



SAXTEAD GREEN with part of FRAMLINGHAM CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

July 2012



On 1 April 2019, East Suffolk Council was created by parliamentary order, covering the former districts of Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council. [The Local Government \(Boundary Changes\) Regulations 2018](#) (part 7) state that any plans, schemes, statements or strategies prepared by the predecessor council should be treated as if it had been prepared and, if so required, published by the successor council - therefore this document continues to apply to East Suffolk Council until such time that a new document is published.

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Public consultation: this took place between 16/1/12 and 13/4/12 and included writing to all residents of the village to request views; writing to the Parish Council and providing printed copies; placing the draft on the Council's website; including a request for views via the Council's public magazine 'Coastline'; issuing a press release; making available printed copies at SCDC's planning reception; providing posters for display around the village; and inviting responses from Suffolk County Archaeology and Suffolk Preservation Society. A total of 5 responses were received which led to 4 additions, amendments and alterations to the draft appraisal, summary map and management plan prior to adoption in July 2012.

INTRODUCTION

The conservation area at Saxtead Green was originally designated by East Suffolk County Council in 1972 and confirmed by redesignation by Suffolk Coastal District Council in 1991.

The Council has a duty to review its conservation area designations from time to time, and this appraisal examines Saxtead Green under a number of different headings as set out in English Heritage's 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' (2011).

As such this is a straightforward appraisal of Saxtead Green's built environment in conservation terms and is followed by a gazetteer describing the village in more detail.

The intent of this document is as a demonstration of 'quality of place', sufficient to inform those considering changes in the area. The photographs and maps are thus intended to contribute as much as the text itself.

As the English Heritage guidelines point out, the appraisal is to be read as a general overview, rather than as a comprehensive listing, and the omission of any particular building, feature or space does not imply that it is of no interest in conservation terms.



Public House Sign



The Mill on The Green

1 CONSERVATION AREAS: Planning Policy Context

There are currently thirty four Conservation Areas in the Suffolk Coastal District.

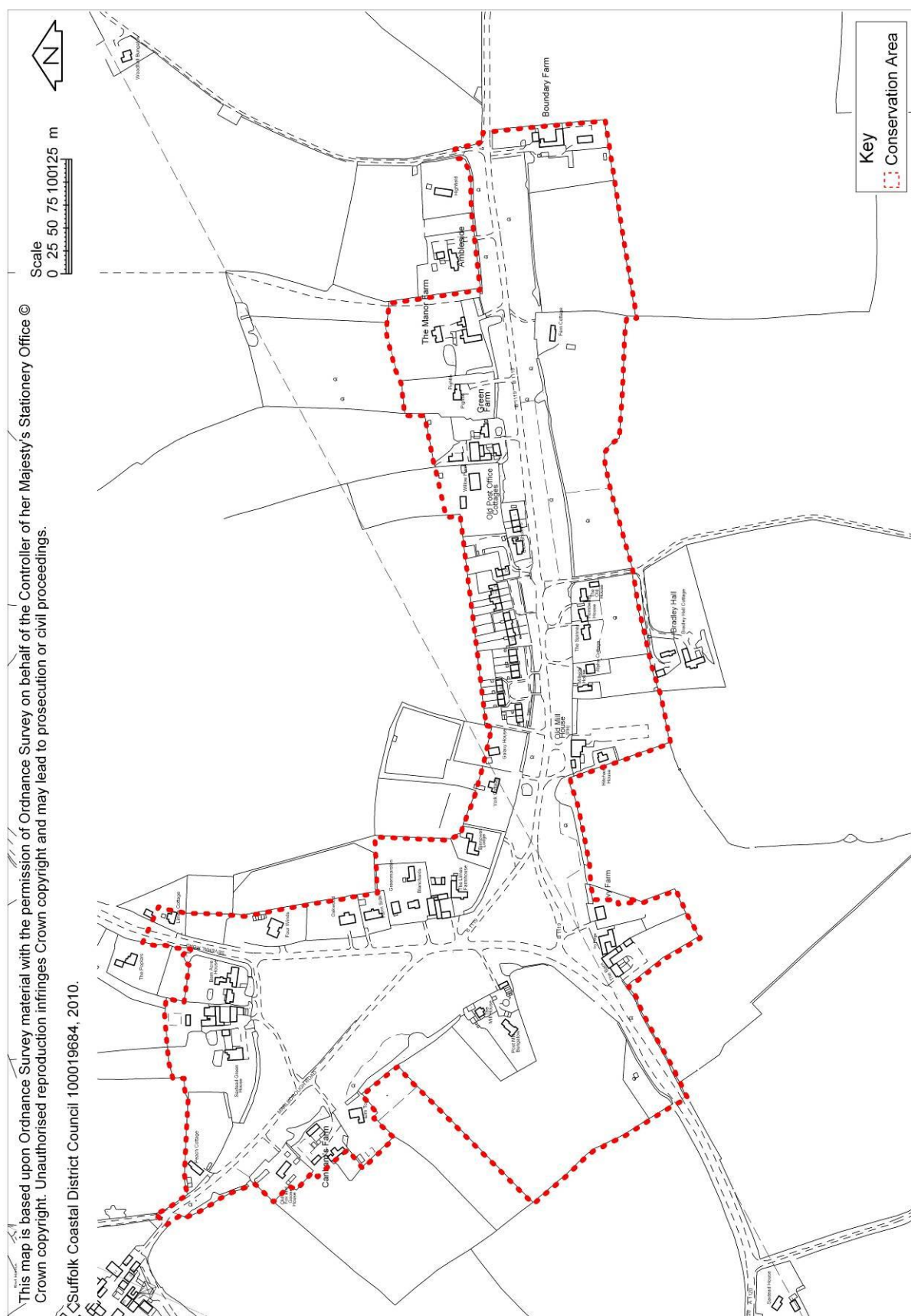
The identification and protection of the historic environment is an important function of the planning system and is done through the designation of Conservation Areas in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Conservation Areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. These areas make an important contribution to the quality of life of local communities and visitors by safeguarding their physical historical features which sustain the sense of local distinctiveness and which are an important aspect of the character and appearance of our towns, villages and countryside.

