



LITTLE BADDOW

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT



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1. Introduction

Background

The government wishes to involve rural communities in maintaining their character and managing any necessary changes without altering the uniqueness of the area. To assist with this aim, the Countryside Agency established the concept of Village Design Statements (VDS). Chelmsford Borough Council has encouraged villages within their boundary to produce VDS documents that can be adopted as Interim Planning Guidance.

Purpose of Little Baddow's Village Design Statement (VDS)

The VDS was adopted by Chelmsford Borough Council as Interim Planning Guidance in May 2005.

The VDS will help to ensure local involvement in the determination of planning applications.

The whole of the Parish is addressed in this document.

The purpose is to record how the inhabitants saw Little Baddow in 2003/04 with regard to the following:

- historical evolution of the community;
- its setting in the countryside;
- the form of the settlement as a whole;
- the characteristics of the buildings and spaces within the village, and to express the view of the community on the future development of the village by
 - assisting property owners and developers in adopting designs which are acceptable to the local community;
 - promoting the use of appropriate building materials;
 - ensuring that the valued physical qualities and characteristics of the village and its surroundings are conserved, protected and improved;
 - assisting the local planning authority in their determination of planning applications.

The Development and Production of the VDS

The VDS has been produced by village residents with extensive consultation within the village, including completion of an extended questionnaire by 50% of all households. The final document reflects majority opinion in all respects. For further details of the process leading to the production of the VDS, refer to the Appendix.

The document has also been subject to consultation with Little Baddow Parish Council and Chelmsford Borough Council, and revised to take account of the comments of both.

Planning Policy Context

The VDS builds upon both the objectives and the built and rural environment policies of the Development Plan for the Borough (Chelmsford Borough Local Plan, adopted April 1997), and Essex & Southend Replacement Structure Plan, Essex Design Guide and the Borough Council's Residential Design Guidances.

Parts of Little Baddow are Defined Settlements in the Chelmsford Borough Local Plan. The Local Plan sets out general policies for development and change across the Borough as well as specific policies for the Defined Settlements and development in the countryside. The settlements are within an area of attractive countryside, part of the Chelmer Valley, where there are restrictive policies to development. Protection of the character of the Little Baddow Defined Settlement and nature conservation site is covered by policy DS1. The VDS provides further description of the special character. Little Baddow has numerous listed buildings covered by policy ENV9, 10 and 11. The design of development is covered by policy ENV1. The Borough Council has started work on the Local Development Framework, although at a very early stage, and this will replace the Local Plan. The VDS will contribute to that plan.

2. Landscape

The Parish of Little Baddow bounds the River Chelmer to the north and west. This was made navigable in the late 18th Century forming the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. From the river flood plain, the ground to the south-east rises by approximately 100 metres onto the Danbury Ridge on which the upper part of the village is situated. The ridge was formed before the last Ice Age from London Clay, and it prevented the southward progress of the ice sheet. As the ice melted, it deposited a mixture of gravel and sands in various areas on the ridge. The river valley has deposits of Terrace Gravel and is overlain in some areas by alluvium.



The village is surrounded by fields and woodland

The area is mainly of arable farmland interspersed with woodlands, some of them ancient. These woodlands, including those managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust, provide a valuable habitat for wildlife and plants. A network of footpaths and bridleways gives access for leisure activities.

The position of Little Baddow on the Danbury/Little Baddow ridge allows magnificent views across open farmland and the Chelmer Valley.

Approaching from the south the boundary is noticeably marked by a fall in housing density and an increase in natural vegetation, both of which are critical to the character and separate identity of the Parish.

The roads through the village are minor rural lanes other than the main route linking the A414 at

Danbury to the B1137 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel. Some of them are high-banked on ancient track-ways. Most of the housing and woodland is on former farmland with old hedge lines still present. The A12, running through the Chelmer Valley, can be accessed at the western-most boundary of the village. Little Baddow lies approximately 7 miles from the county town of Chelmsford and 7.5 miles from Maldon. The railway line between the East Coast and London can be accessed from Chelmsford or Hatfield Peverel.

The Special Landscape Area of the Chelmer and Blackwater valley

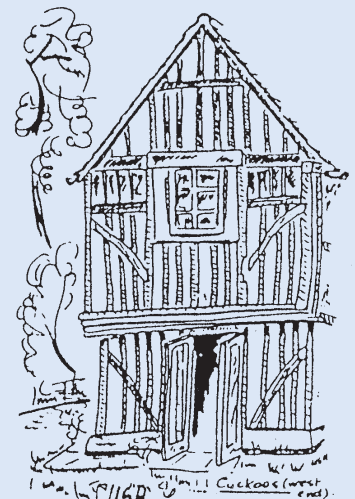
bottom is also a Conservation Area. It is recognised for its natural beauty and it provides a haven for plants and wildlife. The roads in this area are prone to flooding, restricting access to the village when this occurs.



