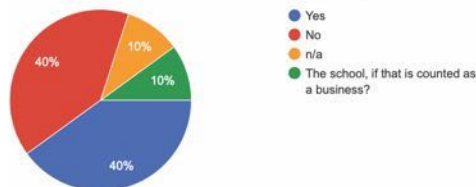
None of the above, but you have not provided that option
Film, TV and social

Business Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Are existing businesses in Woodham Walter likely to attract customers who may also support your business?

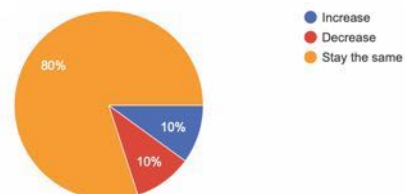


Submitted Comments:

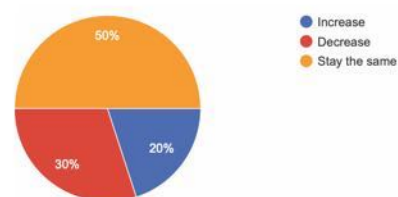
And the other way round. Shelley often recommends other local businesses to her customers or works alongside those where necessary.

Possibly

In the next twelve months do you expect your headcount to:



In the next twelve months do you expect your turnover to:

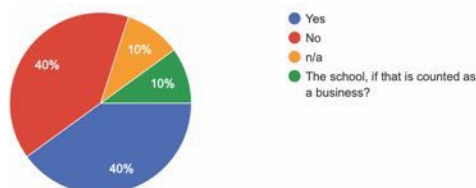


Business Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Are existing businesses in Woodham Walter likely to attract customers who may also support your business?

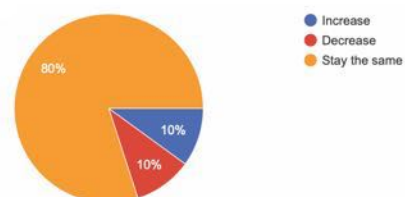


Submitted Comments:

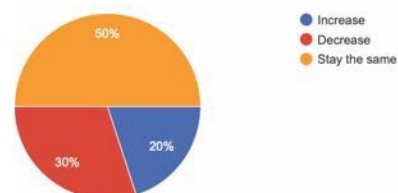
And the other way round. Shelley often recommends other local businesses to her customers or works alongside those where necessary.

Possibly

In the next twelve months do you expect your headcount to:



In the next twelve months do you expect your turnover to:

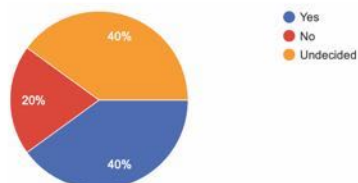


Business Survey Results

Woodham Walter Parish Council



Should the Neighbourhood Plan encourage the facilities to enable the creation of new jobs within the village?



Submitted Comments:

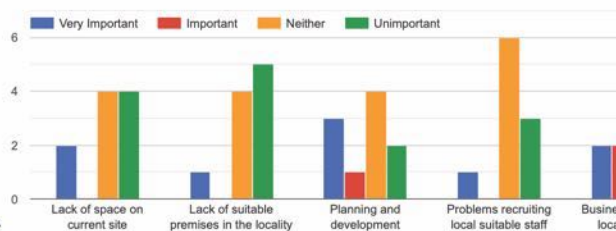
Why on earth do we need to enhance business opportunities in the village. We are an arcadian residential village, not a business park. Existing businesses thrive because they can, and they adapt to being part of the village; and are (typically) very welcome as such. Typically local people either run their own businesses as sole traders not operating (only or at all) in the village, or they work outside of the village in other businesses in nearby towns and business centres/parks; Local businesses in the village typically employ people from outside the village. It has always been thus, and does not need to change, as local businesses need to prioritise having the right staff for their roles, and there is no certainty such staff will be villagers.

Some people who work part-time would be able to work if they don't need to travel to do so. It can be a very satisfying thing to do. Good for wellbeing

This business does not operate from home, so the questions about parking and premisses need to be read in that context.