As part of this commitment there is a need to ensure there are the means available to identify what is special in the historic environment and to define through the development plan system their capacity for change. Such changes can act to help to address environmental quality in addition to achieving the aims of planning for sustainable development.

National planning advice on the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas and other heritage assets is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). At the District and local level, the Local Development Framework (LDF) recognises that development within conservation areas will need to accord with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Core Strategy of the LDF contains an objective 'to maintain and enhance the quality of the distinctive natural and built environment'. The Core Strategy also provides general advice supporting the retention and enhancement of Conservation Areas whilst minimising any significant adverse impact upon them. Conservation areas are also included under general development control policies, particularly those in relation to design where one of the key criteria requires that all new development must have regard to the character of the area and its setting.

This Conservation Area Appraisal provides details and identifies particular features which contribute to and justify its status. The purpose of this conservation area appraisal includes:

- a definition of the special character of the conservation area through its special qualities: layout, uses, architecture, setting, open spaces, topography and archaeology
- an analysis of the area's history, development and current status
- a guide to managing future change.



Saxtead Green Conservation Area (North to the left)

2 GENERAL CHARACTER SUMMARY

Saxtead Green is a distinctive rural settlement comprising key features such as a common, around which cottages are clustered; a linear form along an important route off which are dispersed more cottages; and a large central green providing the setting to a mill rather than a church. Included within the settlement are farms – some still working - which provide the village with a distinctive rural character in contrast to other villages that have been reduced to a dormitory function. The former low density, dispersed character of the village has changed due to a significant amount of twentieth century infill, which itself forms a significant feature.

The village is a small spread out settlement, originally a group of farms set around a central grazing green as found more commonly in the central Suffolk clayland belt, e.g. Mellis or Wortham. The form of the village contains features of both nucleation and also dispersal along the linear route of the road to Framlingham. Making Saxtead Green distinctive is the focal point provided by a large and completely restored windmill of the post and roundhouse type, which forms a local landmark. The parish does have a church but at some distance.

Although there has been some infill around the edges, the central space remains as unimproved grassland and is cut for hay once a year.