The views through gaps and the spaces between properties are particularly important in helping Little Baddow retain its identity, particularly towards the south.














Guidance

- ◆ The character of the village is defined by green wooded areas and views over large open spaces. Every effort should be made to protect these and to respect this important characteristic in all applications for development.
- ◆ Towards the south end of The Ridge the views through gaps and the spaces between and above properties are particularly important to the identity of the village.
- ◆ Properties should be set back from the road and the visual impact of boundary materials should be sensitive to their setting.
- ◆ The conservation area based on the valley bottom of the Chelmer/Blackwater should be strictly maintained.
- ◆ The water meadow character of the conservation area should be maintained.
- ◆ Any flood prevention measures should not impact adversely on the character of the conservation area.



"Cuckoos" by E Shuring

Little Baddow Parish

-  Defined Settlement Boundary
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Buildings
-  Buildings of Local Interest
-  School / Education Site
-  Floodplain
-  Protected Lane
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Open Land
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Essex Wildlife Trust Reserve (EWT)
-  Area of Nature Conservation and /or Scientific Interest
-  Little Baddow Parish Boundary

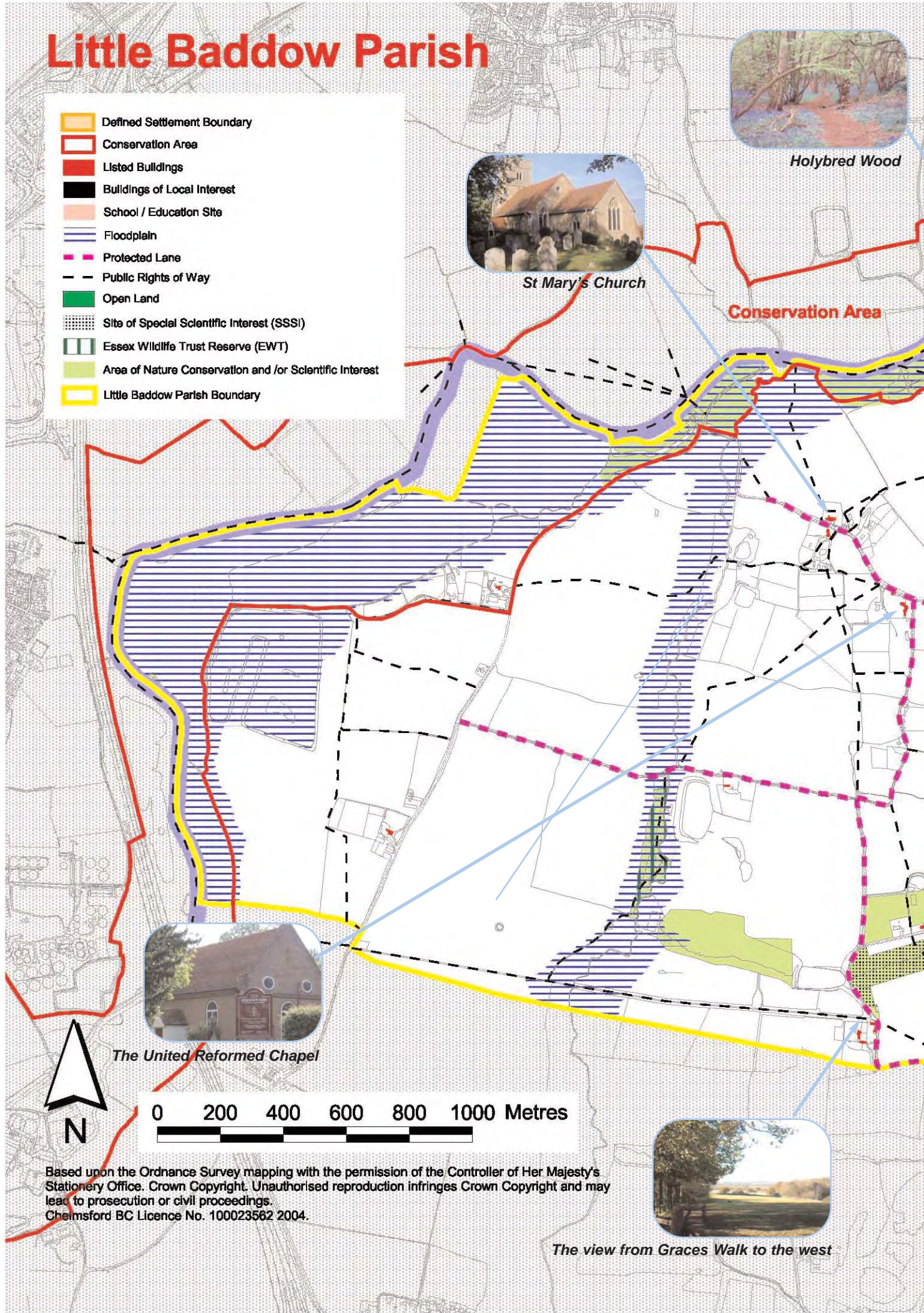


Holybred Wood

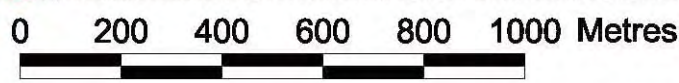


St Mary's Church

Conservation Area



The United Reformed Chapel



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The view from Graces Walk to the west



Paper Mill Lock



The Memorial Hall



The Sports Field



Approach to the village from the south

Please note
Nature conservation notations
extend into Maldon District

3. Evolution of the Village



"Waterhall" by E Shuring

Little Baddow developed from a group of small hamlets and scattered farms. There is evidence of early Celtic settlements both on the heavily wooded hill and by the river.

In Roman times the river was navigable as far as Little Baddow and there was a Roman villa in the area of the present day church. The Saxons are thought to have settled by the river and the line of farms that lie parallel to it dates back to this time. The manor houses of Little Baddow Hall, Tofts, Graces and Riffhams originated with such farms.

Construction of the church started some twenty years after the Norman Conquest and the north wall contains Roman tiles. It is thought that the present building replaces an earlier Saxon church.

When ecclesiastical parishes were created, the scattered settlements which formed the manors of Little Baddow Hall and Middlemead were grouped together and took the name Baddow, with the Church later becoming the Parish Church.

After the Conquest the village was divided into three manors – Baddow Hall, Middlemead (later divided into Tofts and Bassets) and Graces. In the Middle Ages further settlements were established as the population increased. The largest of these was Wickhay Green, now the site of most of the modern village, which is situated almost a mile from the church. The green at Aldermanburgh was only established in the 1970s.