We may be closing in July, none of the questions gave me the opportunity to add that so I have filled questionnaire in as if we are continuing

Please indicate the importance of these factors in constraining future growth of your business.



Appendix 4

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

created for Woodham Walter Parish Council in June 2025 by
the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE)

SYNOPSIS compiled by Woodham Walter Parish Council in September 2025

Executive Summary

In early 2025, Woodham Walter Parish Council, in partnership with the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE), conducted a Housing Needs Survey to gain a better understanding of current and future housing needs of local residents. **The survey achieved a strong response rate - well above the county average - and provided valuable insights into the housing challenges and aspirations within the parish.**

Key Findings

- **Local Housing Need:** 11 households indicated a need to move within the next five years, with 7 providing sufficient information to assess their needs. Most expressed a strong desire to remain in the parish, highlighting the importance of enabling local people to stay within their community.
- **Affordability Gap:** There is a clear mismatch between local incomes and housing costs, particularly for first-time buyers and those on moderate incomes. Even smaller homes remain out of reach for many.
- **Preferred Housing Types:** The most common need was for smaller, more affordable homes, particularly 2-bedroom properties. There was also interest in self-build, shared ownership, and affordable rented housing.
- **Community Sentiment:** While views on new housing are mixed, 67% of respondents supported a small-scale development (4–8 homes) to meet local needs. Many expressed conditional support, favouring modest, well-designed homes that respect the village's character and are supported by appropriate infrastructure.

Recommendation

Based on the evidence, the report recommends a small, sensitively designed development of up to 10 homes, including:

- 6 affordable rented homes (1–3 bedrooms)
- 2 shared ownership homes
- 2 open market bungalows to support local downsizing

This proposed mix reflects the diversity of need within the parish and aims to support younger residents, families, and older people wishing to remain in Woodham Walter.

1. Key Findings and Recommendations

Introduction

The results indicate strong support for modest, locally focused development. Specifically, 67% of respondents were in favour of a small-scale scheme of 4–8 homes, primarily for affordable housing to meet local needs. In comparison, 48% supported additional open market housing.

There was broad support for housing that enables younger families to remain in the village and allows older residents to downsize. However, respondents also emphasised the importance of ensuring that any development respects the village's rural character. Concerns were raised about the capacity of local infrastructure - such as roads, amenities, and public transport - and the potential impact of larger-scale developments.

Overall, the community expressed a preference for well-designed, small-scale housing that supports the village's long-term sustainability without compromising its unique identity.

Woodham Walter Housing Types / Housing Tenure / Council Tax band / Population

Housing types in Woodham Walter as of 2021 Census compared to the national average.

Dwelling Types						
Indicator	Woodham Walter		England		Essex	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Detached	158	62.70%	5,368,859	22.91%	191,338	30.54%
Semi-Detached	61	24.21%	7,378,304	31.48%	197,039	31.45%
Terraced	10	3.97%	5,381,432	22.96%	124,599	19.89%
Purpose Built Flats	1	0.40%	3,999,771	17.07%	93,638	14.95%
Flats: In Converted House	0	0.00%	821,153	3.50%	6,623	1.06%
Flats: In Commercial Building	3	1.19%	197,967	0.84%	4,034	0.64%
Caravan/Temporary Accommodation	19	7.54%	99,894	0.43%	5,241	0.84%
Source: Census 2021						

Housing Tenure in Woodham Walter as of 2021 Census compared to the national and county averages

Housing Tenure						
Indicator	Woodham Walter		England		Essex	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Owned Outright	138	54.98%	7,624,693	32.53%	227,592	36.33%
Owned: With Mortgage/Loan	66	26.29%	6,744,372	28.78%	204,778	32.69%
Shared Ownership	0	0.00%	235,951	1.01%	5,259	0.84%
Rented: From Council	8	3.19%	1,945,152	8.30%	45,368	7.24%
Rented: From Housing Association	17	6.77%	2,060,511	8.79%	43,161	6.89%
Private Rented: Landlord/Letting Agency	15	5.98%	4,273,689	18.24%	87,593	13.98%
Private Rented: Other	6	2.39%	521,200	2.22%	12,171	1.94%
Living Rent Free	0	0.00%	30,517	0.13%	548	0.09%
Source: Census 2021						