Saxtead Green: Aerial View 2001

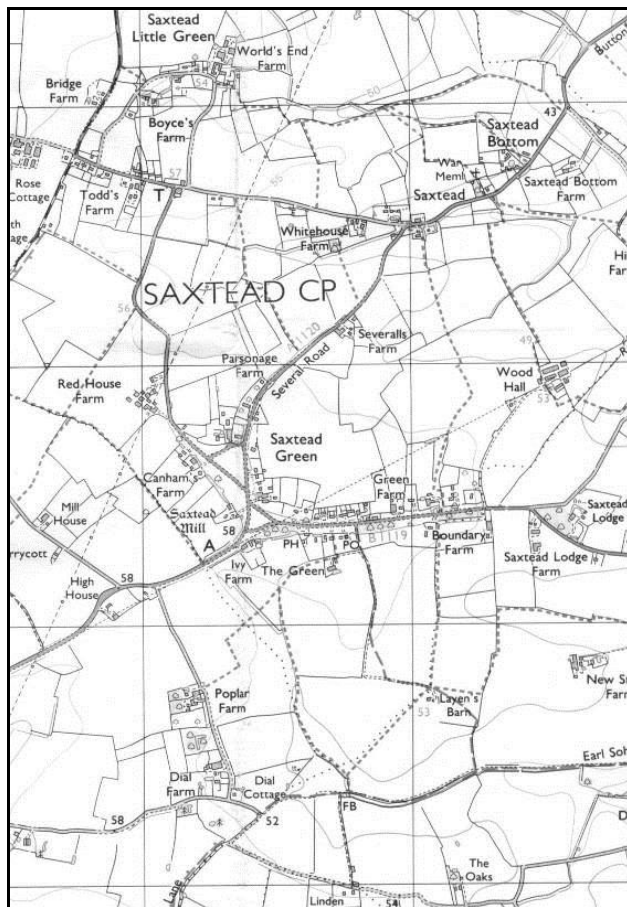
3 TOPOGRAPHICAL SETTING

Saxtead Green is part of a village in south-east Suffolk about 3 miles west of the small market town of Framlingham. The settlement lies on the A1120, which runs for many miles along the line of a Roman road from Coddensham across to Peasenhall in the east. At the green, the main road diverts northwards off the line of the old road to go through Saxtead itself, with the parish church, and then the village of Dennington before returning to the line some four miles further east.

Where the road bends there is a small triangular green to the east, formed by the junction of the B1119 to Framlingham with the main road. Around the bend to the north a much larger area of green surrounds the junction of a minor road heading northwards to the hamlet of Saxtead Little Green.

Framlingham was served during the 18th Century by a branch of the Ipswich to South Town (Great Yarmouth) Trust's turnpike road. Between 1859 and 1952 passengers could also join the railway network at Framlingham, on a branch of the East Suffolk line from Wickham Market.

The village is sited on the eastern edge of the 'High Suffolk' claylands, where the heavy soils are best suited for arable farming. The underlying geology is essentially crag deposits, sands and gravels laid down during the Pliocene period over the chalk, which underlies all of Suffolk at depth. The village itself effectively sits on a high plateau and its immediate surroundings are formed of a level topography, with commanding views across open countryside.



Extract from Ordnance Survey Map

4 ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

The Suffolk County Historic Environment Record lists twelve sites of archaeological interest for the immediate area of Saxtead Green, the earliest of which are Roman in date. As well as the Roman road crossing the parish, there is an associated settlement site with finds of pottery, bronze brooches, a coin and a figurine along with a separate site where a coin was found.

There is one Late Saxon artefact comprising a Viking type sword found during the digging of drainage ditches. More recent entries are of Medieval date: the Village Green itself which is well preserved with its associated boundary drainage ditches and a burial found in 1831 with a gold ring and coin.

Two windmill sites are known of Post Medieval date, one of a former Smock Mill actually in Framlingham parish near Lodge Farm, the other the remaining post and roundhouse type mill on the green, a Scheduled Monument.

The parish was listed in the Domesday survey of 1086 as 'Saxteda', held prior to 1066 by Burghard, and later as part of the land of Earl Hugh. There was woodland for 200 pigs and 4 acres of meadow.

The principal historical occupation for residents of Saxtead has been agriculture and early 19th century records confirm that by far most were employed on the land, with a smaller proportion in supporting trades including blacksmiths, wheelwrights and corn millers. Saxtead fell within the wood-pasture region of Suffolk and farming included a mix of animal husbandry (pigs, horse breeding and poultry) and the growing of arable crops (wheat, barley, hay).

From a peak in population of 505 in 1831 present numbers are around 342.

Suffolk Historic Environment Record is now available online at www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/CHR



Porch at All Saints Church

Bisopes . H. Saxteda ten . t . r . e . Burghard p buita in fram
incham . LX . ac . sep . XI . uilli . 7 . v . bor . sep . IX . car . 7 . IIII . ac .
piti . filua . cc . por . hoc ē in p̄tio de framinchā .

BISHOP'S Hundred
Burghard held SAXTEAD before 1066, as an outlier in
Framlingham; 60 acres.
Always 11 villagers; 5 smallholders.
Always 9 ploughs.
Meadow, 4 acres; woodland, 200 pigs.
This is in the assessment of Framlingham.

Extract from Domesday Survey

5 QUALITY OF BUILDINGS

Saxtead's only grade I listed building is its Church of All Saints, mostly 15th Century but not in the conservation area, remotely positioned about a mile north-east of the green just off the main road.

The highest grade building within the conservation area is the windmill at grade II*. It has a painted brick-built roundhouse topped with a timber-framed and weather-boarded buck, of 18th Century origin, but much modernised in the 19th Century and restored in the 20th. A particularly fine example of a post mill, it has complete and working internal machinery.