The population at the time of the Norman Conquest is estimated to have been between 100 and 150. Although it rose over the centuries that followed, in the 1901 census it was still only 510. The greatest increase in population (now around 1500) came during the second half of

the twentieth century but the pattern of the village remains the same. A conjectural sketch map of Little Baddow in the Middle Ages does not look very different from one of 1897.

Agriculture remained the principal occupation of the village until the 20th century, when the availability of land for development



Little Baddow United Reformed Chapel was built in 1707 and is one of the earliest non-conformist churches in Essex

and improved transport links made Little Baddow attractive for commuters.

It is still possible to see how attractive the land must have appeared to the early farmers with the combination of woodland, arable land, and the river that supplied both water and opportunity for transport.



St Mary's Church



Aldermanburgh Green

4. Development of the Village

The most important characteristic of Little Baddow, which unifies the whole village, is its open appearance. Stretching as it does from The Ridge to the Chelmer there are still heavily wooded areas but also open views. Much of the more recent development is open plan and with wide verges at the entrances to access roads.

Although there is great architectural diversity within Little Baddow, once again the feature which is evident throughout the village is the space between properties. The majority of houses are detached or semi-detached and the large number of trees create a streetscene in which it is the green spaces between properties which most strongly epitomize the character of the village.

Little Baddow comprises many sizes, styles and periods of property, the defined settlement areas being loosely based on the main North/South route through the village. Large plot sizes allowed the village to maintain open space between houses and to retain its rural character. Some infilling has been permitted.

Although there are no statutory conservation areas, the group of cottages on North Hill surrounding and including The Rodney Inn was given special mention among listed properties as being of local interest. There are also several listed properties between St. Mary's Church and Chestnut Cottage that should be of special concern.



Church Cottages

Council housing was built at Wickhay Green shortly before World War I, with some later additions. Social housing has been based mainly in this area with some at Ridge Cottages; most of these houses are now in private ownership.



Wickhay Cottages

The biggest change came in the 1960s and 70s with the construction of roads of similar style houses at Spring Close, Jarvis Field, The Rysley, High Pasture and The Rye Field. They present a pleasant appearance which should be retained.