Dwellings by Council Tax band

Indicator	Woodham Walter	England	Essex
Band A	6.58%	23.81%	8.56%
Band B	5.26%	19.49%	17.96%
Band C	18.42%	21.93%	28.69%
Band D	10.53%	15.65%	19.80%
Band E	17.11%	9.78%	12.46%
Band F	17.11%	5.20%	7.19%
Band G	18.42%	3.54%	4.76%
Band H	5.26%	0.60%	0.57%

(Source: Valuation Office Agency (VOA))

The population of Woodham Walter as of 2021 Census compared to the national average.

Population Composition						
Indicator	Woodham Walter		England		Essex	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Total Population	635	-	57,112,542	-	1,519,859	-
Males	310	48.82%	27,986,032	49.00%	740,051	48.69%
Females	325	51.18%	29,126,510	51.00%	779,808	51.31%
Population Aged 0-15	94	14.80%	10,567,635	18.50%	283,322	18.64%
Population Aged 16 to 64	343	54.02%	35,915,152	62.88%	920,233	60.55%
Population Aged 65+	198	31.18%	10,629,755	18.61%	316,304	20.81%

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

In Part 1 of the survey, 16 households indicated a need to move to alternative accommodation. Of these, 7 households completed Part 2 and confirmed a desire to remain within the parish.

The responses reflect a range of housing needs and aspirations, including:

- Older residents seeking to downsize.
- Two individuals looking to establish their first or independent home.
- One household requiring a physically adapted property.
- One resident seeking to purchase retirement or sheltered housing, with sufficient assets to do so.
- Two households interested in self-build, both of whom appear to have the financial means to pursue this route.

These findings provide a clear picture of the types of housing that would best support the evolving needs of the local community.

Recommendations

- **Affordable Housing:** Based on our analysis, we recommend provision of up to six affordable rented units of mixed size to meet the needs of older residents and younger individuals seeking to establish independent homes.
- **Shared Ownership:** We recommend the inclusion of two shared ownership homes within the scheme, ideally 2-bedroom properties suitable for young professionals, small families, or older residents looking to downsize but remain within the community. Shared ownership offers a more accessible route to homeownership for those who may be priced out of the open market, while also supporting a balanced and sustainable tenure mix. These homes would help meet local demand for intermediate housing options and contribute to the overall viability of the development.
- **Open Market Contribution:** We recommend that two 2-bedroom bungalows be delivered on the open market as part of any future scheme. These homes would meet the aspirations of financially capable downsizers and could also cross-subsidise the delivery of affordable housing, helping to make a mixed tenure scheme viable.
- **Housing Register Awareness:** The Parish Council should raise awareness of the Maldon Housing Register to ensure residents are eligible for future local needs housing.
- **Community Led Housing:** Given the strong local support and interest (5 respondents keen to be involved, 14 potentially interested), a Community Led Housing project may be a viable and inclusive solution.
- **Accessible Housing:** One respondent requires a physically adapted home. Any future open market 3-bed bungalows should be designed to be fully wheelchair accessible.

2. Affordability and Local Market Context

The interpretation of housing need has been guided by local property values and applicants' financial circumstances. For example:

- The average price of a **2-bedroom home** in Woodham Walter is between **£345,000 and £475,000**, while **3-bedroom homes** range from **£575,000 to £685,000**.
- A single applicant earning **£16,000–£20,000** annually with no savings would be unable to afford a discounted market sale or shared ownership property, making **affordable rent** the only viable option.
- Even applicants earning over **£61,000 annually** would struggle to purchase a **3-bedroom home** without significant savings, due to the high deposit requirements and associated costs.
- Households seeking to downsize from **2, 4 and 5+ bedroom homes** could help free up housing stock but would require suitable smaller properties to move into.

These examples illustrate the gap between local incomes and property prices and highlight the importance of providing a range of affordable housing options that reflect real financial circumstances and household size

Recommendation

Based on the evidence gathered, it is recommended that a small, sensitively designed development of **up to 10 homes** be considered to meet the identified local need. This could include a mix of affordable rented, shared ownership, and open market properties to support local downsizing.