Saxtead's other listed buildings are all grade II, the majority 16th or 17th Century farms and cottages of timber-framed construction with rendered walls. Some of the render is roughcast and where brick is included it is generally painted, maintaining the same appearance. Some of these buildings retain their original thatch, whilst others have pantiles as a replacement, or slate.

Key to the working rural character of the village is the farmsteads that are included within the Conservation Area including Ivy Farm, Boundary Farm and Canham's Farm. Although none of these contain listed buildings they form important groups of agricultural and related domestic buildings and their group value makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The majority of buildings within the conservation area are unlisted. This status does not diminish their value nor their important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and their character-defining features should be retained. Those that make a positive contribution to the conservation area are identified on the Summary of Character Features Map on page 26. Loss of a building that makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area will be treated as substantial harm to the designated heritage asset.



Saxtead Mill



The Limes



Render and Thatch



Roughcast Render and Slate



Weather-boarding and Corrugated Iron



Render and pantile

6 TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

The variety of Suffolk's vernacular materials is well represented around the settlement, both on the listed buildings and also on some of those of lesser historic quality.

Old Post Office Cottages is a storey and a half semi-detached pair of properties with roughcast render and a pantile roof with catslide dormers. Old Mill House, formerly the Volunteer public house, is similarly of roughcast render with a pantile roof. Mill House, adjoining the windmill, has a shallow pitch hipped slate roof and rendered walls, which might conceal Suffolk White brick, not otherwise to be found in the area.

Boundary Farm is a solid red brick Victorian farmhouse with original sash windows and a black pantile roof. Ivy House is similar but with a slate roof and now uPVC windows.

Ancillary buildings to the various farmhouses within the Conservation Area provide their own vocabulary of building materials. These are generally timber-framed and can be rendered or weather-boarded, usually in black, and mostly have pantile roofs, although some have a replacement covering of corrugated iron, which when well weathered takes on the colour of pantiles.

The variety of walling and roofing materials, finishes and colours is characteristic of the Conservation Area and should be respected when changes to existing buildings are made or new development added. There is also a fine variety of traditional window types including 9-pane 'Suffolk' windows; multi-paned sliding sash windows; metal casement windows; and Gothick windows.



Roughcast Render and Pantile



Red Brick and Slate

7 CHARACTER OF SPACES

The settlement at Saxtead Green has two main parts to it, each of which represents one of Suffolk's typical settlement forms.

Firstly there is a scatter of farms and cottages surrounding at some distance an area of open green forming a rough rectangle with the main road running through on the diagonal from south-west to north-east. This green is owned by Pembroke College and maintained by Suffolk Coastal District Council.

Within this green area Marlborough Road runs away to the north-west off the main road, remaining central to the green area, whilst to the south-east the Framlingham road comes off with a split junction containing a large triangle of green.

Beyond here to the east, the second area comprises a long strip of green containing the Framlingham road. Here the pattern is linear with a series of farms and cottages, mainly on the north side of the road.

Around both areas of green there remain a series of linear ponds and drainage ditches in addition to the many circular ponds associated with each farmstead.

Without a Church in the vicinity, the mill forms a very prominent focal point within The Green and when viewed on approach along Framlingham Road. Views of the mill from afar and views from the green out into open countryside are also very important here.

Another key space is the field adjacent the mill which was included at designation of the Conservation Area to retain and protect long views of the landmark structure.

Thus these important spaces make a substantial contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and must be retained, protected and managed. The seasonal character of The Green, in particular – long grass in summer, cut in autumn – is also a defining

feature of the village; as are village ponds, of which there are several.



The Green and Post Mill



Framlingham Road

8 TREES AND GREEN SPACES

One of the key elements of the Conservation area is its trees and green spaces. Treed and planted spaces usually enhance the buildings and spaces around the village and provide an appropriate setting for the conservation area.

Within a conservation area all trees over a certain size are afforded some protection. Notice to fell or prune trees has to be submitted to the local planning authority for consideration. Specific trees, groups or woodlands throughout the conservation areas may sometimes be protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) by virtue of the fact that there has been a previous request or proposal to remove the tree or develop a site. Protected trees may have particular amenity, historic and ecological value.

The main area of green space at the western end of the settlement is meadowland with an enclosing belt of trees, particularly along a section of its western edge, where there are no properties. Elsewhere the trees form both the front and rear boundaries of the properties scattered around this green, giving the latter the effect of an open glade within woodland.

To the east the linear part of the settlement is more built up and devoid of trees particularly on the northern side of the road. This is balanced by an extensive tree belt along the southern side for much of its length.

One further significant area of trees is a plantation immediately north of Manor Farm, adjoining the conservation area boundary.