The Rye Field

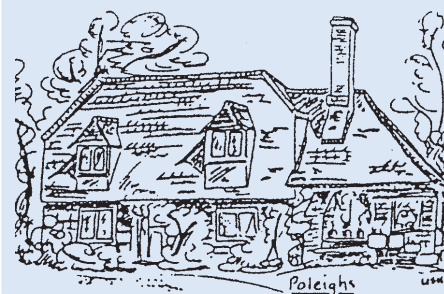
Less formal development took place at the same time at the southern end of the village with building in Fir Tree Lane and the Woodroffe estate, comprising Wayside, Chestnut Walk and Woodside. Individual detached houses and bungalows are set in large gardens, reflecting again the spacious, rural character of Little Baddow.

The most recent development in Little Baddow is Litchborough Park, a development of large similar style houses close to the Danbury boundary and backing onto Essex Wildlife Trust property.

Buildings of Special Interest including Listed Buildings

- ❖ Bassetts
- ❖ Paper Mill Lock
- ❖ Yew Tree Cottage
- ❖ Church of St. Mary the Virgin
- ❖ Little Baddow Hall
- ❖ United Reformed Church
- ❖ The Manse
- ❖ Cuckoos
- ❖ The Old Rectory
- ❖ Great Graces
- ❖ Outbuilding to the north-east of Great Graces
- ❖ Barn to the north-east of Great Graces
- ❖ Outbuilding to the south-east of Great Graces
- ❖ Wall and Pavilion to the east of Great Graces
- ❖ Little Graces
- ❖ Phillow's Farmhouse
- ❖ Hammonds Farmhouse
- ❖ Holybred Farmhouse
- ❖ Pilgrims
- ❖ Water Hall
- ❖ Mill Cottage
- ❖ Forest Lodge
- ❖ Barn to the east of Forest Lodge (Nos. 1 and 2)
- ❖ Chelmer Cottage
- ❖ The Rodney Inn
- ❖ Cock Farmhouse
- ❖ The Return
- ❖ House at Warren Farm
- ❖ 57 North Hill
- ❖ Coleraines
- ❖ Poleighs
- ❖ Thatched Cottage
- ❖ Woodlands
- ❖ Old Riffhams
- ❖ Gibbs
- ❖ Monks Garden
- ❖ Walter's Cottage
- ❖ Tofts
- ❖ Bassett's Farmhouse

Source: Chelmsford Borough Council Planning Department



"Poleighs" by E Shuring

Guidance

Open Spaces

- ◆ The open spaces such as those at the entrance to The Rye Field, Rysley, High Pasture and Spring Close should be maintained or improved.
- ◆ The open spaces between properties and the views they afford are highly important to the character of the village and it is important when considering planning applications that these are maintained. Any proposals for infill or backland development should respect these gaps to protect village character.

Boundary Materials

- ◆ Boundary treatments should be of low timber fencing and hedging in preference to modern brick and railings.

Lighting

- ◆ Security and convenience lights can be very intrusive and can create a hazard if adjacent to the highway. Careful consideration should be given to their strength and siting.

Surfaces

- ◆ Drives and private roads should be surfaced with materials appropriate to the rural environment.

Development of the Village (continued)

Open Spaces

The village is characterised by green areas in amongst housing and views over larger open spaces.



Open space retained in front of housing in Spring Close

Green areas have great importance both to the immediately surrounding houses and the look and feel of the village as a whole. Important examples include the entrances to The Rye Field, Rysley, High Pasture and Spring Close.



View from North Hill towards the Chelmer & Blackwater Canal

The unusual situation of the village on a hill creates inspiring views between properties and out over the open countryside that surrounds the parish. These are appreciated by residents and visitors alike, and every effort should be made to preserve them. One or two examples are shown as photographs.



The Almshouses with green space in front, and a low picket fence



View towards the western boundary of Little Baddow from Graces Walk. A key characteristic of Little Baddow is its open views over farmland.

Boundaries, Lighting and Surface Materials

In order to maintain the rural character of Little Baddow careful consideration with regard to boundaries, lighting and surface materials needs to be given to all proposals whether the physical change needs planning permission or not as such changes can have much effect on the appearance of the area.



Natural boundary hedging in Holybread Lane

5. General Design Considerations

Little Baddow is an area of low-density housing and attractive perspectives. The design of any development needs to be sensitive to this character.