An indicative mix could include:

- **1 x 2-bed bungalow (Open Market)** to support downsizing and release larger family homes.
- **1 x 2-bed house (Open Market)** to support downsizing and release larger family homes.
- **3 x 1-bed homes (Affordable Rent)** to meet the needs of single applicants with limited income.
- **1 x 2-bed homes (Affordable Rent)** to meet the needs of small families or couples with limited incomes.
- **2 x 3-bed homes (Affordable Rent)** to meet the needs of larger families with limited incomes.

- **1 x 1-bed house (Shared Ownership)** for financially eligible young adults seeking a first home.
- **1 x 2-bed home (Shared Ownership)** for financially eligible small families or couples.

This recommendation reflects the diversity of need within the parish and aims to provide a balanced, inclusive housing mix that supports residents at different life stages. It is also aligned with the community's preference for modest, well-integrated development that respects the rural character of the area.

2. Support for Development

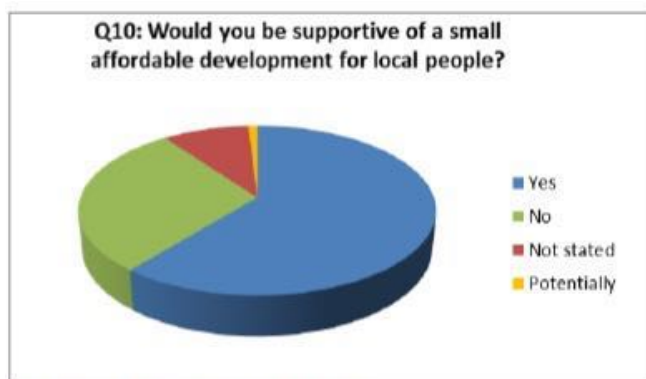


Figure 14: Small affordable development

Sixty-seven respondents (61%) would support a small development (typically 4-8 homes) of affordable housing for local people, thirty-two (29%) would not be supportive, one (1%) would be potentially and ten respondents (9%) did not answer the question.

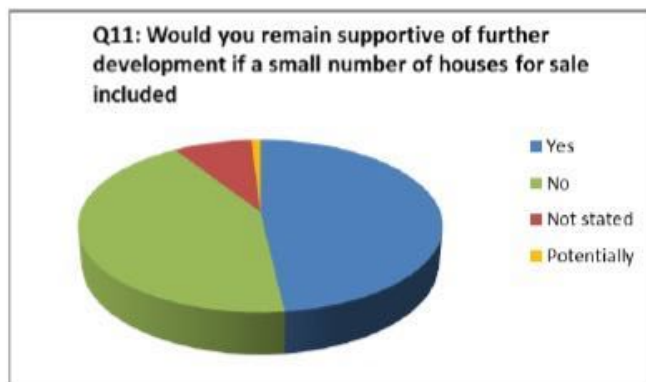


Figure 15: Small affordable development which included a small number of homes for sale

Fifty-three respondents (48%) would be supportive of a development of affordable homes which included a small number for sale on the open market, forty-seven (43%) would not be supportive, one (1%) would potentially be supportive and nine (8%) respondents did not answer the question.

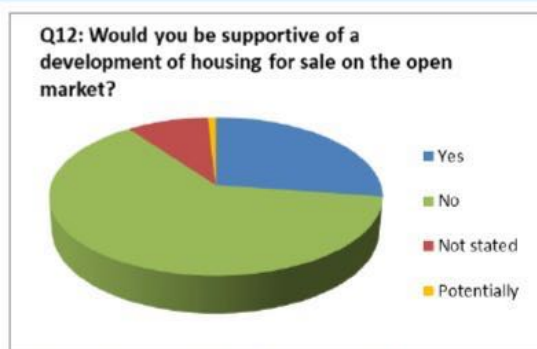


Figure 16: Further developments of open market housing

Thirty respondents (27%) would support further developments of housing for sale on the open market whilst the majority, sixty-nine respondents (63%), would not be supportive. One (1%) stated they would potentially be supportive whilst ten respondents (9%) did not answer the question.