Tree group adjacent Old Mill House PH



Poplars near Ivy farm

9 COUNTRYSIDE SETTING

A cluster of agricultural holdings and associated cottages around a green as found at Saxtead is essentially part of the countryside rather than distinct from it. Only the terraced houses and bungalows on the north side of the Framlingham road with a scatter of buildings opposite, present anything approaching a built up area.

Definitive footpaths 11 and 12 both head south from this area, straight into the fields. Further east, towards the end of the linear part of The Green, footpath 10 approaches from the north, passing Manor Farm. South of The Green it continues along the parish boundary with Framlingham.

To the west of the Mill, footpath 14 heads northwards off the main road, following the parish boundary with Earl Soham.

Although there is easily accessible farmland all around, the environmental value of Saxtead Green rests in its being unimproved grassland, which is of considerable botanical importance locally. The area is a Registered Common and part of it is designated as a County Wildlife Site.

Views from the Conservation Area out to the adjacent countryside setting should be guarded as they are as important a part of the open aspect of Saxtead Green as the Area itself and were included in the reasons for the original designation.



Local agricultural traffic



Start of Footpath 65 at Fern Cottage

10 FORMER USES

Saxtead Green probably comprises about half of the development in the parish, the remainder being taken up by Little Green and the nucleus around the remote church and school; all taken together, a dispersed farming community.

Within the parish, records from the early 17th Century show 14 yeomen, 5 husbandmen, a carpenter and unusually 3 coopers. The linen cloth industry was also represented by 2 cordwainers, a tailor and a twill weaver.

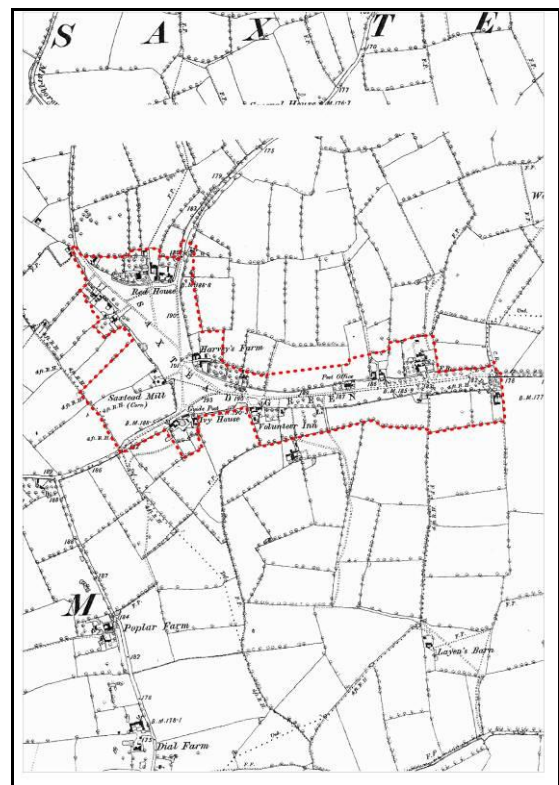
19th Century directories paint a similar picture of a small agricultural settlement with 14 farmers, 2 shopkeepers, a blacksmith, a wheelwright, a corn miller and by then only a single cooper amongst the residents. Around this time records show that 87 people were occupied in agriculture.

The tithe map apportionment of 1838 confirms the range of traditional industries in the village at that time with field names such as 'Mill Field', 'Clay Pit Field', 'Blacksmith's Shop', and 'Ozier Ground' listed.

Current uses in the village include a public house and the mill, which opens regularly during the visitor season and is a significant tourist attraction.



Mill House



19th Century Map

11 PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS

With such a widely spaced group of historic buildings, infill has been unavoidable around the fringes of the green at Saxtead. Unfortunately some of this has been of lesser quality than might be expected in a conservation area, houses and bungalows of non-traditional form built of alien materials to poorly proportioned designs. Several, however, likely date from prior to designation of the Conservation Area.

Fortunately the distances involved within the central open space mean these are often viewed at a distance or screened behind hedges.

Other modern intrusions include the use of uPVC windows in some of the older unlisted properties and the overhead wiring that provides power and communications links.

Boundary treatments are also of concern, some properties having removed all frontage barriers so that their dwelling appears to have the green as its lawn, others hidden behind barriers allowed to grow too tall. Some areas of the green are getting mown more than annually by adjoining owners. This fragments the visual effect of the large open area of meadowland and degrades some of the natural diversity by lessening the area of 'unimproved grassland'.

The green in areas is also at risk of erosion on its margins through car parking and over-running by heavy vehicles, and needs to be monitored for its impact. Reinforcement of verges and their reinstatement in grass could overcome these problems, by agreement.

The area around the existing public toilet block could benefit from the development of a seasonal café/visitor facility. The block and surrounding land are owned by SCDC.