Plans

Because of the impact that additional development would have on the existing landscape of Little Baddow, developers should be encouraged to provide perspective drawings to show how proposed new development will appear in relation to the overall surroundings and should specify any proposed landscape development.

Layout

The size of any proposed development, whether of new properties or extensions to existing properties, should be appropriate to the size of the plot and the extent to which the development will "urbanise" the streetscene. Particular attention should be given to maintaining sufficient distances between properties. It is preferable that new houses are set back from the road.

New Housing

If new housing were to be inevitable, individual houses or small groups of houses built at low density would be considered less unsuitable than uniform estates.

Given the natural character of Little Baddow and the inadequacies of the infrastructure, any large-scale development in Little Baddow is considered unsustainable.

The site of the garages adjacent to the Spring Close Play Area is in a state of dereliction and this site might be appropriate for development.

Landscaping with open space and the planting of indigenous trees would be the most important consideration.



Insufficient off-street parking causes hazards in narrow country lanes



Sheltered accommodation in High Pasture



Derelict garages - an opportunity



Litchborough Park, retaining space between properties with views to the woodland beyond

Guidance

- ◆ Development should be confined to land within the boundaries of the defined settlement
- ◆ Open spaces, and hedge and tree planting, should be of paramount importance in the consideration of any proposed new development.
- ◆ The lack of public transport and amenities and the sporadic settlement within the village made it difficult to identify any specific sites that are suitable for affordable housing.
- ◆ The site of the garages adjacent to the Spring Close Play Area are in a state of dereliction. Environmental improvements are needed and there may be scope for redevelopment of the site. Negotiation between the site owner, the Parish Council and Borough Council would be encouraged.
- ◆ Due to the narrow roads, frequent absence of footways and lack of public transport, provision for on-plot parking should be a requirement for all properties. Where alterations and extensions could increase occupancy of a property the need for additional parking should be addressed.
- ◆ Uniformity of design and materials for new housing would not be appropriate. A variety of house sizes would be preferred.
- ◆ Houses should be sufficiently widely spaced to allow the existing landscape to dominate.

Guidance

- ◆ Alterations and extensions within the curtilage of existing houses should be compatible in size, design and materials with the existing house and should take account of the character of immediate surroundings, including nearby properties.
- ◆ A replacement dwelling within the defined settlement area should leave sufficient space around the new dwelling in order to protect its setting and the character of the area.
- ◆ A replacement or new dwellings outside of the defined settlement area should be of a size and scale similar to that being replaced.



Variety of attractive, traditional materials, walls and roofs

Alterations and Extensions to Existing Houses (including New House Building in the Grounds of Existing Houses)

Infill development would erode the low-density housing pattern of the village and is, therefore, not considered desirable by residents. Alterations and extensions to existing houses should be compatible with the size, design and materials of the existing house and should be considered in the context of the whole road. There should be consistency in roads built to a single style such as Spring Close, High Pasture, Rysley, The Ryefield, Jarvis Field and Litchborough Park.

Particular attention should be paid to the relationship between the size of a proposed dwelling and its plot. Replacement dwellings within and outside the defined settlement boundaries should leave sufficient space around the new dwelling in order to protect its setting and the character of the area.

The high ratio of cars to households in Little Baddow should be recognised and adequate off-road parking should be addressed in planning.

Parking spaces and garages should be inconspicuously sited to minimise the impact on the streetscape.

Chimneys and Roofs

Chimneys add interest to the skyline and should be preserved where possible.

Pitched roofs for houses and dormers are preferred although flat roofs would be appropriate if designed to complement the architectural style of an existing building.

Materials used for roof maintenance or extension roofs should match in colour, texture and style the original building and neighbouring

buildings where appropriate.

In older properties, roofs should be retained in their current form and any alterations or repairs should use reclaimed or compatible materials.

New dormers should generally be above the gutter line and to the same pitch as the main roof.

Rainwater Goods

Rainwater goods should reflect the colour, shape and form of the original, and where new, respect those of the surrounding materials.

Doors and Windows

The pattern and style of windows and doors should be replicated in extensions to properties.

In semi-detached and terraced houses, windows and doors should aim to achieve unity in the design of the whole building.

Extensions



Mill House - extended using matching materials

Matching brick, render or appropriate materials should normally be employed for extensions. Extensions should relate to their context and not dominate the main building.

Garages

New garages should match the materials of the host dwelling and surroundings, and as a general rule should not be built in front of the



Re-development of garages in keeping with surrounding buildings

building line. Roof pitches should reflect the style of the main building.