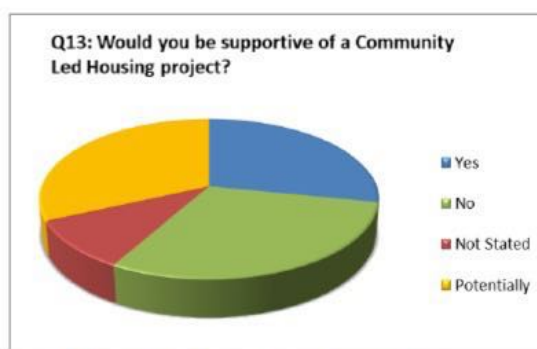


Figure 17: Community Led Housing Scheme (not for profit)

Thirty-one (28%) respondents were supportive of a Community Led Housing Scheme (not for profit). Thirty-three (30%) were not supportive. Thirty-five (32%) stated potentially whilst eleven (10%) people did not answer the question.

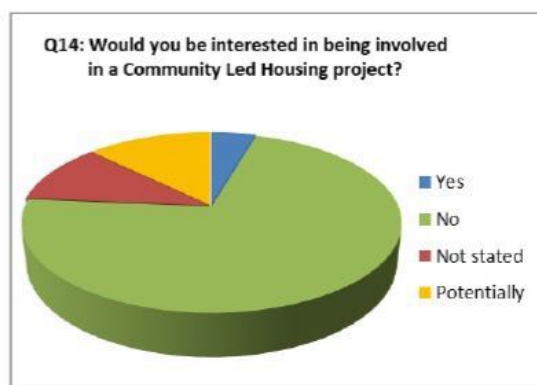


Figure 18: Personally involved in a Community Led Housing scheme

Thirty-nine respondents (13%) would be interested in being personally involved in a community-led housing scheme whilst two hundred and fifty-eight (83%) would not be interested. Fourteen people (5%) did not answer the question.

4. Summary of Community Feedback

Community Sentiment

The feedback reflects a community that is both thoughtful and divided on the issue of new housing development in Woodham Walter. While some residents express openness to carefully planned growth, particularly to support younger families and maintain the village's vitality, others are concerned about preserving the rural character, avoiding overdevelopment, and ensuring that any changes align with local needs and infrastructure capacity.

The following themes emerged consistently from community feedback, highlighting both support and concern around future development:

i) Infrastructure Limitations

Several residents raised concerns about the village's capacity to support additional housing. References were made to the limited availability of public transport, the absence of local shops and healthcare facilities, and the already congested A414 were all cited as constraints.

ii) Protecting the Rural and Environmental Character

Woodham Walter's rural charm and surrounding countryside are clearly valued by the community. Many respondents expressed a desire to avoid development that would impact views, encroach on productive farmland, or alter the village's natural setting. Several residents emphasised that the village should remain a distinct, Arcadian settlement, and not risk becoming a suburb of Maldon or Chelmsford.

iii) Concerns About Overdevelopment

There is a noticeable concern about the scale and impact of potential development. Some residents feel that the village already has sufficient social housing, while others worry that any new development could lead to overcrowding or fundamentally change the character of the village. There were also concerns that development could lead to urban sprawl, joining Woodham Walter to nearby towns and eroding its identity.

Several respondents stressed that any new homes should be modest in scale and located within the existing village footprint to avoid unnecessary expansion.

iv) Affordability and Housing Mix

While some residents believe the village already has enough affordable or social housing, others highlighted the need for more flexible and accessible housing options. Many called for smaller 2- and 3-bedroom homes that younger people could afford to rent or buy, as well as single-storey homes for older residents looking to downsize. There was also support for enabling annexes or extensions to support intergenerational living.

Several respondents expressed a desire to see housing prioritised for families with strong local ties, and for development to help maintain a balanced, multi-generational community. However, others cautioned that housing should be based on demonstrable need - not simply on demand - and that any new provision must be sensitive to the village's character and limitations.