Suffolk Coastal District Council's Parish Tree Scheme is available to Parish Councils who wish to carry out sensitive planting schemes to enhance spaces within the Conservation Area.



Overhead Wiring



Erosion of The Green

**12 STREET – BY – STREET
APPRAISAL**



12.1 The Green - East End

Approaching Saxtead Green along the B1119 from Framlingham in the east, one enters the Conservation Area whilst still in the latter parish. A key view into the village is provided here which provides an impression of a verdant setting and an absence of a built-up frontage. These are key characteristics worthy of retention.



Manor Farm is of rendered timber frame construction with a pantile roof, grade II listed with a good range of outbuildings and ponds. The complex is now used entirely for residential purposes but is a good survival and a reminder of how integral working farms and their buildings and ranges were within the actual fabric of the village itself.



To the south on the left, suitably named **Boundary Farm**, in red brick with a black pantile roof, soon gives way to The Green which is in Saxtead. Although unlisted the farmhouse makes a good contribution to the conservation area through its traditional nineteenth century appearance. For some distance ahead there is only a tree-lined green to the south, with fields behind.

On the north side there is sparse development, at first two houses outside the conservation area boundary not considered of sufficient quality to include.



Opposite Manor Farm on the south side, grade II listed **North Pells**, formerly Fern Cottage, rendered with a roof of thatch, sits in splendid isolation. Its traditional form and character and its setback position, seen above a well established hedgerow, sets the character for the some aspects of the village to come and, therefore, makes a characteristic and attractive contribution to the Conservation Area.



Next to Manor Farm on the north side is **Pigtle**, an uncompromisingly modern house relatively well set back and screened from the road. Somewhat suburban in character it bears little visual relationship to its historic context.



Further west on the north side, still facing across to the green and fields to the south, is **Green Farm**, of similar construction to North Pells, and again grade II listed with a good range of outbuildings and barns. As with Manor Farm and other examples around the village, including adjacent **Willow Farm**, it provides important evidence of the integration of farmsteads into the historic development of the village. Now exclusively residential it is important that external features of these former agricultural buildings are retained to maintain their character and contribution to the Conservation Area.



Adjoining this to the west are **Old Post Office Cottages** and a house called **Blue Shutters**. The Cottages make a good contribution by virtue of their modest scale, attractive catslide dormers and traditional character.

Beyond Blue Shutters the village takes on a different character with development both sides of the road, mostly twentieth century infill the contribution of which to the Conservation Area is at best modest.



The corridor of green continues westwards through here, squeezed between terraced houses and semi-detached bungalows to the north and a number of detached houses to the south. The character of the village in this area is perhaps the most densely developed. Some aspects of the traditional form of the village are maintained here including houses and terraces well set back from the road, treed front boundaries and just one plot deep with open countryside immediately to their rear. These features of newer development are important to maintain but design standards in future should be much higher.



Amongst these detached properties there are two more listed buildings, both timber-framed and rendered: **West View** with a pantile roof (below) and further west **Hitcham House**, thatched, in behind Old Mill House public house.



Both buildings make a good contribution by virtue of their traditional character and appearance.



Old Mill House is the remaining public house at Saxtead Green, formerly The Volunteer. It makes a very important contribution to the Conservation Area by virtue of its use and acts as a focal point to the village.



12.2 The Green – West End

Beyond Old Mill House to the west, the road forks to form a triangle of green, part of the junction with the main A1120.



Here The Green widens out with views of the Windmill ahead and contained to the

south by a further farm complex, that of Ivy Farm, next to which the main road goes off out of the settlement south-westwards towards Earl Soham.



Ivy Farm, although unlisted, provides an attractive group of traditional agricultural buildings including a farmhouse and range of barns and outbuildings. These have largely retained their external visual characteristics and join the important group of village farmsteads that are important to the character of the Conservation Area.

From Ivy Farm the conservation area effectively runs northwards taking in an even larger triangular area of green formed around the main road (Several Road) running north-eastwards and Marlborough Road running north-westwards to Little Green.



Development along the eastern side of this area is well spaced out and includes two grade II listed timber-framed buildings finished in roughcast render. The first of these is **York Cottage**, which has a steeply pitched slate roof and has had a more

modern house implanted to the east in its former garden, **Galaxy House**.



West of York Cottage there is another modern infill house, **Binnowes Lodge**. The contribution of this dwelling and Galaxy House is minimal although both have well treed garden areas.



The Limes is another timber-framed and roughcast rendered listed building refronted in Victorian times with treble roll pantiles and 'gothick' windows. Highly visible from the green it is a delightful and well maintained dwelling.