6. Transport and Infrastructure

Transport

Excess speed and volume of traffic is a major concern to the residents of Little Baddow. The road network in the village, consistent with its rural character, consists of a network of narrow lanes. There is one



The rural lanes are unsuitable for large vehicles

principal road through the village leading from Danbury to Hatfield Peverel but the network could not be made adequate to accommodate either a large volume of traffic or non-agricultural vehicles of any great size without affecting the character of the village.

Unfortunately, because of its location, this network is increasingly used, not only as a convenient through route from the A12 to Danbury and beyond, but also as a shortcut by many anxious to avoid traffic jams on the Chelmsford By-pass and the A414.

The volume of traffic using the road network in the village, and the speeds maintained, cause considerable damage both to the lanes themselves and also to the verges which are constantly being eroded at points where they are particularly narrow. Spring Elms Lane is of particular historic and landscape value. Concern has also been expressed at the danger caused to pedestrians, there being few roadside footways. In particular reference has been made to The Ridge, North Hill and the junction of Holybred Lane with Colam Lane which are considered especially dangerous.

The problem has now become so acute that there is strong feeling that there should be a maximum speed limit of 30 mph imposed on all primary roads leading through the village. There has been no suggestion that the road network should be improved to accommodate the extra traffic now using it.

Difficulties are also caused by

inappropriate parking of vehicles in areas where it causes congestion, on footways forcing pedestrians into the road, and on grass verges where damage is caused to the greensward. North Hill and Colam Lane are specific examples.

Little provision for public car parking has been made within the village and visitors to the village, anxious to enjoy the area, only serve to make the problem worse. There are also various areas in the village (e.g. the Jarvis Field/Spring Close section of North Hill) where historically no provision has been made for off road parking, or the facilities that are available are not used by the residents.

A large proportion of the population of the village own their own transport and the public transport system has deteriorated over the last 20 years. The provision of an improved morning and evening bus service would encourage increased use by commuters and young people. The majority of others would continue to use private transport.

Street Lighting

There is no street lighting in Little Baddow. There is a strong view by most residents that it would be inappropriate and spoil the rural setting of Little Baddow.

Overhead Wires and Masts

There was strong feeling that future installations of overhead wires, radio and mobile phone masts should be restricted more than occurs generally.



Excess speed and volume of traffic is a major concern to the residents of Little Baddow

Roadways

Ninety percent of respondents felt that greater priority should be given to pothole repairs and the general condition of the roads.



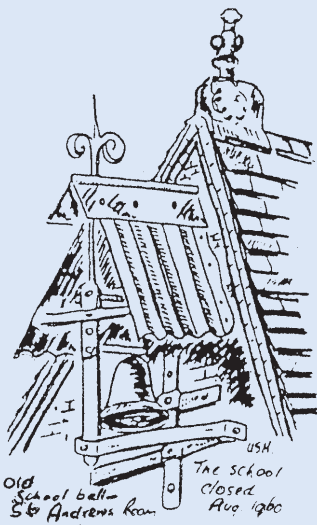
Guidance

- ◆ Development in the village should take account of the fact that excess speed and volume of traffic is detrimental to the character of the village.
- ◆ Footways should be provided along sections of The Ridge where none exists and along lower North Hill to Paper Mill Lock while maintaining the existing rural character.
- ◆ The character of Spring Elms Lane should be given special protection.
- ◆ Planning applications should be viewed critically in relation to the effect of any consequent HGV movements, especially where there might be impact on protected lanes.
- ◆ Development of the public transport system should be encouraged.
- ◆ Rural views should be retained by placing utilities underground and resisting applications for telecommunications masts.

7. Village Facilities, Community and Leisure

Guidance

- ◆ Any application for small local shop facilities should be considered sympathetically
- ◆ The footpath and bridleway network should be protected and maintained.



"Old School Bell at St Andrew's Room" by E Shuring

Little Baddow Post Office Stores closed in November 2002 despite a valiant effort to keep it open as a community shop. It is sorely missed. The two public houses provide a popular facility for residents and visitors.



The Rodney P.H.

The Churches work together in the Community to provide a focus for many activities and help for the more vulnerable parishioners. There are a great many clubs and societies within the village, and the Memorial Hall and St. Andrew's Room are available for the use of groups and individuals.



The Memorial Hall

The Cricket Club, Ridge Runners and Elm Green School use the sports field. Unfortunately Hockey is now played on artificial surfaces and the field is not large enough for Football.

The Tennis Club rent private courts. The Parish Council is working with this club with the aim of providing facilities that will secure the Club's future.