5. Suggested Locations for Development

Suggested locations demonstrate that, while cautious, the community is not closed to the idea of new housing. There is a clear preference for small-scale, well-integrated development that respects the village's character and infrastructure. The emphasis on infill, proximity to the village centre, and avoiding disruption to views and farmland reflects a thoughtful approach to growth – one that prioritises sustainability, community cohesion, and local need.

6. Potential Benefits of New Housing

While many residents expressed understandable concerns about infrastructure, overdevelopment, and preserving the village's rural character, several thoughtful and conditionally supportive comments highlighted how new housing - if carefully planned - could bring meaningful benefits to Woodham Walter. These insights reflect a recognition that modest, well-designed development could help meet the evolving needs of the community, particularly for younger families and older residents. In addition to these community perspectives, new housing could offer broader benefits that positively impact the parish:

i) Modern Infrastructure

A small rural housing development can act as a catalyst for upgrading essential village infrastructure. This could include enhancements to sewage and drainage systems, improved broadband connectivity, and the integration of modern utilities. These upgrades would not only support new homes but also deliver lasting benefits to existing residents, helping to future-proof the village and improve overall quality of life.

ii) Growth That Benefits Everyone

Welcoming a small number of new residents, particularly those with strong local ties, can help sustain village life. Affordable rural housing is often prioritised for people already living or working in the parish, or with close family connections. This ensures that development supports the existing community, not replaces it.

A modest population increase can help keep local businesses viable, maintain essential services, and secure the future of valued community facilities.

iii) Inclusive and Affordable Living

Smaller, more affordable homes could provide vital housing options for young families, older residents looking to downsize, and those on lower incomes. This would support a more balanced and inclusive community, helping local people remain in the village.

iv) Sustainable Living & Lower Household Costs

Modern homes are typically built to higher environmental standards, using a "fabric first" approach that prioritises insulation, airtightness, and energy efficiency. These features not only reduce the environmental footprint of the village but also help lower energy bills for residents—reducing the risk of fuel poverty and supporting long-term affordability.

By investing in sustainable design, rural developments can contribute to broader climate goals while improving quality of life for both new and existing residents.

v) Enhanced Community Amenities

Where viable, particularly in slightly larger schemes, new development could include shared spaces such as green areas, play spaces, or community facilities. These features can foster social interaction, support wellbeing, and enhance the overall sense of community.

vi) Inclusive Access & Vibrant Communities

Improved transport links can significantly benefit specific groups, particularly younger families and older residents, by making the village more accessible and connected. Better connectivity not only supports independence and wellbeing but also encourages greater use of local services and amenities. This, in turn, helps create a more vibrant, socially active community where facilities are better used and more sustainable in the long term.

vii) Alternative Housing Needs

Some residents proposed creative solutions such as annexes or extension to existing homes, allowing for intergenerational living and enabling families to remain close while adapting to changing needs.

7. Balancing Community Concerns with Local Housing Needs

The Housing Needs Survey for Woodham Walter has identified a clear and genuine need for affordable housing, particularly among younger families and older residents who wish to remain in the village. Many residents recognise that modest, well-designed homes could help sustain the vitality of the parish by enabling local people to stay close to family, contribute to the community, and support local services such as the school.

At the same time, community feedback reflects a strong desire to protect the parish's rural character and to ensure that any development is sensitive to the village's scale, infrastructure, and environmental setting. Concerns were raised about limited public transport, the lack of local employment and services, and the potential for overdevelopment to erode the distinct identity of Woodham Walter.

While views on new housing are mixed, there is a notable openness to carefully planned development—particularly where it prioritises local need, avoids large-scale sprawl, and is located within or adjacent to the village core. Many residents expressed support for smaller 2- and 3-bedroom homes, including single-storey dwellings for downsizers, and emphasised the importance of retaining a balanced, multi-generational community.

This report outlines both affordable and open market housing options. Should a scheme move forward, it will be essential to continue engaging the community, the Parish Council, the housing association partner, and the local authority in open and transparent discussions. These conversations should focus on the size, tenure, and design of any proposed development to ensure it reflects the values and aspirations of Woodham Walter residents. With thoughtful planning and continued dialogue, there is a real opportunity to deliver homes that meet local needs and strengthen the future of the parish.