Compared to the low density plots along the eastern side the northern edge of The Green is denser with a characteristic complex of farm buildings between Barn Acre and Saxtead Green House, both grade II listed. **Barn Acre** itself is timber-framed and rendered, but has a concrete pantile roof. All make an important contribution to the Conservation Area individually and through their group value.



North of The Limes, beyond its former farm outbuildings (another important farmstead within the village, formerly Harvey's Farm), there is a series of infill modern houses and bungalows leading up to the north-east corner of the green. Although unremarkable architecturally they do establish an approximate building line, which should be maintained.



An attractive and highly visible black weather-boarded barn with a pantile roof adjoins Barn Acre to the west. Trees here make a very important contribution to the group of buildings providing a backdrop, frontage and boundaries, all of which provide an impression of a verdant setting to these attractive buildings. The retention and management of these trees, therefore, is essential.



The Conservation Area ends just beyond here, but includes **Limes Cottage** a short way along the main road out to the north-east, which makes a good contribution.



Saxtead Green House is a 19th Century red brick and slate house formerly called The Cedars. Not as visible today at the head of The Green as it once was it still provides a prominent and architecturally high quality façade and a building of reasonable scale in a village notable for the absence of large houses.



On the western side of The Green at its northern end is the grade II listed former public house, **Old Fox and Goose House**, timber-framed and roughcast. Similar to other traditional dwellings in the village it sits back some way from the road and is bounded by an established hedge. The informal character and rough surface of its entrance and access appear entirely appropriate to its village setting. This building adjoins another characteristic farmstead, **Canham's Farm**.



South of here there is an extensive open area of green with a tree belt down the western side which, at its southern end forms the setting for the **Saxtead Green Windmill** and its associated outbuildings and adjacent **Mill House** in a very important group. From most areas within the conservation area the mill is highly visible, forming an important focal point and local landmark. The extent of the open space around the mill – to its front, south side and rear – is of great importance in preserving its setting and long views to it, and must always be preserved from unwelcome intrusion, clutter or development.



13 CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Saxtead Green has a unique overall character which is different to other villages in the area. Its form and appearance is derived from its landscape setting but just as importantly it is also derived from a very informal layout of groups of traditional buildings scattered around a very extensive green and a linear route into the village. Mature trees, hedgerows, grass verges and banks and the often large spaces which exist between and around buildings make a major contribution as does the green and the contribution of several integral former farmsteads.

Despite some 20th Century infill and some small-scale incremental change having taken place, the area continues to retain many of the special characteristics which justify its Conservation Area designation.

These special characteristics include, amongst other things, the number and quality of its traditional buildings, the relatively unique shape, form and layout of the settlement itself and the attractive relationship which exists between the older buildings, the spaces between and around them, and the wider landscape. Important natural features such as trees and hedgerows also make a major contribution as does the botanically important Green. It is vitally important therefore, that these special characteristics are retained and reinforced.

There are however other characteristics which only serve to undermine the traditional qualities of the Conservation Area. These can include intrusive overhead wires and their supporting poles, large modern street lights, standard concrete kerbs and large prominently sited highway signs. Heavy traffic can also have a major impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, as can inappropriate car parking, causing the erosion of grass verges. Physical measures to control parking including signage, lining and bollards must be very carefully considered to minimise their impact on the quality and importance of open spaces and streetscenes within the conservation area and alternatives should always be considered preferable.

Inappropriate new developments and the cumulative effect of incremental change are a constant threat to the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area. Detrimental change can take many forms, from infill with poorly designed new houses to modern replacement windows and doors in older buildings.

Other undesirable changes can include inappropriate alterations and extensions which do not respect the scale, form and detailing of existing buildings, the use of modern materials and details in the area, insensitive highway works and signage, unsympathetic advertising and the construction of intrusive walls, balustrades, fences, driveways, garages and other structures.

The use of concrete tiles, artificial slates, plastic and aluminium windows and doors, cement render and modern bricks should all be avoided. So too should the use of brown stain on timber joinery, windows and doors as it invariably appears as a discordant feature, particularly where the traditional use of white paint provides a unifying element in the street scene.

In order to protect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, wherever possible the District Council will seek to prevent such inappropriate developments from taking place. To this end the Council is publishing design guidance and other advisory material and, as opportunities arise, will assist with implementing specific projects aimed at positively enhancing the area.

13.1 Alterations to existing buildings

The particular character of Saxtead Green, with its prevailing historic appearance but also significant amount of twentieth century infill, renders it particularly sensitive to the cumulative loss or alteration of key features that contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Such features include windows, doors, front boundaries, chimneys, and roof coverings. Whereas some conservation areas can benefit from the enhancement of their mixed character, others will be slowly degraded over time through the exercise of permitted development rights.