The Spring Close Play Area needs upgrading and the Parish Council is planning some investment in the near future. However, the problems of vandalism and the derelict garages adjacent to the Play Area need to be resolved before much improvement can be made.



Spring Close Play Area

The distance from the southern edge of the village to its northern boundaries is over 2 miles, with a further 2 miles from there to the western boundary. Thus many residents need a car just to travel within its boundaries. This restricts demand for additional facilities, although more opportunities for shopping and sport would be welcomed.

With its ready access to attractive countryside, the village is a natural focus for walking, riding and informal recreation.



The Sports Field

8. Commerce and Industry

Across Little Baddow and Danbury there is a myriad of small enterprises catering for local needs. Most services are available including carpentry, electrical and plumbing services, taxis, estate agencies and public houses.

Farming businesses, either wholly owned or rented acreage, frame the village.

A more recent development of the farms has been the provision of livery stables. The main effect of this is the presence of horses and riders in the narrow lanes and there is concern for their safety due to the speed of traffic.

The questionnaire established that light business or office based activity was generally acceptable provided it was strictly controlled. Smoke, fumes, noise or unsociable hours of work should not be permitted.

Additional vehicle movements, especially HGVs, cannot be accommodated within the network of narrow lanes and weak bridges around the village.

Heavy industry per se would not be welcomed, and in any case the roadways offer no opportunity for casual parking. There is no capacity for industrial estates.



Many farms have diversified into equestrian activities



Increased horse traffic should be recognised with more warning signs



Paper Mill Lock is now a leisure centre for boating, fishing and walking, with a tea-room



Guidance

- ◆ Additional permission for change of use of farm or domestic buildings should only be granted if consideration is given to the limitations of the infrastructure and the character of Little Baddow.



*"The Tinker"
an 18th century sketch by Samuel Shaen*

Guidance

- ◆ When planting new trees and hedges, native species should be preferred.
- ◆ Existing hedgerows should be retained and trees and hedges protected when roadside work is being carried out.
- ◆ Support should be given to further development of recreational footpaths.
- ◆ Nature conservation should continue to be a significant consideration when any new development is proposed.
- ◆ Farmland hedgerows should be restored where practicable.
- ◆ Protection of trees should be encouraged.

9. Woodland and Open Spaces

It was readily apparent from the questionnaire results that the woodland character of the village is very special to Little Baddow residents. Those who responded made clear how much they valued all aspects of the landscape picture - woodlands, leafy lanes, tree-lined roads, old hedgerows, footpaths and bridleways - plus the small open spaces within housing developments. The many views over largely unspoilt countryside were also considered to be of the utmost importance.

“Woodland” can mean many things in Little Baddow. The most unique feature is the presence of no less than nine nature reserves and significant parts of two others. It is further enhanced by the adjacent Woodham Walter Common, Lingwood Common and the balance of Scrubs Wood and Little Baddow Heath which lie outside the parish. The bulk of the reserves are owned/managed by Essex Wildlife Trust while Holybred

manages easily to dominate the whole village scene.

The nature reserves we have are of the highest quality mainly having S.S.S.I. status (Sites of Special Scientific Interest). Together



they form an intricate mosaic of ancient and secondary woodland, coppice, heath, meadow, spring-fed streams, ponds and marshes. Notable features include ancient pollarded trees, newly-restored heather, carpets of Bluebell, Wood Anemone and Lily-of-the-Valley to name just a few. Some of the species present are of county importance, such as the scattered populations of dormice. Almost any of the local flora and fauna may be seen in gardens throughout the village.

Those managing the reserves are always working to develop them for the maximum benefit both to wildlife and people. This may be difficult to achieve elsewhere in the village for many reasons. As examples, problems could well occur with urbanisation to frontage, further loss of hedgerows, conflict with very large trees or the possible extension of roadside paths. Any such situation might tend to erode the quality of the landscape scene which is so highly valued. One possible action to consider might be to link the Millennium Walk in the north with Essex Wildlife Trust's nature trail in the south of the parish. Joined together by Postman's Lane it would give continuity from Runsell Lane right down to the river. In the process the defined settlement areas would also be joined as well as the three parish-owned reserves - Poor's Piece, Heather Hills and Holybred Wood.



