



9. THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Historic Environment Objectives

- To conserve and where possible enhance all aspects of the historic environment - built heritage, archaeology and historic landscape features
- To identify, conserve and enhance areas of special character
- To promote awareness of the historic features that help to make Broomfield special
- By celebrating these historic assets, to promote a sense of place and community.

Feedback from the Community

- 9.1 86% of responses to the residents' questionnaire said that 'Old buildings and/or sense of heritage' was important or very important, with hardly any opposing responses.
- 9.2 In Question 24, residents were asked: 'How important are Broomfield's historic buildings to you? (eg the Angel, Butlers, Broomfield Hall, St. Mary's Church). 98% of responses said important or very important; with only 1% stating the opposite. About half of these responses went on to make suggestions for more conservation areas in Broomfield, in addition to the existing one at Church Green.
- 9.3 Finally, when asked to indicate which buildings or parts of the village residents most liked, responses showed an overwhelming preference for historic buildings/parts of the village (see responses to Questions 21 and 22).
- 9.4 From this data, we can conclude that a general sense of heritage and appreciation of historic buildings in particular are very important aspects of the village for local residents. They help to define the village and create a distinctive sense of place.
- 9.5 The history of the village might also be a way of enhancing community spirit, through involvement and enjoyment in exploring it further. The local history group, Brumfelda, the U3A, local schools and interested local residents might be able to bring people together to enhance Broomfield's sense of place and community spirit.

Local Plan Policies

- 9.6 The Local Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment through:

Strategic Policy S3 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
Policy DM13 – Designated Heritage Assets. This includes policies to protect Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Monuments.
Policy DM14 – Non-Designated Heritage Assets
Policy DM15 – Archaeology.

Historic Buildings

- 9.7 Broomfield has 25 listed buildings as indicated in Appendix 3. In addition, the City Council has identified 14 structures (or groups of structures) in a Register of Buildings of Local Value (non-designated historic assets of local interest). These are also identified in Appendix 3. Adopted Local Plan Policy DM14 – Non-Designated Heritage Assets addresses the protection and retention of non-designated heritage assets, as identified on the City Council's Buildings of Local Value List.

Anglo-Saxon Burial Site

- 9.8 In 1888, workmen excavating a gravel pit behind Clobbs Row found a collection of iron objects and high-status jewellery. This led to a full excavation in 1894, which uncovered the grave of an Anglo-Saxon warrior, complete with a sword, spear and shield; drinking vessels, cups and a bowl; a lamp, glass jars and other items. Most of these are in a new exhibition at the Chelmsford Museum (on long-

term loan from the British Museum). By the 1980s, almost the whole area had been subject to gravel extraction. A watching brief revealed a very few Anglo-Saxon features nearby. These are reported in the Transactions of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History (3rd Series, Volume 17, 1986).

- 9.9 In 1888, this was a discovery of national importance, as many similar burials had been robbed a long time ago. The Broomfield Burial has since been eclipsed by the grander Anglo-Saxon Burial site at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk and, more recently, by a well-preserved site at Prittlewell in Southend. Nonetheless, it remains a very significant discovery which puts Broomfield on the historical map. It is therefore an important aspect of Broomfield's heritage to be celebrated, especially since the new exhibition in Chelmsford Museum is giving it greater publicity.

Community Action CA10 - Promoting Awareness of Historic Features

The Parish Council will work with the Local History Group and other interested residents, land/building owners, the Village Hall Charity and others to:

- design and install interpretation boards to enhance the impact of important heritage assets, such as the village greens, the Parish Church and other historic buildings (with the agreement of the owners)
- facilitate displays about local history at the Village Hall and/or other public buildings, linked to heritage trails around the village
- as part of plans to create public open space east of Saxon Way (CA6 and BFD10), prepare a design for the Anglo-Saxon Burial Site to celebrate its significance and value as a public asset; and seek funding from the Heritage Lottery and similar sources to support implementation.