It is proposed, therefore, that a survey be undertaken to identify the extent of existing harmful change and that an Article 4(2) Direction be considered for making in the conservation area which will require householders to seek planning permission when changing any of the following features:

- Front windows
- Front doors
- Chimneys
- Roof coverings
- Removal of front boundary walls and railings

An Article 4(2) Direction removes the permitted development rights of householders within a conservation area to undertake works to their houses without planning permission. Such a Direction is only justifiable where erosion of the conservation area's character through the cumulative effect of unsympathetic works is happening and may not be relevant in every conservation area. The purpose of a Direction would be to encourage retention and repair of original features or their sympathetic replacement or reinstatement, where necessary.

An application for such a planning permission is currently free. The purpose of this proposal would be to encourage retention and repair of original such features or their sympathetic replacement or reinstatement, where necessary. Residents of the conservation area will be sought their views on the proposal for an Article 4(2) Direction before proceeding with it.

13.2 Design of new development

In a conservation area such as Saxtead Green the prevailing historic character can make it a challenge to consider what is appropriate for the design of new development and can include high quality modern design. Pastiche or historicist re-creation can be acceptable but is not always achieved well, particularly where existing buildings abound in decorative features. Certain characteristics can be used as inspiration without resorting to copying – perhaps a high degree of modelling (three-dimensional effect), the use of projecting bays, or a bold scale or character. Such an interpretation can ensure that new design is both creative and contextual. New development should always respect the grain of the conservation area, including preservation of building lines, relationship to gardens, streets, parking and farmland, scale, density and uses.

Proper account should also always be taken of the impact that new development adjacent a conservation area can have on its setting. Although a conservation area boundary represents a demarcation enclosing a special area of historic interest, changes immediately outside of it can still have a significant impact on character and appearance. The setting of the

conservation area, therefore, has an intrinsic value that must be acknowledged in any proposals for change to it.

13.3 Conservation area boundary

On completion in 2012/2013 of appraisals for all 34 of the District's conservation area a review will be commenced of their boundaries as a separate exercise. There is no timetable as yet proposed. Full public consultation will be undertaken on any suggested revisions to the position of the boundary that may be proposed as part of the future review.

13.4 Demolition

Saxtead Green has a finite quantity of historic buildings which are integral to the character of the conservation area. Their loss, through unwarranted demolition or neglect, would erode the special status and distinctive character of Saxtead Green and undermine the conservation area. English Heritage in its draft guidance on 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' (March 2011), which takes full account of PPS5, provides a checklist to determine if a particular element within a conservation area makes a positive contribution, provided that its historic form and values have not been eroded (p15). Planning Policy Statement 5 describes at Policy HE9 the tests that are applied to the loss of a heritage asset that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area.

13.5 Enhancement opportunities

Opportunities to enhance the conservation area have been identified by the appraisal including overhead wires, boundary treatments and general design standards. Where possible the Council will work, through its enforcement role and in conjunction with utilities framework providers to promote the visual improvement of the conservation area. The Council will also work to ensure that in terms of the highway, footpaths and open spaces, the distinctive character of Saxtead Green is maintained and protected.

13.6 Landscape and Trees

The positive management and design of the landscape of the conservation area is a key consideration in planning related work. Inappropriate planting (design and species) can detract from the character of the settlement. Using plants which are found naturally within the locality and taking guidance available from the Suffolk landscape character assessment website (www.suffolklandscape.gov.uk) and Suffolk Coastal District Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance can be useful tools.

The key consideration regarding trees is to ensure that the spaces they need to grow and thrive are preserved and enhanced.

Suitable replacement planting to ensure longevity and succession in the treescape of the settlement will be encouraged in addition to the positive management of existing trees. Where space for larger trees is not available character can be achieved through other species, climbers and distinctive shrubs.

New boundary treatments to property can also provide enhancement to the conservation area and here the use of materials which in character with the settlement should be considered. Walls, fences, railings and hedges (whether native or ornamental) can be carefully chosen to reflect local styles and respond/create a sense of local distinctiveness.

13.7 Contacts

Further advice, information and support can be provided by officers of Suffolk Coastal District Council:

Conservation and Design Service

Tel. 01394 444616 conservation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Landscape Officer

Tel. 01394 444420 communityandeconomicservices@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Arboricultural Officer

Tel. 01394 444241 communityandeconomicservices@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

14 REFERENCES & FURTHER INFORMATION

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For further information regarding Conservation Areas and Listed buildings please visit the Councils web site www.suffolkcoastal.co.uk or contact the Design + Conservation Team, Planning Services, Suffolk Coastal District Council, Melton Hill, WOODBRIDGE, Suffolk, IP12 1AU Tel: (01394) 383789 or email: conservation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk.