The woods and open spaces which characterise the village must be preserved

Wood is looked after by the parish and Blakes Wood mainly by the National Trust (owners). Together this amounts to some 412 acres - approximately 258 of which lie in Little Baddow. All the land enjoys total protection, offers free access to the public and helps to enclose the village settlements along both sides of the north-south axis. To bolster the reserves there are private woods, woodland gardens, remnant hedgerows, numerous mature trees and beyond all of these the fields and open farmland. Common Oak



10. Future Development

The preceding pages have described Little Baddow and in particular those elements that define why it is so highly valued by its residents. Though it is a diverse village, it has a special character that could so easily be destroyed by accident or by gradual erosion of its key features -

Little Baddow is a place of open spaces and beautiful views, both within and beyond its heart, so we need to -

- ◆ avoid progressive infill of additional property along the streetscene, or backfill of adjacent fields
- ◆ preserve hedges & trees as an integral part of our environment
- ◆ avoid wherever possible any further installation of overhead wires and telecommunications masts

It is rural, not urban, so we need to encourage the use of

- ◆ natural boundary materials
- ◆ low farm-style gates, not high & ornate city-style gates
- ◆ driveways & access paths finished informally, perhaps with gravel rather than tarmac, and lit minimally, not excessively

Little Baddow has extensive woodlands and other natural features, rare in this part of Essex, and so we need to ensure safe & ready access to those on foot or horseback, by -

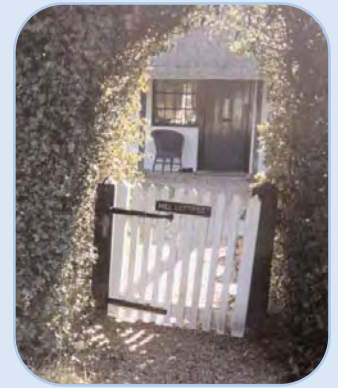
- ◆ preservation & enhancement of the footpath & bridleway network
- ◆ restriction of vehicle speed on our roads and narrow lanes

Finally, although Little Baddow is a village of diverse parts and varied housing, it has its own single clear and separate identity & character, which could so easily be eroded by unplanned growth & development. To avoid this, we need to -

- ◆ acknowledge and accept our limited transport infrastructure, with regard to any new development
- ◆ in particular, ensure that the conspicuous decline in housing density that marks the transition from Danbury to Little Baddow is maintained
- ◆ ensure that any housing alterations, extensions, or replacements are compatible with the character of the immediate surroundings, including nearby properties



The beautiful views and open spaces are an integral part of the village



A traditional picket gate set in a native species hedge is in keeping with the rural setting of the village



The village has an extensive network of footpath and bridleways



Low density housing towards the boundary with Danbury helps Little Baddow retain its own identity

Appendix - The Consultation Process

VDS Steering Group:

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Richard Godden
Wendy Godden
Martin Gregory
Margaret Martin
Mike Masterson
Donald Neal
Chris Rigler
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The majority of photographs and the associated captions in this document are the result of the Photo-fun Day. Other photographs and illustrations are from the Parish Chest, or taken by members of the Steering Group.

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Further copies of this document are available from Little Baddow Parish Clerk and Chelmsford Borough Council Town Planning and Building Control Services

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The concept of producing a Village Design Statement was suggested to residents at a public meeting held in June 2002, hosted by the Parish Council. The idea of forming an independent group of interested residents to produce a VDS met with a warm response, and a Steering Group was formed in September 2002.

At each stage of the production process, care was taken to ensure that the whole village was consulted and given the opportunity to express its views.



The "Photo-fun Day" for residents was very well attended

A "Village Character Photo-fun Day" was held in March 03, attended by 91 residents (of all age groups). The results of that survey were exhibited on several occasions and formed the basis for the content of the questionnaire. Much thought went into formulation of the questionnaire, which was delivered to every house in the village and resulted in a very significant 50% response. The village was kept informed of the progress of the VDS by frequent articles in "Little Baddow News" and "The Journal", and a website which included minutes of meetings, press releases and the exhibition sheets from the Photo Day.



A full notice-board reflects the positive community spirit of Little Baddow

Further consultation has taken place throughout the process with Chelmsford Borough Council, Little Baddow Parish Council and the Rural Community Council of Essex.



The photographs were assembled into exhibitions and comments invited from all participants

For the purposes of the questionnaire, housing was categorised into five types with the same group of questions posed for each category. Response from residents was fairly uniform across all groups. The groups were:

- ◆ scattered houses in farmland or woodland
- ◆ detached houses of differing styles and a low density
- ◆ detached bungalows of differing ages and styles with gardens in sub-urban density
- ◆ roads of detached or semi-detached houses and bungalows built at the same time and in the same style
- ◆ semi-detached houses and bungalows of higher density with good-sized gardens.



Farm-style gates are particularly suitable to Little Baddow's rural character