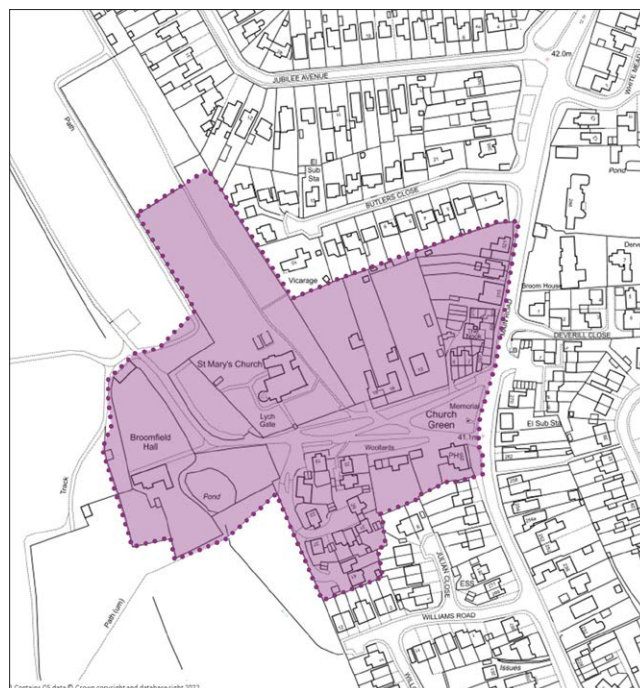
Broomfield Conservation Area

- 9.10 Broomfield has one conservation area, based on the historic buildings around Church Green (a registered village green) and as identified on Map 11. The City Council prepared a draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal in 2009 which is available to view on the City Council website at <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation-areas-and-listed-buildings/conservation-areas-in-chelmsford/>. The draft Appraisal (never formally adopted) identified several enhancement projects and, some 16 years on, it is appropriate that the list is reviewed to identify whether the projects remain relevant.

- 9.11 For some years, there have been discussions about enhancing the Green and repairing degraded features. The City Council commissioned a study in 2012 which summed up the issues as follows:

'Church Green is at the centre of the Broomfield conservation area and forms the setting to a number of a number of listed buildings. It is a high-quality space but is currently degraded by the impact of highway paraphernalia and car parking. The Parish Council has a desire to see the space enhanced.'

'There is scope to enhance Church Green with redesign of the space, including tree planting and management, road surfacing, highway paraphernalia (including kerbs, road markings and signs), footpath surfacing and soft landscaping. Parking provision can be reconsidered, but should not be significantly reduced.'



Map 11 - Broomfield Conservation Area

- 9.12 The study proposed four options for enhancing the Green, though it did not come with any funding for implementation. So, for any proposals to be progressed, funding streams (such as National Lottery Heritage Fund or Community Infrastructure Levy) will need to be investigated. The agreement of the County Council Highways Department for any changes affecting roads and establishing community consensus among Church Green residents will also be necessary before the project can be implemented.



Community Action CA11 - Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Enhancement of the Area

The Parish Council will work in partnership with City Council officers to review the enhancements identified in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and determine whether they remain valid and whether additional Conservation Area enhancements are needed. As appropriate, the Parish Council will seek to bring forward a feasible scheme to enhance the Conservation Area, taking into account the views of Church Green residents.

Special Character Areas

- 9.13 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), para. 195, encourages plans to conserve historic assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. It notes that these include sites and buildings of local historic value as well as those of national/international importance.
- 9.14 Due to development pressures and high land values, Broomfield is an area where historic character might be eroded, for instance through the pressure to accommodate new buildings in small green spaces within the village; to adapt existing buildings to better accommodate commercial activities; and to construct or extend buildings as economically as possible.
- 9.15 Given these pressures, the Neighbourhood Plan process has included consideration of potential areas of special character in the Parish which have distinctive built and natural features that,

in combination, are worthy of recognition and protection from inappropriate development.

The criteria for selection are:

- whether the area contains listed buildings and/or buildings of local historical interest
- whether these buildings interact with adjacent buildings and landscape features (trees, hedgerows, meadows, gardens, village greens, open spaces) to form a coherent character area, distinct from adjoining areas
- whether there is evidence that they are 'enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life' (NPPF, para 195) by the local community – for example, through evidence in the residents questionnaire.

- 9.16 Leaving aside Church Green (which is a Conservation Area, so needs no further designation in the Neighbourhood Plan), the areas identified as meeting these criteria are:
- Angel Green and Broomfield Place
 - Parsonage Green
 - Broomfield Mill and the surrounding area
- Separate assessments of each, including maps to identify their scope, are contained in Appendix 4.
- 9.17 Because of their qualities, these three areas are designated as Areas of Special Character within which development proposals will need to demonstrate how they preserve and enhance the special characteristics of the area.



POLICY BFD13 - SPECIAL CHARACTER AREAS

Three areas at Angel Green/Broomfield Place, Parsonage Green and Broomfield Mill (Mill Lane), as identified on the Policies Map, are designated as Special Character Areas.

Development proposals in these areas will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- i. The siting, design and scale would preserve or enhance the character and appearance (listed in Appendix 4) of the Special Character Area; and
- ii. Building materials and finishes are appropriate to the local context; and
- iii. Features which contribute to the character of the area are retained; and
- iv. Important views are preserved; and
- v. Significant open spaces are protected, where appropriate; and
- vi. The setting and significance of any heritage assets are protected in accordance with Local Plan policy.

In addition to the above criteria, development will be supported where:

- a. **Angel Green**
 - i. The alignment of any new structures respect the shape of the Green and avoid overshadowing it; and
 - ii. The relationship between historic buildings and the Green is respected; and
 - iii. The relationship between historic buildings and other prominent lawns/grassland is respected.
- b. **Parsonage Green**
 - i. New buildings are set back from the Green to conserve the sense of openness; and
 - ii. The sense of transition between the Green and the wider countryside to the west is conserved.
- c. **Broomfield Mill**
 - i. boundary treatments respect the existing features of traditional brick, small hedges, brick walls and wooden fences/gates.